

Palladium Books® Presents:

THE

RIFFTER®

Your Guide to the Megaverse®

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Rifts® – Treasures of the Megaverse®

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Fantasy – Prophet O.C.C.

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Beyond the Supernatural™ – Adventure

News, coming attractions, adventure ideas and more



Though despised, tears flow when the giant falls.

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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 83

Your Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®!

Dedication – To all our wonderful contributors over the many years – writers and artists – for sharing your imaginings with us, whether they be heroes, villains, monsters, rules, comic strips, stories, or adventures from across the Megaverse®. Keep those imaginations burning bright and the adventures coming.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2019

PDF Edition – January 2020

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Palladium Books® Presents:



THE RIFLER® #83

BRANDT - 97

Sourcebook and Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®

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

Special Thanks to Carl, Hendrik, Ian, Matt, Julius and all our contributing writers and artists this issue, introducing Sires Jan Black (you'll see more of her work in Garden of the Gods and other books), and to the hardworking Palladium staff. Our apologies to anybody who may have gotten accidentally left out or their name misspelled.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2019

Contents – The Rifter® #83 – Summer 2019

Page 6 – From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

Books are coming your way! This issue of **The Rifter®**, **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One**, and **Garden of the Gods™** are available right now! All July releases. (A hardcover edition of the Rifts® Bestiary, too.) **In the Face of Death™**, **The Rifter® #84**, **Titan Robotics™**, **Chaos Earth® Psychic Scream™**, and more are in production. With even more in development.

Page 7 – Palladium News

Get more information about recent releases, the Palladium Fantasy RPG® Interactive Character Sheet, new artists, and Pinnacle Rift® Savage Worlds titles.

Page 8 – Coming Attractions

Not just books are available now and coming soon, but so are new baseball caps, mugs and a Rifts pen. Books like **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One**, **Garden of the Gods™**, **In the Face of Death™**, **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume Two**, **Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Psychic Scream™**, **Rifts® Antarctica**, **Fantasy titles**, and many others are in production, along with a lot of other books. Read all about them here.

Page 15 – The Prophet O.C.C.

– Optional Material for Palladium Fantasy RPG®

Ian Herbert present a new, optional O.C.C. that is not a Priest in the traditional sense, but a character who can be something of a wild card and a maverick. And a lot of fun as a player character or as an NPC (Non-Player Character).

Art by *Benjamin Rodriguez*.

Page 19 – Half-Ogres or “Hogres”

– Optional Material for Palladium Fantasy RPG®

Ian Herbert takes a comprehensive look at the Hogre – a half-human and half-Ogre subspecies. Ogres and humans are similar enough to mate and bear offspring. Sadly, these people are neither accepted by humans nor Ogres and often become outcasts living on the fringe of society or bitter monsters angry at the world.

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Art by *Mark Dudley*.

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– Optional Adventure for *Beyond the Supernatural™*

Hendrik Härterich presents an epic, wartime **Beyond the Supernatural™** adventure that is like Indiana Jones meets The Dirty Dozen filled with horror and dangerous secrets.

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Art by *Benjamin Rodriguez*.

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with the Secret Operative

– Optional Source Material for *Heroes Unlimited™*

Matt Reed gives us a new look at Superspies and Secret Operatives for *Heroes Unlimited™* RPG complete with Superskills, Gadgets, and new abilities.

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Artwork by *Sires Jan Black*.

Page 67 – On the Trail ... with the Hunter/Vigilante

– Optional Source Material for *Heroes Unlimited™*

Matt Reed gives us a new look at The Hunter/Vigilante for *Heroes Unlimited™* RPG. Complete with traps, new abilities, and equipment.

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 Artwork by *Mike Mumah*.

Page 82 – Treasures of the Megaverse® – Optional Material for *Rifts*® and other settings

Carl Gleba knocks it out of the park with this diverse and spectacular treasure trove of magic items. Rune Weapons, Magic Rings Elixirs, Cloaks, TW devices, and much more, including a few warships!

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The Theme for this Issue

The theme for **The Rifter**® #83 is mysterious people, places and devices (including magic items galore). Many of them misfits and people and magic that lurk in the shadows or on the fringe of society. Enjoy.

Become a Writer for Palladium Books®

The Rifter® is going on hiatus, but if you like, you can still continue to submit articles for our consideration like always, just like you did for *The Rifter*®.

Why, if there is no publication? Because Kevin and crew may decide to use your adventure, setting, new magic, new psionics, new super abilities, monsters, villains, heroes, high-tech weapons, vehicles, robots, etc., in an upcoming sourcebook, that's why. All such submissions are unsolicited and entirely on speculation, with no promise of publication or payment. Always looking for material for *Rifts*®, *Chaos Earth*®, *Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, *Heroes Unlimited*™, *Ninjas & Superspies*™, *Beyond the Supernatural*™, *Dead Reign*®, *Splicers*® and *Nightbane*®.

The Cover

The cover is a portion of **Kevin Long's** famous cover to *Rifts*® Conversion Book One. It was one of the early *Rifts*® book releases way back in 1996. We thought it was nice to harken back to our beginning as we launch a new era of *Rifts* titles and books for other settings.

Optional and Unofficial Rules & Source Material

Much of the material presented in *The Rifter*® is "optional," but that doesn't make it any less exciting, fun, or useful. It is source material written by role-playing gamers just like you (and a couple of pros). It's how we have found many of the artists and writers who have gone on to work for Palladium. We wouldn't present the material if we didn't think it was worth sharing. If we thought it sounded cool or fun we included them for your gaming enjoyment. Use what you like, ignore the rest. And remember, you can usually adapt material designed for one setting in many others, like *Rifts*® magic and monsters for *Palladium Fantasy* or *Heroes Unlimited*, and vice versa. Even settings and adventures can be tweaked and used in many different settings. We hope all of it ignites your imagination and inspires you to create your own wonders.

www.palladiumbooks.com – Palladium Online

COMING – The Rifter® #84

- **Golems in the Myst**, source material for *Rifts*® by **Greg Diaczyk**.
- **The Kingdom of Raf-Chalon** for the *Palladium Fantasy RPG*®.
- **The Dark City of Cascade** for *Heroes Unlimited*™.
- **Spellbound O.C.C.** for *Nightbane*® RPG.
- **All Quiet on the Western... What? An Adventure for *Beyond the Supernatural*™.**
- **The Dimma**, a short story for *Beyond the Supernatural*™.
- **John Zeleznik** cover.
- **News, coming attractions, product descriptions and more.**
- **96 pages – \$14.99 retail – Cat. No. 184. Fall release.**

One game system, infinite possibilities limited only by your imagination™

Though despised, tears flow when the giant falls

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

We are thrilled so many of you enjoyed the Erick Wujcik tribute in **The Rifter® #82**. Ten years after his untimely death, I still miss him every day. So that was a very special issue for all of us. Glad you enjoyed it. If you missed it, there are still copies available, but probably not for long.

This issue is outstanding. A number of our regular contributors have submitted outstanding articles and source material to **The Rifter #83** (and **#84**) just in time before **The Rifter®** goes on hiatus for at least two years. We love the material they submitted, and know you will too. With any luck, we'll all be seeing these talented people contributing to future sourcebooks.

Why is The Rifter® going on hiatus? A number of reasons, but the main one is because we need to spend the time usually allotted for **The Rifter®** on producing official sourcebooks. And we have a lot of ideas for all kinds of exciting sourcebooks for **Rifts®, Palladium Fantasy®, Heroes Unlimited™, Beyond the Supernatural™**, and ... well ... everything. As a result, we intend to take a couple years off from producing **The Rifter®** to give our full attention to knocking out a bunch of sourcebooks, including a number of titles you have wanted for a very long time. I don't even want to list them. You'll find out when we announce their release dates. But most of you will be pleased. Very pleased. After we've spent a couple years pounding out books, we will revisit whether or not we should return to doing **The Rifter®** or keep our focus on new books. As always, we appreciate your suggestions and want to know what you think.

Books are coming your way starting now

- **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** – July
- **The Rifter® #83** – July
- **Garden of the Gods™ (Fantasy)** – July or August
- **In the Face of Death™ (Dead Reign®/Zombies)** – August or September
- **The Rifter® #84** – September
- **Rifts® Titan Robotics™** – October or November
- **Rifts® Chaos Earth®: Psychic Scream™** – September or October
- **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume Two** – Winter
- With a whole lot more in the pipeline. The books listed above are just what are actually in active stages of production.

If you are reading this in **The Rifter® #83** it means **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** has already been released and is available at stores everywhere! It also means **Garden of the Gods™ (for Palladium Fantasy RPG®)** is either also in stores (shooting for a July release) or will be available very soon (August). That will be followed by **In the Face of Death™** for **Dead Reign®**, our zombie apocalypse game. ALL of these titles and other books in development are described in the Coming Attractions section of this issue. And ALL of these books are in some stage of active production. Meaning a manuscript has been submitted and is undergoing final tweaks, additions and rewrites, art has been assigned (or is coming in) and these books WILL see release in 2019.

Other books not quite as far along include **Rifts® The Disavowed™, Rifts® Antarctica, Rifts® CS Arsenal™, Rifts® Living Nowhere™, Chaos Earth® First Responders™, Beyond the Supernatural™ sourcebooks**, more **Fantasy sourcebooks (a whole bunch of them!)** and other titles. These titles and several others are NOT forgotten and are in various stages of active development or waiting for production. As always, just because a book is not specifically discussed here, or listed in every Weekly Update, it does not mean it is discontinued or in limbo, it means there are more immediate things to talk about or there's no substantive news to report. We are anxious to put as many of the books you've been waiting for into your hands as soon as possible over the next 18 months.

So if a book you are waiting for is not mentioned here or in one of *Palladium Books' Weekly Updates* on our website, it means there is nothing new to report, but it should still be in the pipeline and news for it will be coming in the months ahead. Right now, we are focused on releases slated for the next six months, which by our count is 6-7 titles. And many of them are in various stages of production or development.

Lines of contact

For those of you who count on The Rifter® for info about new releases, we apologize for you losing this lifeline to Palladium Books. If you can, we encourage you to visit the Palladium Books website at least once a month. For those of you we know do not have access to the Internet, we will try to send out periodic newsletters and our latest catalog. You can also mail us a request for a current catalog or product checklist, whenever you need one, and we'll send one out to you.

Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One

Available now – in stores everywhere

Yep, **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** is finally hot off the press and shipping to stores everywhere. 256 pages of awesomeness. 82 creatures. Maps. Great art. Comprehensive creature descriptions. Source material for Players and Game Masters alike. Ideas for encounters and adventure.

Editor *Alex Marciszyn* called **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One**, "A monster book unlike any you have ever quite seen before. A Guide to Rifts® monsters and animals written as if it were a real field guide about real animals. All fitting into a complete ecosystem."

Proofreader *Julius Rosenstein* felt the same way. Adding that he loved the *Erin Tarn* opening and many of the expanded descriptions of familiar monsters like the *Darkhound* and *Fury Beetle*. He also loved the new critters. The one beast that creeped Julius out the most: the *Ee-Bee Gee-Bee*. The one he wants his character to acquire: the *Cerebro-Scrambler*. Alex said the *Ee-Bee Gee-Bee* is at the top of his list of beasts that creep him out too, but that for him, the *Dream Butcher* was the worst. Meanwhile, the *Dinostang* was the beast Alex said he'd like his character to have. See the new description for **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** and other books elsewhere in this issue.

A **Sneak Preview of Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One** is available for FREE on DriveThruRPG.com – to give you some idea of what you can expect.

Oh, and there is a limited edition, gold foil hardcover edition of the **Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume One**, available only from Palladium Books. Limited to 400 signed and numbered copies. See the description for both the softcover and hardcover editions in **Coming Attractions**.

Keep those imaginations burning bright.

– Kevin Siembieda, Publisher, Writer, Game Designer
– July, 2019

Palladium News

By Kevin Siembieda, the guy who should know

Rifts® Bestiary™

Hot off the presses, available now

Yep. By the time you read this, the Bestiary will have shipped to distributors and those who pre-ordered it. And it will be at Gen Con. 256 pages of awesomeness. 80+ creatures. Maps. Great art. Fodder for countless encounters, adventures, creatures for your characters to use and command, and more. It's epic and expansive. And designed to help, wow, and inspire both players and Game Masters.

I hope people use the notes under **Life Span**, regarding maturing, young, juvenile, and adult animals, and the varying power levels and sometimes different behavior at different ages, to enjoy different experiences with the same animal. And watch out for momma or a mated pair protecting their young! Editor *Alex Marciniszyn* was correct when he said the **Rifts® Bestiary™** is "written as if it were a real field guide about real animals. All fitting into a complete ecosystem." We wanted to make these beasts feel real and make sense in the Rifts® world. And create a stronger sense of continuity than ever before. I think we have succeeded in giving you a monster book unlike any other. Enjoy.

Oh, and for those of you who love hardcovers and collectibles, don't miss out on the limited, signed and numbered **Gold Hardcover Edition**. Only 400 available while supplies last. Historically, Palladium Books' **Gold Editions** have doubled, tripled or increased in value many times over.

Garden of the Gods™ – available

As I write this, I'm also working on wrapping up the Palladium Fantasy® Sourcebook, **Garden of the Gods™**. With any luck, I finished it up in time so that it is back from the printer the same time as *The Rifter #83* and is shipping in July and appearing at Gen Con.

It's pretty epic too. And another book designed to blow minds, wow and inspire both players and Game Masters. I'm having a blast writing it with Matthew Clements. More than 40 forgotten gods, secrets and fun. This book is an adventure factory for G.M.s and a valuable resource for players to get quests, inspirations, blessings and artifacts from the gods. I love it.

In the Face of Death™

A **Dead Reign® Sourcebook** to follow in August

As soon as I finish *Garden of the Gods* I dive into finishing **In the Face of Death™**. An epic addition to the **Dead Reign® Zombi Apocalypse** setting. Wanted it out for Gen Con, but could not wrangle it. All the art is done, I just need to finish the writing. This should be an August or September release.

Books should be coming quickly

I have been coordinating production of numerous book titles including **Chaos Earth® Psychic Scream™**, **Rifts® Titan Robotics™**, **The Rifter® #84**, and a number of other books. Art is being done for all the above, as well as writing by me and freelance authors.

The advantage of having several books in various stages of production at the same time is we should be able to release several books one after the other very quickly, just like we used to do in the good old days. Sweet! For example, I have been making notes and writing parts of various books the entire first half of the year. In addition, I have been assigning and coordinating artwork and writing for a number of titles at the same time. Getting art for a book is often 2-3 months of time, sometimes more all by itself. And a lot of these books have been art heavy.

The bottom line is you've got 4-5 new titles coming for the rest of the year. And that's not counting the **Rifts® Bestiary™ Vol. One** softcover and hardcover editions. We are so excited. I hope you are too.

A smash hit! Available Online Only

Palladium Fantasy RPG® Interactive Character Sheet

Gamers are going wild over the new **Palladium Fantasy RPG® Interactive Character Sheet**. This is a digital – online product only. Available directly from Palladium Books AND DriveThruRPG.com. We are thrilled so many of you have discovered and are enjoying this helpful and fun product.

The Palladium Fantasy RPG® Interactive Character Sheet is a Microsoft Excel-based character management system. Packed with features and data collected from every *official* Palladium Fantasy sourcebook, this sheet saves you time and hassle with each character you create.

Features & Benefits:

- **The Main Character Sheet Page** collects the important data from across multiple tabs and puts it in one place for quick and easy reference.
- **Separate sheets examine character construction (worktable), Skills, Magic, Psionics, and Combat in greater detail.**
- **Built-in leveling system that calculates skill advancement for you!**
- **Experience Tables for over 80 O.C.C.s already programmed.**
- **Recognizes the percentages for nearly 150 skills, plus combat bonuses for over 20 Weapon Proficiencies and 7 Hand to Hand styles.**
- **Calculates the speed and distance a character can run and jump based on character Attributes.**

- Also calculates how much a character can lift, carry, and throw for humanoids, Giants, and Supernatural Beings.
- Add in your own Hand to Hand style, custom Skills, unique Weapon Proficiencies, and Experience Tables.
- Estimated time to build a character reduced by 20% or more.
- Instructions on how to use the sheet included, as well as a video walkthrough below.
- **Important Note:** This character sheet is built to be used with *Microsoft Excel 2010+* and it comes in .XLSX format. Opening this file in other spreadsheet programs is NOT guaranteed to work as intended.
- **Watch the Overview video here:** <https://vimeo.com/322271758>

New Palladium Artists

You'll be noticing a number of new names in the art credits sections of our books. All are top notch artists. Our newest addition is *Sires Jan Black*. Some of her work appears in this issue of **The Rifter®** and even more appears in **Garden of the Gods™**. *Robert Atkins* and *Steven Cummings* both come to us from the comic book industry and they rock. Both actually made their debut in **Rifts® Sovietski™**, but you'll be seeing a lot more of their work in the **Rifts® Bestiary** books and **Titan Robotics™**, among others.

Meanwhile, many of our long time artists are as good or better than ever! *Amy L. Ashbaugh*, *Nick Bradshaw*, *Mike Mumah*, *Ben Rodriguez*, *Chuck Walton* and *John Zeleznik* are all doing amazing artwork. Perhaps some of the best of their careers. That's not just wonderful for them, but for you who get to enjoy their artistry in our many upcoming books.

2019 Gen Con – Booth 1317

By the time you read this, Gen Con will be over. We hope to have met a bunch of you there, signed your books, chat and have a nice time. We'll have all the new releases there, plus back stock titles, baseball caps, coffee mugs, pens, prints, collector items, negatives, and original artwork. Gen Con is always fun for all of us. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones. The following Palladium creators will be at the Palladium Books booth:

- Kevin Siembieda – writer, game designer, Publisher
- Charles Walton – artist and concept man
- Glen Evans – writer
- Brandon Aten – writer
- Mark Oberle – writer
- Wayne Smith – editor, **The Rifter®**
- Thomas Roache – writer and game designer
- Madman Mike Leonard – artist
- Jeff "NMI" Ruiz – game events organizer

2021 Palladium Open House

The next Open House will be in 2021 to celebrate Palladium Books' *40th Anniversary*, so please start making your plans now. We intend to make the 2021 event the biggest, best Open House ever, so we are giving you all plenty of advance notice! Start making your plans now for an extravaganza nobody will want to miss.

Pinnacle's Rifts® for Savage Worlds®

This past April, Pinnacle Entertainment had a big success with their *Rifts® American Armageddon Kickstarter*. It was funded within 7 minutes and went on to get \$230,000 in pledges in less than 30 days. It is to produce three new Rifts® Savage Worlds® sourcebooks, all set in North America: **Arcana & Mysticism**, **Blood & Banes**, and **Empires of Humanity**, plus updated core rule books, G.M. screen, and other items like Rifts® dice, benches, and more.

Rifts® for Savage Worlds® is just one of the many expanding and exciting Palladium related products and licenses. We are looking for more licensing partners in all areas from film and television, to videogames, board games, etc.

The Rifter® to go on hiatus

Reminder, **The Rifter®** will be going on indefinite hiatus after **The Rifter® #84**. It will be the last issue for at least two years. Anyone who has a subscription beyond that number, will get a store credit for the balance of their subscription.

We know many of you will be disappointed, but this is best for the company. We are doing this so that all of us can devote our time to releasing RPG sourcebooks, World Books, Dimension Books and supplements, including awaited titles for **Rifts®** and the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** to **Beyond the Supernatural™** and **Heroes Unlimited™**. Moreover, we have been working on several *Top Secret projects* for the last few years. As those projects heat up, we need more time to devote to them and, hopefully, a large number of new releases. To make this happen, something had to go, and that something is **The Rifter®** — at least temporarily. We hope you understand.

Coming Attractions

Palladium's 2019 Release Checklist

Available Now

- **New! Rifts® Bestiary™, Volume One** – 256 pages.
- **New! Rifts® Bestiary™, Vol. One Gold Edition Hardcover** – 256 pages.
- **New! The Rifter® #83** – 96 pages.
- **New! Garden of the Gods™, Palladium Fantasy® Sourcebook** – 160 pages.
- **New! Palladium Fantasy RPG® Interactive Character Sheet** – a Microsoft Excel-based character management system. See *News* for details.
- **Back in Print: Monsters & Animals (Fantasy RPG)** – 240 pages – 120 monsters, 200+ animals; S.D.C. setting but easy to convert.

Coming Soon

- **In the Face of Death™, a Dead Reign® Sourcebook** – 96 pages, August or Sept.
- **The Rifter® #84** – 96 pages, September.
- **Chaos Earth® Psychic Scream™** – Fall or Winter.
- **Rifts® Titan Robotics™** – 160 page, Fall or Winter.
- **Rifts® Bestiary™, Volume Two** – 200+ pages, Winter.

- **Rifts® Bestiary™, Vol. Two Gold Edition Hardcover** – Winter.
- **Rifts® Antarctica** – Winter.

Also on the drawing board

- **Rifts® The Disavowed™ Sourcebook** by Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements.
- **Rifts® Heroes of Humanity™ CS Arsenal**
- **Lopan™, a Palladium Fantasy RPG® Adventure Sourcebook**
- **Lopanic Games™, a Palladium Fantasy RPG® Sourcebook**
- **Rifts® Chaos Earth® First Responders™** – Winter.
- **Heroes Unlimited™ Sourcebooks**
- **Splicers® Sourcebooks**
- **Nightbane® Sourcebooks**
- **Beyond the Supernatural™ Sourcebooks**
- **More Palladium Fantasy RPG® Sourcebooks**
- **And more.** Other titles are in the pipeline and being written. Thus additional and other titles may be slotted into the release schedule.

Palladium RPGs are available in many hobby and game stores around the world. We encourage people to support their local stores. Going to a store enables you to see the product before purchasing it, and many stores are happy to place special orders for you, provided you pay in advance, enabling you to avoid the cost of shipping and possible damage in the mail.

Ordering from Palladium Books: You can also order directly from Palladium Books, but you will pay extra for shipping. For customers with access to a computer, we highly recommend ordering online. This provides you with information about the most recent releases and Palladium’s entire product catalog. It also provides you the most accurate shipping costs and more shipping options. You can also order by telephone at 734-721-2903 (order line only). For customers without such access, use the following “mail order” process.

1. Send the cost of the books or items being ordered.
2. **In the USA:** Add \$6 for *orders* totaling \$1-\$50 to cover shipping and handling. Add \$12 for *orders* totaling \$51-\$95. Add \$18 for *orders* totaling \$96-\$200. **Note:** For *non-book products*, including T-shirts, add an extra \$6 per \$50 worth of product, on top of the shipping amounts listed above. This is because *non-book products* cannot ship via Media Mail, and must use a more expensive method of shipping. **Outside the USA:** Double the shipping amount for orders going to Canada, and *quadruple* it for overseas orders. Any and all additional costs incurred as a result of customs fees and taxes are the responsibility of the foreign customer, NOT Palladium Books.
3. Make checks or money orders payable to *Palladium Books*.
4. Please make sure to send us your complete and correct address, *including* apartment number. **Note:** These costs are for the least expensive and slowest method of shipping only. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Order online or call the office for a superior but more costly shipping method.

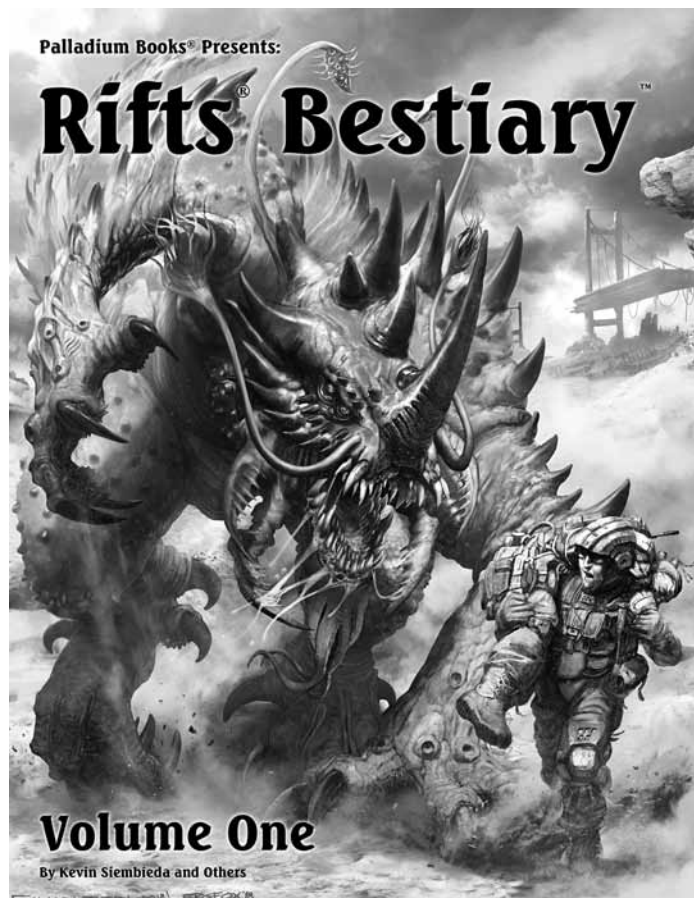
New & Coming Soon

NEW! The Rifter® #83 – available now

Presumably in your hands.

Rifter® #83 Highlights:

- **Treasures of the Megaverse® for Rifts®** by Carl Gleba.
- **Operation Minotaur**, an adventure for **Beyond the Supernatural™** by Hendrik Härterich.
- **Half-Ogre race for Palladium Fantasy RPG®** by Ian Herbert.
- **Prophet O.C.C. for Palladium Fantasy RPG®** by Ian Herbert.
- **Hunter/Vigilante for Heroes Unlimited™** by Matt Reed.
- **The Superspy/Secret Operative for Heroes Unlimited™** by Matt Reed.
- **News, coming attractions, product descriptions and more.**
- **96 pages – \$14.99 retail – Cat. No. 183.**



NEW! Rifts® Bestiary™, Volume One

Softcover Edition – Available now

Could the monsters known as *Caterpillar Things* be the larval form of the *Mothman Monster*?

Is the *Corrival Battler* as aggressive and dangerous as adventurers claim?

Are *Darkhounds* really magically mutated Dog Boys? Is that why they see Coalition soldiers as friends and allies?

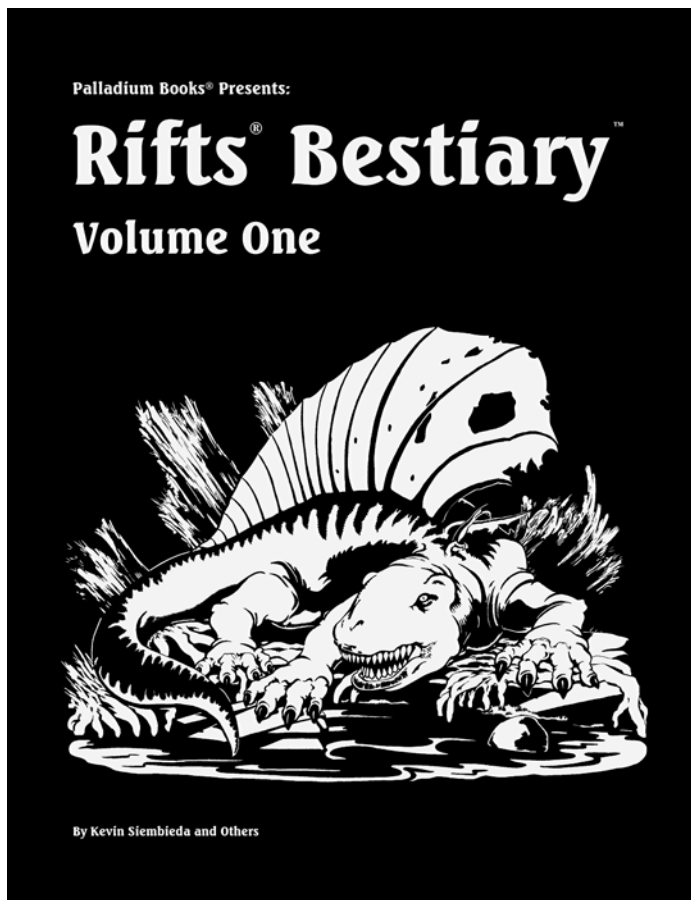
Ee-Bee Gee-Bees are kinda cute, how dangerous can they be? Is it true the animals and people slain by the *Death Springer* rise as zombies?!

What on Rifts Earth is a *Field Reaper*?

Rifts® Bestiary™, Volume One reveals it all.

Designed with both Players and Game Masters in mind, with creatures that can be used as pets, companions, riding animals, attack animals, and even unlikely allies, as well as slobbering monsters and catalysts for adventure. Adult, juvenile, and young stages of life give every creature three different levels of power and danger. Presented as a complete ecosystem, with maps, and details to bring each animal to life. All provide plenty of spice to add to your characters and adventures.

- **Monsters and animals of Rifts North America.**
- **80+ creatures described in detail, updated and expanded.**
- **New predators, exotic riding animals, alien horrors, giant insects, domesticated creatures, and more.**
- **A map for every creature showing where it is found in a glance.**
- **Standardized stat blocks, terms and information.**
- **Easily adapted to *any* Palladium setting. Powerful art.**
- **Includes basic S.D.C. stats for each creature description.**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda, Charles Walton and others.**
- **256 pages – \$26.99 retail – Cat. No. 896 – available now.**



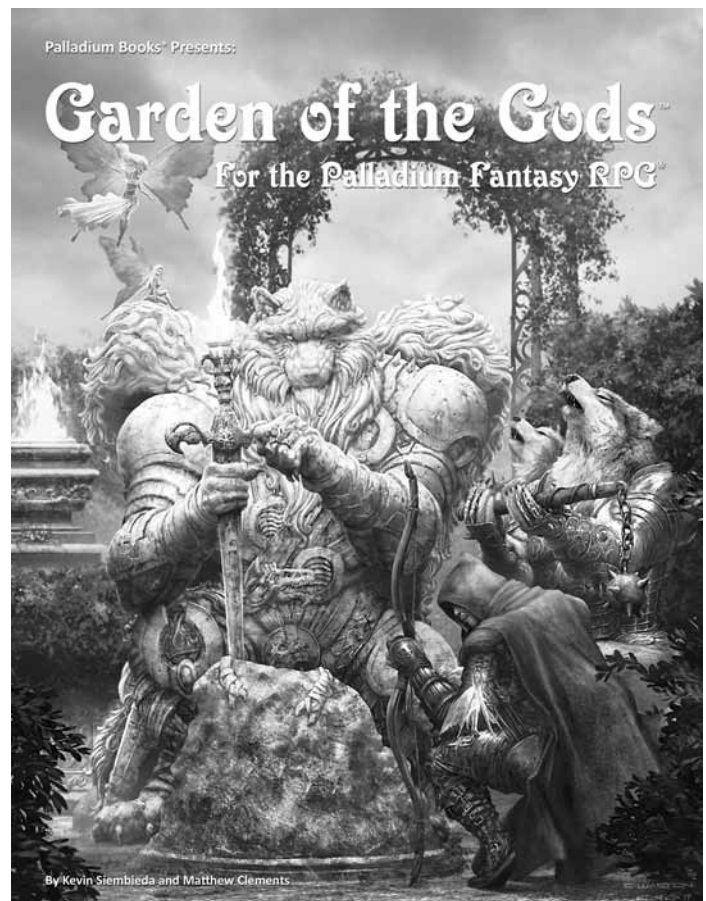
NEW! Rifts® Bestiary™ Vol. One

– “Gold Edition” Hardcover – Available August

A deluxe, limited, Gold Edition hardcover, signed and numbered by Palladium staff and maybe a few freelancers. It is the same content of of unique creatures that can be used as familiars,

pets, riding animals, guard animals, and slobbering monsters as the softcover edition in a durable hardcover. Very limited run of only 400 copies, numbered and signed by Kevin Siembieda, Palladium staff members and possibly available contributing artists and writers. **Note:** Past Palladium Books’ **Gold Editions** have doubled, tripled or increased in value many times over. Valued as cherished collectibles. Sold on a first come, first served basis, while supplies last.

- **Gold foil on a black faux leather hardcover.**
- **Sewn and glued for long-lasting durability.**
- **Only 400 signed and numbered copies. Only from Palladium Books.**
- **Sold on a first come, first served basis while supplies last.**
- **Signed by Kevin Siembieda and Palladium staff.**
- **Monsters and animals of Rifts North America.**
- **Same contents as the softcover edition.**
- **80+ creatures described in detail. New predators, exotic riding animals, alien horrors, giant insects and more.**
- **256 pages – \$55.00 retail – Cat. No. 896HC (Volume One).**
- **August release for the hardcover – at the printer.**



NEW! Garden of the Gods™

– A Palladium Fantasy® Sourcebook

The Garden of the Gods is said to be a holy place watched over and even frequented by the avatars of the gods. According to legend, the god may visit heroes and followers in dreams or in person by an avatar of the god, to be given guidance, inspiration, heroic quests, and gifts of knowledge and magic. More details about this title will follow.

- **40+ Forgotten Gods.**

- **Becoming a Champion of a god.**
- **Restoring forgotten gods to power.**
- **Godly insight and visitations.**
- **Gifts of magic, knowledge, and purpose.**
- **The Garden of the Gods described in detail.**
- **The mysterious Knights Fossar.**
- **The Black Pit, a place of evil and dark secrets.**
- **Is it a counterbalance to the good of the Garden or a trick by the Old Ones? Does it lead to the Land of the Damned as legend claims?**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements.**
- **96-128 pages – \$17.99 retail – Cat. No. 475. Available now.**



NEW! Baseball Caps – Available now

Have you gotten your *Rifts*® Baseball Cap or Mugs?

The new **Rifts**® baseball caps (3 different) are waiting for you. I've been wearing my inexpensive, red Rifts logo printed on a black cap (\$11.99) every morning walk and while doing yard work for weeks now, and I love it. All are 100% cotton.

NEW! Rifts® Screen Printed 100% Twill Baseball Cap – Red “Rifts” printed on a black cap, adjustable Velcro® closure – \$11.99 retail – Cat. No. 2590 – Available now.

NEW! Red Rifts® Logo Embroidered, soft, brushed cotton Baseball Cap – Embroidered Red “Rifts” on a black cap, adjustable metal buckle – \$21.99 retail – Cat. No. 2591 – looks great, nice fit – Available now.

NEW! White Rifts® Logo Embroidered cotton Baseball Cap – Embroidered White “Rifts” on a navy blue cap, adjustable metal buckle – \$21.99 retail – Cat. No. 2592 – looks great, nice fit – Available now!



NEW! Coffee/Beverage Mugs

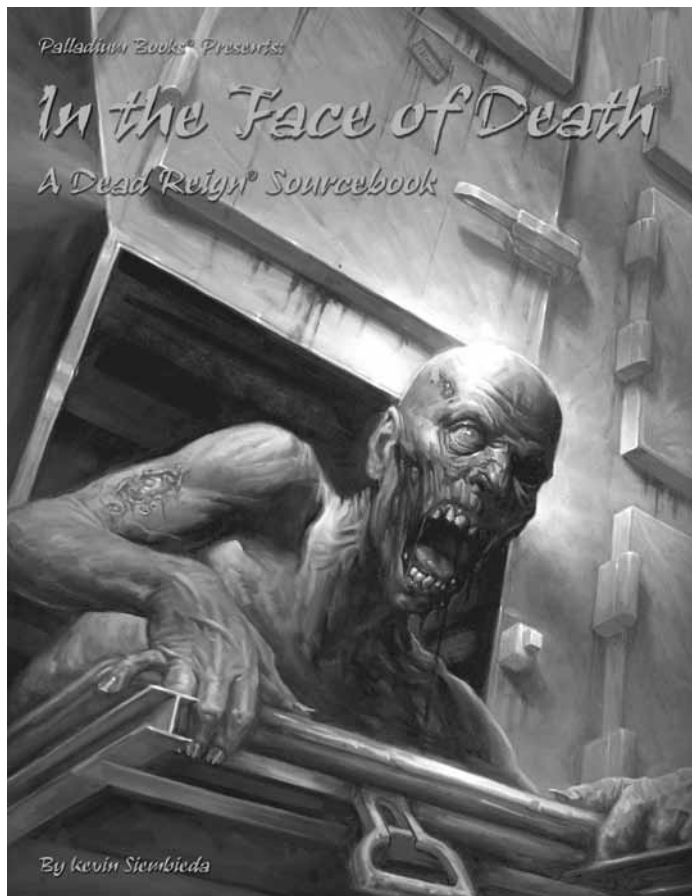
– available now

NEW! Rifts® Logo 16 Ounce Coffee Mug – \$10.99 retail – Cat. No. 2587 – Available now. White Rifts® logo on a black mug, blue inner lining of the cup.

NEW! Rifts® Property of the Coalition States™ 16 Ounce Coffee Mug – \$10.99 retail – Cat. No. 2588 – Available now. White Coalition logo on black mug, red inner lining of the cup.

NEW! Palladium Fantasy RPG® “Dragon” 16 Ounce Coffee Mug – \$10.99 retail – Cat. No. 2589 – Available now. Red Dragon on a black mug, light red (orange?) inner lining of the cup. Harkens back to fan-fave original black and red RPG cover.

Not to mention that snazzy **Rifts**® Soft-Touch Pen with Stylus – \$5.00 retail – Cat. No. 2586 – Available now.



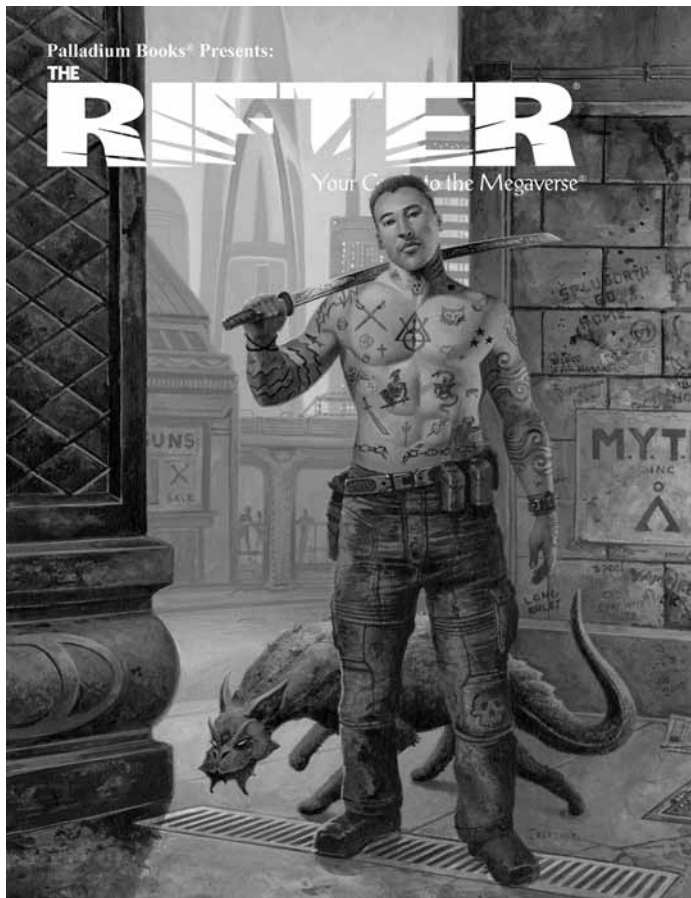
COMING: In the Face of Death™

– A Dead Reign® Sourcebook

“People will tell you no one can survive in the big cities. They are wrong.” – *Brad Ashley, Leader of the Road Reapers in the Zombie Apocalypse.*

This sourcebook is all about inner city survival. Survivor colonies finding a way to live and prosper in the big city. The conventional wisdom is that living in the big population centers is impossible. These survivors prove otherwise.

- **Inner city survival.**
- **Living on the rooftops.**
- **Surviving in big cities crawling with zombies.**
- **Death Cults, a different type of danger.**
- **Gangs, street runners, the new underground, and more.**
- **Heroic Masked Lunatics as player characters.**
- **Take your zombie campaign to new heights!**
- **Cover by E.M. Gist. Interior art by Nick Bradshaw.**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda. Adaptable to other settings.**
- **96-128 pages – \$17.99 retail – Cat. No. 237. August or September release.**



COMING: The Rifter® #84

The **Rifter**® is all about new ideas, pushing the envelope, trying new things and alternative methods, rules and approaches to create epic adventure! There is no one way to look at things. Open your mind to the infinite possibilities.

This issue focuses on dark places, monsters, magic, and the supernatural just in time for the Halloween season.

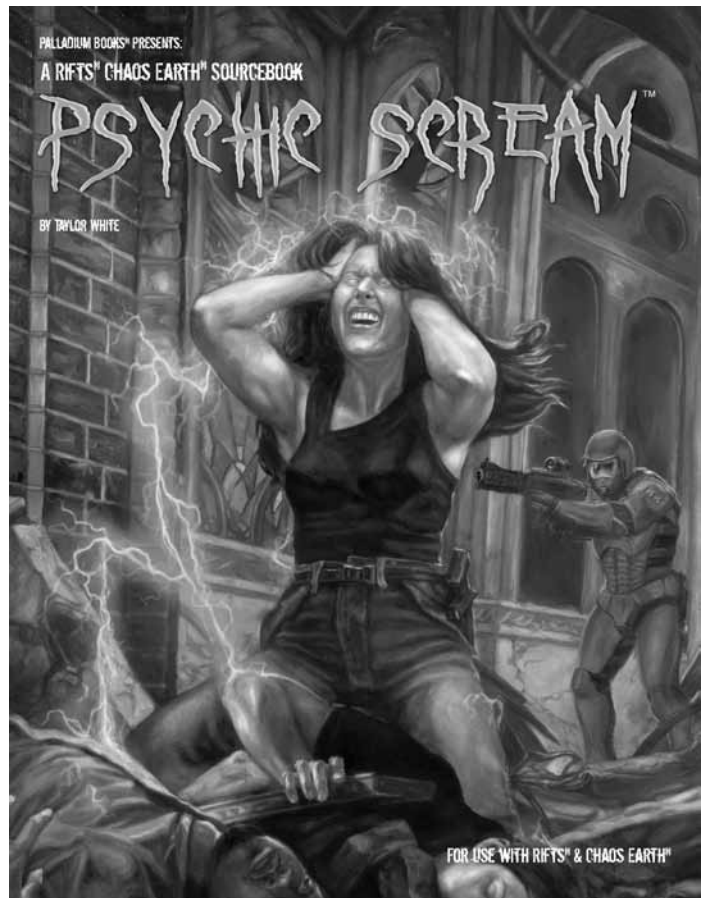
- **Golems in the Myst, for *Rifts*® by Greg Diaczyk.**
- **The Kingdom of Raf-Chalon for the *Palladium Fantasy RPG*® by Glen Evans.**
- **The Dark City of Cascade for *Heroes Unlimited*™ by Matt Reed, inspired by the work of Erick Wujcik.**
- **Spellbound O.C.C. for *Nightbane*® RPG by Ian Herbert.**
- **All Quiet on the Western... What? An Adventure for *Beyond the Supernatural*™ by Kyle Osterberg.**
- **The Dimma, a short story and new monster for *Beyond the Supernatural*™ by Steven Dawes.**
- **John Zeleznik cover.**
- **News, coming attractions, product descriptions and more.**
- **96 pages – \$14.99 retail – Cat. No. 184. September or October release.**

Psychic Scream™

– A **Rifts**® **Chaos Earth**® Sourcebook

A storm has rolled in. A psychic storm. With the Coming of the Rifts, survivors are bombarded by terrifying visions and overwhelmed with powers and abilities they never asked for, and often cannot control.

Where do you hide from the madness boiling inside of you?



What would you do when you know evil lurks hidden among your fellow survivors?

Why do the voices of alien creatures speak to you?

How do you cope when the power you unleashed to destroy a monster and save the innocent, destroys everyone but you?

Have you become a hero or another monster born in chaos?

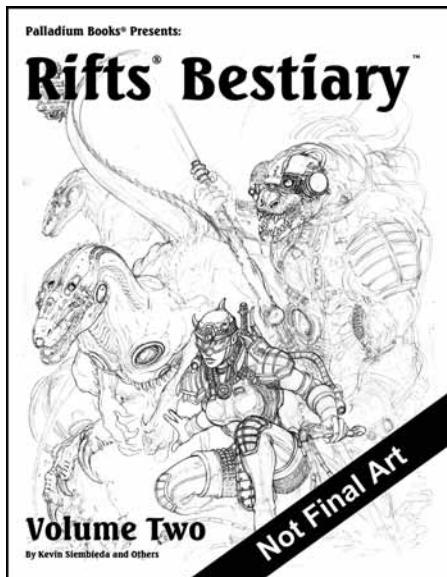
Are these powers your family's salvation or their damnation?

*Find out in **Psychic Scream!***

In the wake of the Coming of the Rifts, people begin to see ghosts and demons, they unleash lightning from their fingertips, command fire and water, hurl boulders and girders with their minds, and manifest a wide range of mental powers. Psionic abilities fueled by the explosive return of magic and the unchecked flow of dimensional energy that is off the charts.

Psychic abilities more powerful than anything known after the Two Hundred Years Dark Age. Wondrous and lifesaving. But also seething and out of control. The psychics' own minds bombarded by feelings of dread, visions of horror, and the thoughts and emotions of everyone around them. For many, it is too much, sending them careening into madness. For others, it creates heroes forged from chaos.

- **Untamed psychic abilities. More powerful than anything known later on Rifts Earth.**
- **New psychic powers and character classes.**
- **New psionic monsters and invaders.**
- **Insanity, side-effects and horror.**
- **Adventure ideas and more. All people, powers and monsters that become myths and legends told about the events during the Two Hundred Years Dark Age.**
- **Written by Taylor White and Kevin Siembieda.**
- **96-128 pages – \$17.99 retail – Cat. No. 667. Sept. or Oct.**



Rifts® Bestiary™ Vol. Two

– Coming Winter

More monsters and exotic animals of Rifts® North America as part of an ongoing series of **Rifts® Bestiary sourcebooks**. The first two or three **Rifts® Bestiary™** will focus on monsters and animals of North America. They collect creatures from all current World Books and Sourcebooks, plus some new creatures by Kevin Siembieda, Charles Walton, and others. Presented in alphabetical order, with maps showing their range and location at a glance.

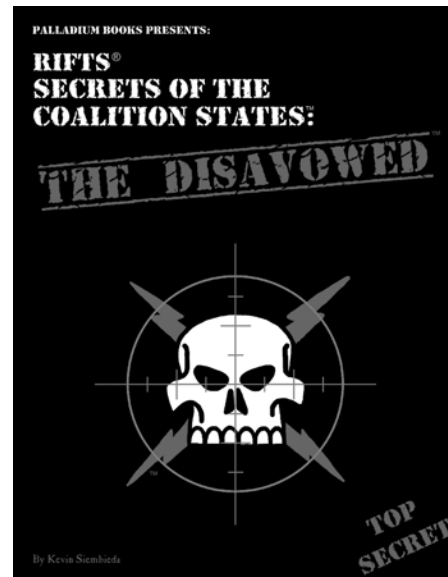
Note: The **Rifts® Bestiary™** series is more than a few big books of monsters, they are deliberately designed to provide players with a useful, living resource (pet, guard animal, riding animal, food source, etc.) as well as present many and varied opportunities for adventure and fun. Some creatures are helpful, some are inadvertently a threat or danger, while others are slobbering predators or wicked beasts that kill and eat you, or capture you, or sabotage you, or worse.

- **Monsters and animals of Rifts North America in a second easy to use sourcebook.**
- **Predators, exotic riding animals, beasts of burden, alien horrors, giant insects and more.**
- **Notable Splugorth hunting animals.**
- **Some new creatures, but most are existing creatures.**
- **Updated information where applicable.**
- **Updated and uniform stat blocks.**
- **A map for every creature showing where it is found.**
- **Fully illustrated.**
- **Art by Chuck Walton, Siembieda, Cummings, Bradshaw, Atkins, Ashbaugh, and many others.**
- **192-224 pages – \$26.99 retail – Cat. No. 897. In production. Anticipating Rifts® Bestiary™ Volume Two to be a winter or early spring 2020 release.**

COMING! Rifts® The Disavowed™

Secrets of the Coalition States™

The Disavowed are so Top Secret that their existence is known only to a handful of the Coalition States' most elite, top echelon, with *Joseph Prosek II* the mastermind behind the Disavowed



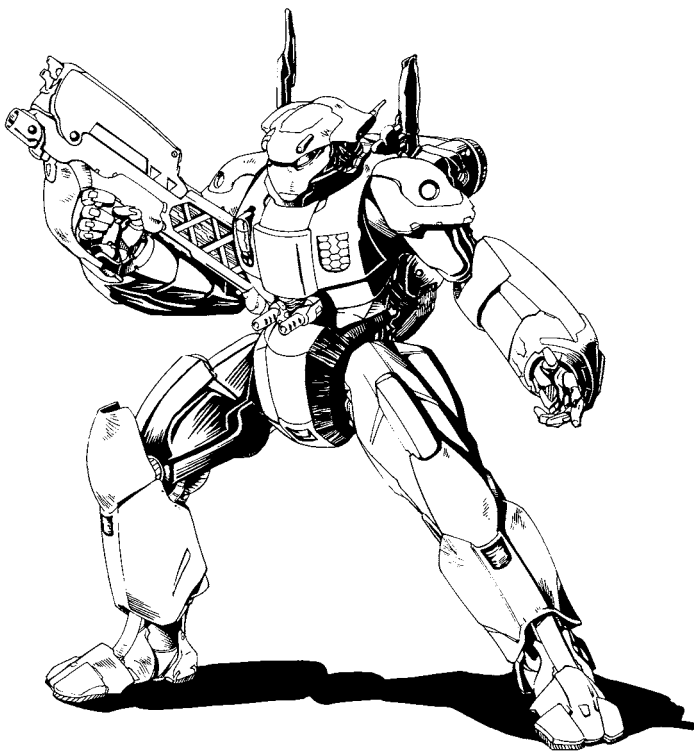
operation, and Colonel Lyboc its shadowy face. Find out who these men and women are. How the Disavowed get away with using magic, traveling to other parts of Rifts Earth and even to other dimensions in pursuit of enemies and strategic information that cannot be had through conventional means. Learn about the secret parameters in which these hard-boiled warriors, secretly hand-picked by Joseph Prosek II, operate, why almost every mission is considered a suicide mission, and why they must forever be the Disavowed.

- **CS operatives so secret that even the top military and political leaders right up to Emperor Prosek *know nothing about them*. And if they did know, would they condone their activity or condemn it?**
- **Are the Disavowed heroes or renegades? Assassins or soldiers? Madmen or super-patriots? Or a little of them all?**
- **Unsung heroes who keep the CS safe, or thugs and pawns of a shadow agency within the Coalition government?**
- **What role does the Vanguard play in this group?**
- **How do they reward their D-Bee “teammates” when the mission is over?**
- **What happens to the Disavowed when they have seen or learned too much? Adventure ideas galore and so much more.**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements.**
- **96 pages – \$17.99 retail – Cat. No. 892. Winter release.**

COMING: Rifts® Titan Robotics™

Rifts® Titan Robotics™ is another high-tech toy box presenting new types of armor, sleek power armor, giant robots, vehicles, and weapons sold by Titan Robotics. Ah, but Titan Robotics is much more than just another weapons manufacturer, it is the secret operation of ARCHIE-3 and all part of his plan to monitor and manipulate the outside world. Learn about Archie's androids that run Titan Robotics, his current schemes and plans for the future. Probably a 160 page World Book around \$22.99 retail, but may expand into 192 pages.

- **New Giant Robots.**
- **New Power Armor, equipment and accessories.**
- **30+ power armors and robots, plus other equipment.**
- **New weapons, gear and vehicles.**
- **Titan Robotics Corporation and structure.**



- Archie's secret kingdom and plans for the future.
- New O.C.C.s and key Non-Player Characters (NPCs).
- Android executives, security and much more.
- Wellington Industries, Campaign prompts and more.
- Art by Zeleznik, Walton, Cummings, Atkins, and others.
- Written by Matthew Clements and Kevin Siembieda. Cover by Zeleznik.
- 160-192 pages (tentative) – \$22.99 retail (or \$26.99) – Cat. No. 899. Fall or winter 2019 (tentative).

COMING: Rifts® Antarctica

Rifts® Antarctica is a truly compelling and exotic land beyond what anyone expects. A frozen continent transformed by the power of magic and alien wildlife. Long isolated from the rest of the world, Rifts, D-Shifting events and the threat of war have now brought the distant South Pole within reach. Probably a 160 page World Book around \$22.99 retail.

- New alien monsters and D-Bees.
- Strange new weapons and vehicles. Some left over from the Golden Age of Humanity, others completely alien.
- The Splugorth's secret outpost. More that it would seem.
- A Splugorth zoo and place of secret Bio-Wizard experiments.
- Snow and Ice Golems created specifically for the cold environment.
- Danger from Elements, Ice Witches, Icecraft, and other horrors.
- Vostok City, a city of magic carved from the ice itself.
- Cold-weather skills, technology and survival techniques.
- Ancient danger and dark secrets.
- Written by Matthew Clements, Carmen Bellaire, and Kevin Siembieda.
- 160 pages (tentative) – \$22.99 retail – Cat. NO. 898. Winter or spring release.

Back in Stock – available now

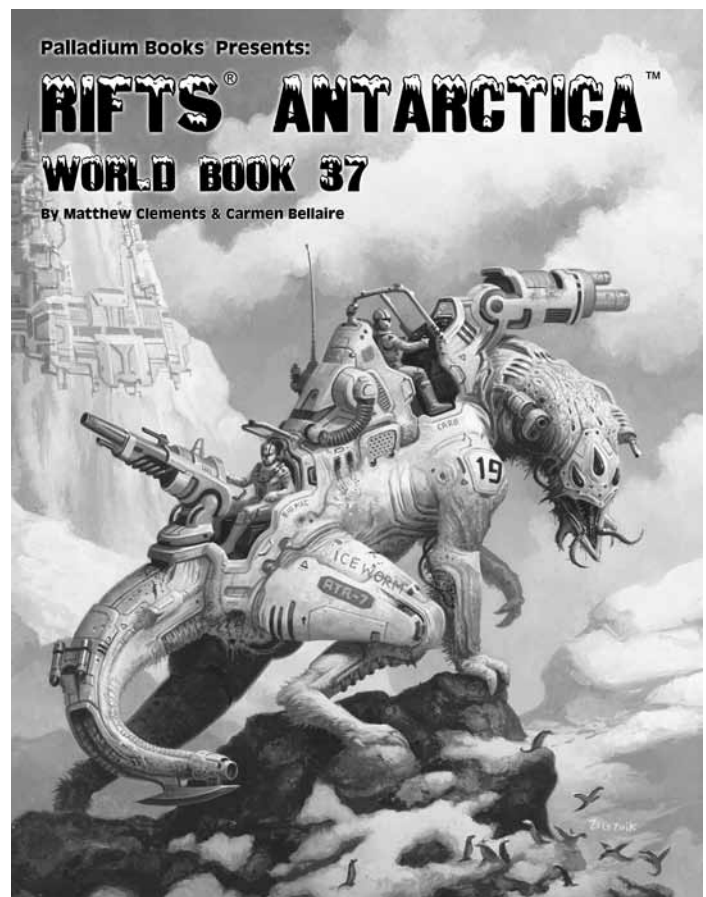
Monsters & Animals (Fantasy)

This fan favorite creature resource for the Palladium Fantasy RPG® is back in stock. 120+ monsters, 200+ animals, all described, statted, and accompanied by maps showing exactly where they can be found in the world. Classic monsters like the Chimera, Harpies, Kelpie, Pegasus, Unicorn, Werebeasts, etc., plus all kinds of unique creatures such as Bearmen, Devil Digger, Dragondactyl, Entities, Faeries, Jungle Ogre, Land Squid, Lizard Mage, Maxpary, Mummy Immortalis, Rahu-Men, Tree Eels, Waterbat, Wing Tips, and more. Plus G.M. tips and conversion notes for Mega-Damage settings.

- 120 Fantasy Monsters, easy to adapt for most settings.
- 200+ S.D.C. animals.
- Maps showing where in the Palladium World they are found.
- Conversion notes and tips. Easy to adapt to Rifts® and Phase World® (as alien creatures), Heroes Unlimited™ & other settings.
- Art by Kevin Siembieda and others.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda, Erick Wujcik and Matthew Balent.
- 240 pages – \$26.99 retail – Cat. No. 454 – Available now.

Product Note

Just because a specific title is not mentioned does not mean it is not coming out, it simply means there is nothing to report other than we are “working on it” and there is no “tentative” release date yet. We are trying not to show exact dates of releases until we feel strongly we can hit them. We are working on a vast number of projects for a large number of our game lines.



Prophet O.C.C.

Optional Material for the Palladium Fantasy RPG®

By Ian Herbert

The Prophet is a combination clergy, mystic and performer. Like the traveling priest, they roam the land preaching the word of their god in the hope of converting new followers; like the bard, they operate in the streets and parks, engaging crowds with their words; and like psi-mystics, they can communicate with the supernatural and predict the future. The Prophets see themselves as a direct line to their god. They have been chosen as the medium through which their god can speak to the mortals of the world. Unlike a priest or monk, who will usually seek actively to enter the profession and join a church, the Prophet is usually “chosen” by the god; blessed (or cursed) with divine powers almost overnight, with little or no preparation or training. The process may begin with a few strange dreams, sometimes inspirational, sometimes prophetic, but it is the will and determination to act upon these visions, and to spread the word they have been given to the world that will result in the dreamer being chosen as a Prophet. Prayers, divination and communion with the god or with spirits from the other side (assumed by the Prophet to be agents of the god) will provide the Prophet with insight and guidance. The visions are often cryptic or metaphorical; it is up to the individual Prophet to interpret them and to translate their meaning to the masses. Allegorical tales and parables often form an important part of the Prophet’s teachings, but warnings of future doom and/or promises of good fortune (provided the listener heeds the warning) will be the fundamental message in any sermon. A Prophet will usually be extremely outspoken, zealous and unwavering (stubborn!) in their beliefs.

Either roaming from town to town or perhaps setting up a regular preaching spot in a local square or park, the Prophet will broadcast his or her teachings to any and all who will listen. Often, all races and classes are considered worthy of hearing their words, though some gods have their own agenda and may reject certain peoples. Some Prophets may begin with flamboyant demonstrations of power such as levitation or healing to attract and impress a crowd before beginning their address. Many a Prophet has been dismissed by other clergy and the public as a charlatan, glory-hound, madman or drunk, but the most gifted can attract large crowds of avid listeners, many of whom return on a regular basis, eager to hear the next sermon. The most successful can even start small cults, gathering a multitude of like-minded followers. But the Prophet will rarely take time to establish a true church (although a member of the congregation might take it upon themselves or be instructed to do so); their interest is not in the organized religion of churches and temples, but the simple connection between god and man; if a listener heeds their words and acts on them, or as a result, gives small tributes and prayers to the god, then they will consider their work worthwhile.

A Prophet is usually a free agent, outside of the normal church hierarchy, and is regarded by church officials as an *un-ordained lay preacher*, that follows his own path (guided by the god or pantheon he worships). Prophets cannot perform many of the duties of a true priest, such as blessings, and they are not permitted to lead or take part in mass. Education is minimal. Actual knowledge of church doctrine and dogma is usually very limited, and many Prophets are simple folk who cannot read or write. The Prophet’s teachings are based on their own interpretation common beliefs, stories about the divine, and their own visions and dreams, which may well be at odds with that of the established churches believe and teach. Therefore, a Prophet is often rejected by the *true church* as a dissident and a radical, and in some cases may be considered a threat – to be dealt with accordingly. Those who are merely irritating may be evicted from an area (only to set up again round the corner); those who are more radi-

cal and/or more popular may find themselves targeted for stronger action as an enemy of the church.

While a Prophet will usually honor and show respect to an entire pantheon of gods (where applicable), the actual connection is established with a single god; it is from this one god that the Prophet receives his visions, and to this god that he pledges his allegiance. This is one reason why the Prophet’s words may differ from the doctrine of the church, which is usually representative of the pantheon as a whole. It could be said that, from a god’s point of view, choosing to bestow prophetic powers in this way rather than relying on conventional priesthood may seem like they are competing against themselves. However, it can be advantageous to tackle a task (in this case, gaining more worshipers) from different directions at the same time, and can be extremely useful to the god concerning elements of doctrine that it feels its church has neglected or strayed from the true path, or in areas of the world where the god has yet to gain a foothold. If nothing else, a good Prophet will certainly bring attention to the god and/or its church, and from some points of view, any publicity is good publicity.

Some renowned Prophets currently at large on the Palladium World:

- A Prophet of Sebek in the Old Kingdom said to be on a journey to the Holy City of Khemennu. Native tribes with whom he has already met disagree on their account of his race (Orc tribes claim he is an Orc, Kobolds claim he is a Kobold and so on).
- A Prophet of Wolvenar roaming the northern forests on both sides of the Disputed Lands, both to spread the word of the young god and to report any observations concerning this unstable area back to him.
- A wild-eyed Prophet of Chantico: A fanatical firebrand, currently whipping up a fury in the Free City of Troker (where organized religion is ostensibly banned).
- A Prophet of Aco: A peaceful preacher quietly and steadily attempting to re-establish praise for this well-known and respected but rarely worshiped goddess.
- And a Prophet of Tolmet touring the Western Empire, loudly prophesizing doom and destruction for the Empire wherever she goes.

Knowledge and abilities of the Prophet:

1. Special Prayers: The Prophet is almost always a lone, radical preacher, outside of the normal church hierarchy, and does not perform any of the normal services of a priest such as blessings or communion and does not lead or take part in mass or similar services. However, he may lead a group in informal prayer as part of his preaching, and do regularly pray to the god on a personal basis. The Prophet can perform the following special prayers. All prayers take one full melee to recite, and can be attempted twice per 24 hour period only:

Prayer of Divine Message: Through prayer, the Prophet communes with their chosen deity, and may be given a message through visions and dreams. As a herald for the god, this message does not usually concern the Prophet directly, but is typically intended to be relayed by the Prophet to another. The message may be intended for a companion of the Prophet, but more often it is to be imparted to an outside party, whether that be a particular person, group or faction (from a small town to an entire nation). The message may include a specific request or instruction, may be meant simply to inspire, may be an outright threat, but is often a warning, and often includes a foretelling of things to come. Such a prophecy is typically a broad, far-reaching forecast, never a specific short-term prediction such as the outcome of opening a box or entering a particular building. The Prophet automatically knows who the message is for and has a general idea of the location of the intended recipient (beyond those hills/the town of Acaba/the Golden Palace, etc.) **Success rate:** 20% +5% per additional level. However, the god will not usually burden a Prophet with more than one or two Divine Messages at any one



time. Only once the current prophecy has been delivered to its intended recipient will the god consider sending another, and even then, maybe not at all. Conversely, the Prophet may receive an unexpected Divine Message at any time, for instance while dreaming or engaged in general prayer, entirely on the initiative of the god.

Prayer of Intervention: similar in concept to that of the Priest of Light O.C.C., but with the following modifications:

- Enables the Prophet to cast any one spell that the god knows (including elemental, necromantic or other specialist magic spells) *or* can use any standard psionic ability possessed by the god (if any).

Strength, duration, damage, etc. of either is at five levels higher than the character's current level of experience, and the necessary P.P.E. or I.S.P. is supplied by the god. Success Rate: 21% +7% per additional level.

- Grants the Prophet temporary knowledge to create a magic circle or ward phrase, provided that the god has such knowledge. However, the Prophet will need to provide the required component himself (and a sacrifice, if applicable), the details of which he will not necessarily know until the prayer has been uttered. This means that it is a good idea to have a selection of common diabolism/summoning components to hand, and may require the Prophet's companions to rush around searching for a suitable sacrifice while the Prophet draws out the circle. The knowledge will last as long as is necessary to complete the drawing of the circle or ward (see Diabolist and Summoner O.C.C. descriptions), but the process must not be interrupted for more than five minutes at a time or the knowledge will fade. Strength, duration etc. of the circle or ward phrase is five levels higher than the character's current level of experience, and the necessary P.P.E. is supplied by the god. Success Rate: 18% +6% per additional level. (**Note**: The Prophet *cannot* create magic scrolls or perform super healing.)

Prayer of Inspiration: The successful utterance of this prayer serves to inspire the Prophet or those who hear it. It is essentially a simple message or speech from the god that is either received by the Prophet or is spoken through him. A personal message of inspiration can encourage the Prophet in dark or troublesome times, creating a calming effect and instilling them with confidence, providing the following bonuses: +5 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 to save vs possession and mind control, +10% to all skills, +2 to strike and +10% on all other prayers and abilities (not including miracles). Alternatively, the message of inspiration may be passed on to another individual, spoken to them by the Prophet, providing them with the same bonuses (the bonus to prayers and clerical abilities relevant only if the recipient of the message is a priest of the same god or pantheon). Speaking the word of the god to encourage and motivate a group of people provides all who hear it and wish to heed the words (to a maximum of two people per level of the Prophet's experience) with the following bonuses: +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +10% on all skills and +1 to strike. Duration: Self: 1 minute (4 melees) per level of experience, others: 2 minutes (8 melees) per level of experience. Success Rate: 21% +6% per additional level.

Prayer to Expose False Prophet: reveals and punishes those who speak untruths about the god, its Prophet or its church, or those who claim to speak the word of the god but lie or twist its words. The person preaching these untruths will be enveloped by a dark, swirling aura and buffeted by high winds (70% chance of losing balance and falling to the ground, unable to take further action). The victim's voice is magically whisked away by the winds, rendering them speechless. Above the swirling mass, a booming deific voice will be heard, denouncing the false Prophet and their words or actions. Although this could be easily dismissed as an illusion, members of the Clergy, Witches, and Psychics will instinctively recognize the great deific power involved (so it is most useful to carry out this exposé in the presence of other members of the church). After the winds and the swirling aura subside (approximately fifteen seconds), the victim will find himself unable to speak, and his voice will not return until a successful remove curse is performed. In addition, Prophets of dark gods and of evil or anarchist alignments can punish the transgressor further by inflicting curses as listed under the Priest of Darkness O.C.C. If the target makes a successful save vs magic of 14 or higher, he will still be surrounded by all the effects above, but will not lose his voice and will not succumb to any curses. Note that this prayer will function only on enemies of the god, limited to those who falsely claim to be the god's representative, those who have openly and publicly spoken untruths against the god or its church, or someone within the church who betrays it, goes against the god or lies in order to discredit the god or the Prophet for their own ends. It cannot be used on

secular or personal enemies of the Prophet, or those (such as local figures of authority) who simply dismiss, doubt or try to silence the Prophet. Range: The target must be in line of sight and no more than 60 feet (18 m) away. Success Rate: 16% +8% per additional level.

2. Miracles: The god *may* grant miracles as a result of a direct appeal by the Prophet, but this is entirely down to the discretion of the god. As the god is *usually* taking a more active interest in its Prophets, the success rate is slightly higher than the Priest of Light: equal to the Prophet's M.A. attribute number +3% per level of experience. The usual limitations regarding miracles apply. Note that while the Prophet does not learn any of the special god-specific prayers that are available to some Priests (see **Dragons & Gods™**), they *are* able to call upon any miracles unique to their particular god. The following miracles are also available. At the god's discretion, any of these miracles may also be made available to their Priests.

Miracle of Divine Power: The Prophet can call upon any one of the god's particular special powers and abilities, i.e. any of the god's prototypical deific powers or special deific powers listed under the description of the god. Any P.P.E. cost and/or body investment is supplied by the god. As usual for miracles, these are granted at the god's (Game Masters') discretion, and it is *extremely* unlikely that the god will perform any deific powers which require consumed or annihilated body investment. Even if the appeal for a miracle is successful, the god may respond with a lesser deific power rather than the one specifically requested.

Miracle of Deific Attribute: Any one of the Prophet's attributes is raised to that of the god, becomes supernatural, and can be used to astonish and captivate observers with deific demonstrations of strength, beauty, grace, genius etc. as per page 86 of the **Dragons & Gods™** sourcebook. Duration: One Minute per level of experience.

Great Miracle of Manifestation: The Prophet calls upon his god to show itself in the mortal realm to provide inspiration for its followers or instil fear in its enemies. Even if successful, the god will not usually appear directly, but in some other form recognizable to its followers: a bright light, ethereal cloud or stream of colors, a burning bush etc., or will appear to possess a nearby person or animal and speak through them. Individual gods may have their own preferred manifestations or avatars. However the god chooses to appear, it will bear a divine aura that is easy to recognize and undeniably deific. How the god reacts once it has manifested itself and what actions it will take depends on the god itself and the reasons for the Prophet's request, but the manifestation will rarely take direct action; often it will merely issue a warning or a blessing to those in its presence. Duration: Determined by the god, but rarely more than a few minutes.

Great Miracle of God's Wrath: Similar in form to the priestly miracle of control over nature, but focused on the punishment of wrongdoers. The Prophet can bring forth a terrible disaster upon those who have offended the god, whether it be a great storm, a flood, earthquake, drought, volcanic eruption (if located near an existing volcano), a disease (which may infect the people themselves, their livestock or their crops) or a swarm of insects or small animals of plague-like proportions. The God's Wrath can only be inflicted upon true enemies of the god; those who have directly mocked or fought against the god or its teachings, (not just enemies of the Prophet), and only when they have ignored a previous warning or instruction made through a divine message or manifestation. Duration: One hour per level of experience.

3. Divination: The Prophet is always someone with an innate connection to the realm of the mystical, their link with the god also enabling them to foretell the future. Through 1D4 melee rounds of prayer and meditation, the character can predict the immediate outcome of an imminent event such as opening a door, meeting with a person, etc. Visions received during the mediation will provide warnings of future events or danger in a similar manner to the psionic ability of clairvoyance. Upon meeting a person, entering an area or seeing an object, the Prophet can also sense if that particular person, place or object holds future danger or may be beneficial. Attempts at divination can only be made twice per 24 hour period. Success Rate: 21% +7% per additional level of experience.

4. Divine Sight: Enables the Prophet to detect those who may be working against the god, such as agents of other religions and supernatural creatures that may be employed by rival gods, witches and clergy. This Divine Sight allows the Prophet to see aura and see the invisible, as per the magic spells, but in addition, the Prophet can recognize from the aura whether the person is a member of the clergy, what type of clergyman they may be (priest of light, priest of darkness, witch, holy crusader, etc.) and to what god or pantheon of gods they are aligned. This is only applicable to those who have a tangible spiritual connection with a god, such as a priest or witch, not a lay preacher or other member of a religion. In addition, the Divine Sight will pick up the aura of demons, Deevils, familiars and supernatural minions of the gods, again identifying which god or demon/Deevil lord they are associated with (if any). Invisible or metamorphosed creatures may also be detected and identified by their auras. Duration: One melee round per level of experience. Success Rate: 20% +5% per additional level.

5. Divine Aura: After a few (2D4) minutes of concentration and prayer, the Prophet is surrounded by a visible aura of holy light, instilling awe in all those who see it. Whilst surrounded by the aura, the Prophet's words hold great weight, and those captivated by the light will hang on his every word. This power can be used to instil awe, trust or to terrify, to rally the people to action or to calm a madding crowd, depending on the god and the intention of the Prophet. All those within a 60 feet (18.3 m) radius who see the aura must roll over 14 to save vs magic or be captivated, listening to every word for the full duration of the Prophet's speech (unless physically removed from its radius of influence) and will respond accordingly. Note that even those who successfully save vs magic may still be impressed by the holy light and the Prophet's words (especially common folk), and may find themselves swept up by the overall response of the other people around them. Therefore, this ability is most effective when directed at a large crowd. Duration: The Divine Aura remains present for four melees per level of the Prophet, enough for a brief lecture or sermon. However, the effects of seeing the aura and hearing the words of the Prophet (awe, trust, fear, tranquillity, etc.) will persist in a diminished capacity for a further 1D4 hours. Success Rate: The Prophet cannot manifest a Divine Aura until third level of experience, at which point the success rate is 24%, +6% for each additional level thereafter.

6. Penance and Sacrifice: Through meditation, inner reflection and self-control, the Prophet can go without food or water for extended periods, the same as the Priest of Light O.C.C. Thirst can be resisted for two days per level of experience, and hunger for three days per level. In addition, the Prophet can tolerate long-term exposure to pain and discomfort. This enables him to show steadfastness in the face of adversity, enduring pain and suffering inflicted upon him by his enemies, such as beatings, public floggings, and other punishments. His refusal to give in to fear and pain serving as an inspiration to his followers. The Prophet receives a bonus to save vs pain of +2 at level one, and +1 at levels 4, 7, 11 and 15. There are also some Prophets who choose to subject themselves to pain and discomfort voluntarily as a demonstration of piousness and devotion. This most often takes the form of a self-imposed hermitage: the Prophet is able to sit, stand or lie in one position, unmoving, for days at a time, perhaps on the top of a tall pole or in a prominent location. One famous incident occurred when a Prophet lay across the road into the city of Epiphany in the Western Empire without speaking or moving for 30 days, blocking the path of an army of invading soldiers. Superstitious of moving the Prophet and invoking the wrath of his god, the army eventually turned back after their supplies had been depleted. Some Prophets willingly subject themselves to self-imprisonment, allowing themselves to be sealed within a cave or a tiny cell inside or attached to a church or other holy place, the isolation supposedly bringing them closer to their god. A few religions may follow different forms of self-inflicted suffering, from the wearing of coarse animal hair clothing or a vow to always walk barefoot to extremes such as the use of constricting bands/belts or self-flagellation. The Prophet can endure moderate to severe discomfort and pain for a period of three

days per level of experience. Intense pain such as torture or injury requires a successful save vs pain and can thereafter be tolerated for one hour per level. This ability can also be used to temporarily ignore the penalties incurred from the *Optional Minor Injury Table* on page 20 of the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**, and continue to function normally despite the serious injury. After the initial period of ignoring the injury subsides, the penalties should be applied for the remaining duration of recovery as it heals as normal. **Note:** The ability to stay stock-still for long periods also helps the Prophet to stay silent and undetected when hiding out of sight (90% chance of remaining undetected if unseen, and providing a bonus of +10% to the prowling skill, if selected).

7. Spell Casting/Psionic Powers: Prophets are endowed by their god with the ability to cast magic or to perform psionic abilities. This functions exactly like that of the priest – the Prophet does not have any knowledge of how to work magic, the abilities are granted by the god. However, because of the Prophet's special connection with their god, he is able to draw upon his deity's specific knowledge rather than the general pool of spells available to standard priests. At each level, starting at level one, the Prophet can select one spell or psionic power. Spells can be selected from any spell that is known by the god, including necromancy or other specialized magicks and elemental magic normally limited to warlocks. However, the Prophet can only choose spells up to and including his or her own level of experience. In the alternative, the Prophet can select any standard psionic power possessed by the god. Healing, physical and sensitive psionic abilities can be selected at any level; super psionics (if possessed by the god) can be selected only by Prophets of sixth level or higher.

Permanent P.P.E. base and/or I.S.P.: If the god possesses spell magic, the Prophet receives **P.P.E.:** 6D6 plus the P.E. attribute number, and 2D4 per level of experience. If the god possesses psionics, the Prophet instead has only the usual permanent P.P.E. base for their race, but is deifically imbued with Inner Strength Points: **I.S.P.:** 1D4x10 plus the M.E. attribute number, and 2D4 per level of experience. If the god has both spell casting and psionic abilities, the Prophet must choose from the start whether to focus on either magic or psionics, limiting all his subsequent selections to one or the other and gaining the relevant P.P.E. or I.S.P. as above, *or* he can opt to split his focus and mix and match their abilities, and can select either a magic spell or a psionic power at each level (one choice from either category; not both). In this case, the Prophet receives both **P.P.E.:** 4D6 plus P.E., and 1D6 per level, *and* **I.S.P.:** 4D6 plus M.E., and 1D6 per level.

Spell Strength (if applicable): 12 at level one, plus one at levels five, ten and fifteen.

Note: Gods with no spells or psionics: The Juggernaut has only two psionic abilities and no magic knowledge; Cirga the Bowman has neither. Tough luck! Prophets of these two gods and any others that lack psionic or spell-casting abilities will receive all the remaining powers, but will be unable to cast spells and have little or no psionics. They will have to rely on their other abilities.

Note: Any psionic powers and I.S.P. are bestowed by the god, and work as normal even if the Prophet is of a race not naturally able to develop psychic powers. It is also possible that a Prophet may be a natural minor or major psychic in addition to his bestowed powers. In this case, select natural psionic abilities as normal and use whichever I.S.P. base and rate of increase is higher. Prophets with deifically bestowed psionic abilities are considered a master psionic for save purposes (despite the fact that the psionic powers are bestowed): 10 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Those Prophets that split their knowledge between psionic powers and spell magic are considered major psychics: 12 or higher to save vs psionics.

8. Bonuses: +5 to save vs possession, +4 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Note: The Prophet cannot perform blessings, healing touch, exorcism, or any other abilities of the priest. The focus of the Prophet is less on protecting or serving the flock, and more on directing them to follow the correct path.

Prophet O.C.C.

Alignments: Any. The Prophet may be a gentle guide, or a fanatical, even violent zealot, depending on their disposition and that of their god.

Attribute Requirements: M.A. 10 and M.E. 9 or higher.

O.C.C. Skills:

Public Speaking (+20%)

Languages: Native 98% plus two of choice (+20%).

Lore: Religion (+12%)

Lore: One of choice (+10%).

Land Navigation (+10%)

Dowsing (+5%)

W.P.: One of choice.

Hand to Hand: Basic (may be changed to Expert at the cost of two other skills, or to Martial arts or Assassin at the cost of four other skill selections).

O.C.C. Related Skills: Select six other skills from the following list at level one, plus one at levels three, six, nine and thirteen. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%).

Domestic: Any (+5%).

Espionage: Imitate Voices & Impersonation only.

Horsemanship: General and Exotic only.

Medical: Animal Husbandry and First Aid only.

Military: None.

Physical: Any except Acrobatics, Gymnastics and Wrestling.

Rogue: Any (+5% to Streetwise only).

Science: Maths: Basic and Anthropology only.

Scholar/Technical: Any (+8%).

Weapon Proficiencies: Any except Siege Weapons.

Wilderness: Carpentry, Identify plants & fruits and Wilderness survival only.

Secondary Skills: Select five additional skills from the above list at level one, plus one at levels two, five, eight and twelve. Usual restrictions regarding secondary skills apply.

Starting Equipment: Two sets of clothes (ceremonial or preaching clothes are likely to be simply the same as the character's ordinary traveling clothes), traveling robe (with or without hood), hat or skullcap, cloth or rope belt, a pair of sturdy walking shoes, a pair of soft shoes or sandals, bedroll, backpack, one medium-sized sack, 1D4+1 small sacks, a water skin, a holy symbol of the Prophet's god or pantheon, a wooden cross, 30 feet (9.1 m) of rope, a tinder box, a wooden bowl and cutlery, and food rations for 1D4 weeks.

Armor: Starts with padded quilt armor (A.R.: 8, S.D.C.: 15) or soft leather (A.R.: 10, S.D.C.: 20).

Weapons: Most Prophets are not warriors, but the dangers of traveling in the wilderness and unfriendly towns are unavoidable, so it is often necessary to arm themselves for defense. Starts with one weapon of choice. Most often this is a fairly non-threatening looking weapon, such as a staff or stick, or one small enough to hide under their robes, to avoid coming off as aggressive or provoking local trouble. Prophets who follow the more militaristic or violent gods may choose *two* weapons of any type.

Money: The simple, itinerant life led by many Prophets coupled with the focus on their god's work often makes it difficult for them to amass any significant amounts of money. The character starts with 100 in gold. Although the Prophet is not affiliated with any church, some may donate a portion of their earnings to a church that is dedicated to the same god, *if* they are on good terms. More often they will independently make donations to charitable works in the name of their god.

Half-Ogres or “Hogres”

Optional Material for the Palladium Fantasy RPG®

By Ian Herbert

Ogres are known throughout the Palladium World to be belligerent, aggressive and brutal creatures, prone to violence and delighting in bloodshed. They are primal beings driven by emotion, and perhaps do not share the same moral values as humans and the more “civilized” races. However, few can deny that there is one all-too-common Ogre practice that is abhorrent by almost any standard. Ogres have a long history of abducting human women and forcing themselves on them for use as “breeding stock.” The Ogre race is beset by some kind of genetic defect that causes many female Ogres to be born sterile and therefore unable to reproduce. Humans are apparently related closely enough to Ogres to be able to reproduce with them and bear viable offspring. This is the reason Ogres so often target human settlements, seizing women from their homes and dragging them back to their strongholds. A fate many would regard as worse than death. The result of a union between Ogre and human is always considered to be an Ogre, regardless of any mixed parentage. It seems that the Ogre is extremely genetically vigorous; a “half-breed” Ogre appears virtually identical to a purebred Ogre. Or, perhaps, as some scholars propose, after millennia of cross-breeding with humans, there are no “pure” Ogres left on the Palladium World at all, and the Ogres we see today all have a significant amount of human blood in their veins.

One piece of evidence that points to this is the emergence of a subspecies of Ogre, commonly known as “Half-Ogres” or “Hogres.” The Hogre appears to be a cross between a true Ogre and a human; not one or the other, but somewhere in-between. There may be no perfect demarcation line indicating what counts as an Ogre, Hogre or human (perhaps an Ogre who is short of stature, or with fairly low P.S. and P.E. attributes or a relatively high P.B. might have more human blood in him, who knows?), but there are a few pointers that marks one out as a Hogre, the most obvious being a significantly reduced height and weight, complexion and hair color, and the possible presence of psionic abilities.

Hogres are dismissed as some sort of mutation or “defective” Ogre, and on rare occasions, may spontaneously appear in any Ogre population (though always to a human parent). However, the majority of Hogre emergences occur amongst Ogre populations that have been cut off from other Ogre tribes, isolated from their fellows and forced to rely on the kidnaping of human females to a greater degree than most. Over centuries, their genetic pool is “watered down” by the human breeding stock, eventually resulting in a high proportion of Hogre births. Female Hogres suffer from some of the same sterility issues as Ogres, but to a much lesser degree, and are therefore able to breed more successfully (whether with Ogres, fellow Hogres, or humans), furthering the growth of the Hogre population in an Ogre community. Once these rare Hogre populations become established, they may overtake and subsume their Ogre forebears, especially if they continue to use human breeding stock. As normally occurs with Ogres and humans, a child born of Hogre and human parents has all the attributes of a Hogre; a child of Ogre and Hogre parentage may appear to be a Hogre or a “normal” Ogre (the likelihood is dependent on the genetic lineage of the Ogre in question), but note that any subsequent children born of such an Ogre with a human or Hogre partner is much more likely to result in another Hogre.



However, the unexpected birth of a “Hogre” in an Ogre tribe is rarely greeted with joy. Ogres consider them to be weaklings; a mutation or tainted creature worthy of contempt. Many Hogre babies are killed at birth (if it is immediately apparent that the child is a Hogre). The Hogre’s father (they are typically the result of a union between a male Ogre and a female human) rarely mourns this loss – siring a Hogre child is a stain on his own masculinity; if he gave rise to such a weak, damaged creature others must question his own strength, virility and “Ogre-ness.” Fathers are often the first to dispense with their Hogre child, hopefully before anyone else can discover his “shame.” Sometimes, the child’s true heritage is not clear until he or she is a few years old, at which point the young Hogre is typically cast out alone in the wilderness to die. At times, the Hogre’s father refuses to exile his child, preferring to raise it anyway, intending to prove that the child can be as tough and strong as any other Ogre. If successful, this may help to restore the father’s reputation. These Hogres typically experience a tough childhood even by Ogre standards, bullied by their peers and under immense pressure from their fathers, motivated by frequent beatings and punished for the slightest failure. Other Hogre children may be disowned by their fathers, but not exiled from the tribe, left to fend for themselves in the Ogre encampment, subject to persecution by all members of the tribe; living like dogs, scavenging or begging for scraps – a situation perhaps even more deadly than being abandoned in the wilderness. Any Hogre child who makes it to adulthood within an Ogre tribe is either extremely tough, extremely clever or extremely lucky.

Hogres have been born into, or have come to, human settlements. There have been more than a few occasions over the centuries where human soldiers have mounted full-scale attacks upon Ogre encampments in an attempt to drive out the monsters, and to rescue the human they take as breeding stock (and food stock!), freeing women who are already pregnant by their Ogre captors. While many women choose not to allow such a pregnancy to progress to full term, and to even kill the baby after it is born, others go full term and keep their child, despite the life of ridicule he or she is likely to suffer among humans and Ogres both. Though it is not spoken of in polite company, such births of Half-Human/Half-Ogres have resulted in the human world discover the existence of *Hogres*. And as curious humans are bound to do, scholars, slavers and others have studied and learned more about these half-breeds. A few kindly and reasonable souls (some would say misguided) take pity on the Hogres, seeing them merely as victims of a terrible crime and unfortunate circumstance, and attempt to show the world that Hogres can be educated and civilized the same as any full-blooded a human. That Hogres are not stupid monsters, but able to learn skills and the morals and values of human society. Some of these charitable folks are scholarly types out to prove a point. Some are Healers or holy men with a genuine concern for the off-spring of humans and Ogres. In other cases, the Hogre becomes a novelty – a side-show or circus freak – patronized by their human contemporaries and treated more like a dumb animal, pet or mascot than a human being. In too many other cases, they are reviled as freaks or monsters – more Ogre and beast than human – by the humans and other people whom they must live among. That included Elves, Dwarves, Changelings, and most other people. A Hogre’s unfortunate human mother (or father) may be able to love the child as her own, regardless of its origin, or she may see nothing but a monster forced upon her in an ugly act of violence – the end result of the living hell she has been forced to endure.

Other Hogres have been known to approach human or mixed racial communities in search of a place they can fit in, even if its as a second-class citizen. Such Hogres have probably been exiled or ostracized by their Ogre kin who see them as weak or just as much a freak in their society and do other people. They seek out the human world in the vain hope that they will be accepted by the people of their other side of their lineage. The Hogres are typically as well received by their human kinfolk as their Ogre ones – most people view the creatures as “abominations” or “monsters” as bad as Ogres themselves. Though a few lucky ones may get the chance to prove themselves, finding work as manual laborers for a few pennies and a bed of straw in the barn. Like Orcs and *other monsters*, Hogres may well be seized and put to work as slaves. Many

slave owners care little about what races comprise their workforce, and Hogres are known to have strong backs. It’s sad, but few people perceive the Hogre as being “human.” Those who do, may assign them the better jobs or positions of greater responsibility in recognition of their superior human heritage. There have even been rumors of slave owners who have taken a liking to a Hogre slave or servant and given him or her a place of authority over other slaves, and even the household. There are also whispered rumors of humans who have formed romantic relationships with them. However, such love affairs are kept secret because any man or woman found to be having relations with a Hogre is likely to be met with scorn and ridicule even in the most progressive of human, Elf or Dwarf societies.

Young Hogres have it easier than adults. Those who reach adulthood clearly exhibit their Ogre lineage, and may find life in the world of Ogres or humans cruel and unbearable. Many strike out on their own. **Independent Hogres** often find work as mercenaries, hired thugs and bandits, just like their fellow Ogres, Orcs and other members of the so-called “Monster Races,” they find themselves working under the yoke of powerful and often evil masters. Like their Ogre cousins, Hogres have a natural talent for animal training and hunting, and can make decent Rangers, scouts and handlers of livestock. Most are less aggressive than Ogres, and smarter than Orcs, able to work well as part of a team – so long as they feel they are receiving their dues and their fair share of the spoils. Having likely experienced a life of exclusion, resentment, torment and victimization, itinerant Hogres are often searching for their place in the world, eager to find acceptance wherever they can. In this way, they are usually willing to work with all kinds of people and races. However, there are just as many Hogres who have learned the hard way that the only way to survive is to be as tough and ruthless as everyone else, and as evil and cruel, if not more so, as any wicked full-blood Ogre.

Where there is a relatively high number of Hogres in one place, they may band together to form small, independent communities of their own. Although it might make more sense to settle down far away from Ogre settlements, they are often located close by, allowing the Hogres to actively seek out others of their kind whenever they are expelled from or leave an Ogre tribe; rescuing abandoned children and raising them as their own. This is especially true of those Hogre females who are unable to have children of their own. However, living this close to Ogres can be dangerous, as the Ogres (if they discover the existence of the Hogre community) will typically view them as just another local people to take advantage of, ransacking their stores and seizing their livestock (but not their women), just as they would human settlements. Where they are able, Hogres tend to live the same aggressive manner, having learned their way of life from the Ogre tribes from whence they came, supplementing their farming and hunting by raiding whoever seems weak enough. However, they tend to be a bit less brutal and merciless than Ogres. Though they are fierce warriors and show little mercy to rivals fighting in defense of their lands, they are less likely to engage in needless destruction or slaughter of innocents. Some Hogre communities continue the practice of kidnapping human women, some do not. The enslaved women are generally treated better than they would be by true Ogres (as if anyone could consider imprisonment and rape acceptable treatment). Hogres recognize their human origins and in their own twisted way, feel that they show respect to their captives. Some human women may even rise to (unofficial) positions of influence in a Hogre tribe, especially if considered a “favorite” of a high-ranking male, or whose Hogre children rise to a position of power themselves. Some human-born Hogres become very attached to their human mothers – though it must be stated that none of this in any way justifies the horrific acts that brought them into existence. The Palladium World can be a harsh and savage land, very different from our modern world. In contrast, there exist tiny Hogre villages whose inhabitants chose a different path: a solitary existence, living off the land and hunting for food far from the Ogres that may harm them or the humans that fear them, making do with what they have despite the hardships they may endure and the difficulties in fostering the next generation, finding contentment only in the company of their own kind.

Hogres are still very rare, and many scholars believe them to be either a myth or the result of a rare mutation and nothing more. Others predict a future where the Hogre will eventually replace the Ogre completely; as the centuries pass, perhaps we are witnessing the death of the Ogre as a race and the rise of the Hogre. And then what? Such scholars rarely predict the same fate for humans! Even if this were true, such a thing is far off into the future, especially given the difficulty most Hogres face in surviving to adulthood. Only in those isolated Hogre settlements do they thrive, but in tiny numbers, with the ever-present threat of a human attack wiping them out completely.

The Hogre as a player character. It is perhaps unsurprising that a good proportion of Hogres choose to strike out on a life of adventure. With nowhere they can really call home and no one who will accept them as kin, joining up with a mercenary group or some rough-and-ready adventuring types might be the best place to find acceptance. A Hogre player character is likely to be someone who has experienced difficulties in Ogre or human society (or both) and has chosen or been forced to leave in search of a better life. Hogres are so rare that most people have not even heard of them, and they may be dismissed as a funny-looking Orc, a big ugly human, a short Ogre or perhaps some unfamiliar race from a foreign land. If the Hogre tries to explain their true heritage to a human, they may be met with sympathy or (more often) revulsion – many people find it repugnant that their blood can be mixed with “monstrous beasts.” Most folks tend to assume the character will be dim-witted based on their brutish appearance. Ogres who recognize what the character is are likely to be at the very least, verbally aggressive if not physically, if only to prove their own toughness in the face of what many Ogres consider to be an embarrassment to their race. Orcs, Goblins, Wolfen and other monster races are more likely to accept a Hogre, caring less about their origin, just happy enough that the Hogre looks sufficiently monstrous to be “one of them.”

Hogres are slightly larger than many other humanoid races, and require around 50-100% more food than a human – problematic, but not as challenging as an Ogre or troll. Likewise, they are generally able to make do with human-sized furniture, tools and other implements with only a little inconvenience, and should be able to fit into most ordinary buildings (though they probably have to duck under a lot of doors!). Any Hogre seven feet tall or more can be considered “giant-sized” and may use giant-sized weapons that deal an additional die of damage. However, like Ogres, being larger than most humans but smaller than true giants (and smaller even than Ogres, Trolls, Wolfen, and other “giant-sized” beings), it is likely to be difficult to find suitable sized weapons, armor, clothing and other items. For this reason, Hogres often take to using large branches or lengths of wood as clubs, or fashioned into simple spears. Being not *too* much larger than humans and Orcs, Hogres may be able to find simple clothes such as cloaks, kilts and robes to fit, but obtaining shirts, breeches, boots and other fitted garments is more challenging. Most find they can use human or Orc sized hafted weapons such as clubs, maces and axes, or spears, staves, and pole-arms, without too much trouble, but find it more difficult to hold human-sized swords and daggers in their big, beefy hands. Unless the Hogre is less than seven feet tall, bows generally have to be custom made. The following penalties apply when a Hogre of seven feet tall or more attempts to use human-sized swords, knives and other tools: -2 to strike and parry, and -10% to the appropriate skill(s).

Half-Ogres or “Hogres”

Alignment: Lean towards the selfish alignments: anarchist and unprincipled, but are typically found to be anarchist or evil like their Ogre cousins. However, player characters may be unprincipled, aberrant or even good. A Hogre’s early life will have considerable bearing on their alignment.

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6, M.E. 3D6, M.A. 2D6+1, P.S. 3D6+5, P.P. 3D6, P.E. 3D6+3, P.B. 2D6+2, Spd 3D6.

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

S.D.C.: 15 plus those gained from O.C.C.s and physical skills.

Average P.P.E.: 2D6

O.C.C.s Available to Hogres: Any, without restriction. However, the O.C.C. chosen will usually reflect the character’s upbringing: those raised as part of an Ogre clan or tribe are likely to choose similar O.C.C.s to their Ogre peers, leaning towards men-at-arms O.C.C.s, preferring to fight and conquer rather than learn a trade. Those who were expelled from their tribe are likely to be a Vagabond, Thief, Mercenary, Ranger or perhaps a Druid or Witch. And those raised by humans may learn a range of occupations depending on their parentage and environment, but still have a natural tendency towards men-at-arms O.C.C.s, while others may have been denied the opportunity to be anything more than a peasant.

O.C.C. Skill Notes: In addition to other O.C.C. and related skills, any character raised as part of an Ogre or Hogre tribe (even if they left or were expelled later in life) automatically gets the following skills: Recognize Weapon Quality (+10%), Falconry (+10%), and Animal Husbandry (+10%). Those raised by humans do not receive these skills automatically, but do receive a bonus to these three skills if any are chosen as part of their O.C.C.

O.C.C. Related or Secondary skill selections: +5% in addition to any O.C.C. and other skill bonuses.

Horror Factor: The level of Horror Factor is dependent on the Hogre’s size – larger Hogres are more scary, equal to a Horror Factor of 1 for each full foot of height; i.e. a Hogre 6 feet to 6 feet, 11 inches tall has a Horror Factor of 6, a Hogre 7 feet to 7 feet, 11 inches tall has a Horror Factor of 7, and a Hogre 8 feet (2.4 m) tall has a Horror Factor of 8.

Physical Appearance: Large, hairy, muscular humanoids with enlarged canine teeth (top and bottom) and sharp fingernails. Their complexion is a dull tan color. Dark eyes, dark brown or red hair.

Size: 6-8 feet tall (1.8 to 2.4 m); 6 feet plus 4D6 additional inches. Any Hogre 7 feet tall or more can be considered “giant-sized” and may use giant-sized weapons that deal an additional die of damage.

Weight: 200 to 300 pounds (90 to 135 kg).

Average Life Span: 60+ years; some have lived up to 100.

Natural Abilities: Limited Nightvision 30 feet (9.1 m) and excellent day vision (equal to a human).

Bonuses: +1 to save vs Horror Factor. The fingernails are sharp and wicked-looking, but are not true claws, and inflict only normal punch damage (1D4 damage +P.S. bonus). A bite inflicts 1D6+1 damage but no P.S. bonus is applicable.

Magic: By O.C.C. only.

Psionics: Ogres (even those with mixed parentage) cannot naturally develop psionic powers, but a few Hogres do have this capability, presumably due to their stronger human heritage. Psychic powers are a possibility but are relatively rare. Roll percentile: 01-05% major psionics, 06-15% minor psionics, 16-00% no psionics. Also, a psychic Hogre has less I.S.P. than most: those with minor psionics have only M.E.+2D4 I.S.P., plus 1D4 I.S.P. per level of experience, and those with major psionics have only M.E.+3D6 I.S.P., plus 1D6 per level of experience. Hogre player characters may select a master psionic P.C.C., but will receive 20% less base I.S.P. than normal for that class (roll for I.S.P. as normal, and then deduct 20% from that total) and 20% less I.S.P. for each additional level of experience. Powers are standard. Note that because pure Ogres are unable to develop psionic powers themselves, psychic Hogres are often considered to be freaks or mutants (even more so than normal Hogres), and most Ogres and even other Hogres view them with suspicion and mistrust. Many psychic Hogres are driven from their tribes, or choose to leave as a result of the harassment they receive from their fellow tribesmen.

Enemies: Hogres are somewhat of an enigma, fitting in with neither their Ogre nor human progenitors. In general, most other races consider them to be merely another type or subspecies of Ogre, and treat them accordingly. Therefore, Elves, Dwarves, Gnomes, and most humans are considered natural enemies.

Allies: Although their strongest associations tend to be with their Ogre cousins, most Ogres look down on Hogres as weak, puny or tainted versions of Ogres, and treat them worse than Goblins. Trolls and true

giants tend to share this attitude, but are happy to lord it over Hogres, employing them as minions when convenient. Orcs that are part of Ogre tribes (as the ones most likely to encounter Hogres) generally follow the Ogres' lead and join them in their harassment of Hogres, but Orcs, Goblins, and other monster races who encounter independent Hogres are more likely to become allies. Generally indifferent to Wolfen, Kobolds, and Troglodytes. Some humans consider Hogres to be merely the unfortunate victims of horrific Ogre violence, and seek to aid them, even bringing them into human society, but most humans are wary or even frightened by the big, primitive-looking creatures, unable to see past their Ogre origins.

Habitat: Found in or near any areas where Ogres can be found in small numbers. Hogres tend to emerge from small, isolated Ogre tribes that, for whatever reason, have been forced to rely more and more on kidnapped human women for breeding stock. Such places may include small Ogre enclaves within large human kingdoms such as the *Western Empire* or *Eastern Territory*, or on remote islands. Although all Ogres experience the same problems with sterility amongst their people, where there are opportunities for populations to mix and interbreed between tribes, this appears to help retain their "Ogre-ness" to a greater degree. The same goes for Ogre settlements that are far from human populations and are therefore, unable to rely on human abduction to keep their numbers up. Therefore, Hogres are much rarer amongst the Ogre populations of the *Yin-Sloth Jungles*, *Baalgor Wastelands*, and *Old Kingdom Mountains*. The Ogres of the *Silver Range Mountains* and the part of the *Old Kingdom Mountains* that borders the *Timiro Kingdom* are a special case, comprising a number of large Ogre tribes in one area, but having survived for millennia by raiding the human kingdom in the lands below. For this reason, there tends to be more "spontaneous" Hogle emergence here, where a union between a human woman and a male Ogre with an unwittingly human-centric lineage results in a Hogle child. These Hogres are most likely to find themselves alone amongst a population of Ogres, living a life of hardship and mistreatment, or abandoned by their tribe. Some of these displaced Hogres have banded together to form tiny, independent Hogle tribes, hiding themselves from both Ogres and humans.

Favorite Weapons: Large clubs, maces, axes and spears, mainly for the reasons mentioned previously. Spears are a favorite hunting weapon.

Other notes:

1. **May worship** the gods of their Ogre or human parents (if any) or none at all. Druidism is becoming popular among those communities that live in isolation in the wild. Evil gods and demons offer a tempting path for anyone who has been mistreated by their own people, be they humans or Ogres.

2. **Often forced by circumstance** to sell their services as mercenaries, hired thugs or laborers. May be willing to work for or with any races in order to make a living.

3. **Can wear any type of armor**, provided it can be found in their size. Most prefer a simple surcoat of chain mail or double-mail, or leather armor, as it enables them to stay quiet while hunting game.

4. **Can learn any skill** a human or Ogre can – education depends largely on where and how they were raised.

5. **Tends to view all other races with suspicion.** Finds it difficult to fit in and to find their place in the world among any group of people.

6. **Less belligerent and competitive than Ogres.** May work well in a group so long as the Hogle feels accepted by the other members of the group and is receiving their rightful recognition, respect, and share of loot and supplies. Hogres are happy and cooperative when treated like an equal, not a second class citizen or worse.

Designer's Note: Although the Palladium Fantasy RPG has generally been ill-disposed towards hybrid or "half-races" as a whole, I always thought there was potential in expanding on the one "half-race" that exists in Palladium canon – the Ogre-human hybrid. The fact that such a creature is essentially just another Ogre felt like a missed opportunity. It is true that too many interbreeding races

and half-breeds could make game play needlessly complicated and messy, but having just the one provides an opportunity to create a different kind of character with a unique background. I hope that players will enjoy exploring such a character and how they balance their two worlds. Secondly, the most common "monster races" such as Orcs and Goblins are quite restricted with regards to the O.C.C.s they are able to select. In order to play a "subhuman" race that is (for the most part) more than a Warrior, Thief or Witch, one must choose to be a giant, Troll, Wolfen or Ogre – races that can be problematic or unsuitable for use in some campaigns due to their huge size and other issues (depending on the setting and the Game Master). I believe the Half-Ogre provides the flexibility to explore careers and ambitions not available to an Orc, but without the obstacles that can come from playing a Troll or giant. It is my hope that the Half-ogre or "Hogle" fills a useful niche in the current inventory of player races, and provides players with enjoyable new opportunities for character development and role-playing. Enjoy. Game on!

Operation Minotaur

An Adventure for Beyond the Supernatural™

By Hendrik Härterich

Think Indiana Jones meets The Dirty Dozen on a horror trip and you are in the right frame of mind to G.M. this adventure. Follow me back to the war-torn 1940s with an evil greater than many supernatural enemies, dark secrets and a mystery worthy of a tall tale.

Introduction

Operation Minotaur was conceived as a 4-6 hour gaming one-shot for the Palladium Open House 2012 and designed to showcase one of the many options of how to play Beyond the Supernatural ("BtS"). Contrary to the far more frequent mystery or detective type BtS game, this adventure offers an action packed and epic fight of good versus evil against the historical backdrop of World War II.

Like many motion pictures, as diverse as for example Raiders of the Lost Ark, Hogan's Heroes or Captain Corelli's Mandolin, this adventure makes use of stereotypes for easy conveyance of flair. If you do not like them or they have the wrong feel for you: change them! None of the stereotypes employed are meant to reduce anyone to an unhappy extract.

The adventure you find here is more filled out than its open house version was; likely, you will not have the same time constraints at home as you would when playing at a convention. At the end of this article, you will also find some ideas for further adventures and tips on how to turn the adventure into a whole campaign, **To New Horizons**. However, you might have other good reasons to play a tight game of about 5 hours; for example, you may want to showcase BtS to your group. To help you with that I have designated several encounters as "optional" – drop those to speed the game up.

Operation Minotaur is perfectly suited for female characters. Just because women usually were not part of the army in WW2, do not let yourself be confused by this. Hundreds of thousands of women served valiantly on all sides, some in irregular roles, such as agents or in the



various resistance groups, but also in combat roles in some armies. For example, for the Red Army read up on Lyudmila Mikhailovna Pavlichenko, a Soviet sniper who earned the nickname “Lady Death.” That said, as the game centers around a group of British Special Operations Executive (SOE) agents, the SOE had about 50 female agents of various nationalities, such as Noor Inayat Khan, Krystyna Skarbeck, Virginia Hall whom the Gestapo considered “the most dangerous of all Allied spies,” and Odette Hallowes. As a non-army background, war correspondent is a great choice, and there were several female war correspondents in the thick of it, such as the phenomenal Margaret Bourke-White. For the admittedly scant German resistance see the German White Rose group and one of my personal heroes: Sophia Scholl.

The characters are a (very!) special task force sent on a reconnaissance mission into Axis occupied Crete. For better immersion and verisimilitude I have given my best effort to embed the unreal into real events, but nothing in here is any more real than the story of Raiders of the Lost Ark. Suspend disbelief and enjoy!

Quick Start

If you want to jump [pun intended] right into the action skip playing the **Orders in Aldershot** chapter and start with **Parachuting into Crete**. I suggest then you simply do the following before you start your game: send out the ops order (**Handout 3**) to the players in advance, only to the captain if you want to make this more interesting and more military-like, and set the scene as a G.M. flashback monologue, e.g. “*You are in a military transport plane, all geared up, the engines roar, and the jump light turns on red, when you remember what General Montgomery said to you...*”

Especially, however, if you want to adapt existing characters I suggest playing out the **Setting the Stage/Welcome to the Army** sub-chapter below as it will give you essential information for adapting characters to the setting.

BtS Flair Info

Throughout the adventure, you will find “BtS Flair Info” several times. There I will give you some hints to increase the BtS flair for this game, such as whether a location is a good spot for certain P.C.C. special abilities to kick in, what it might show, etc. BtS demands quite a bit of work from the G.M. as they have to monitor all automatic abilities, but it pays off as it helps to build tension and slowly and threateningly draw open the curtain for the supernatural! The “boss fight” is not the goal, the goal is to give the players goosebumps already on the way into the supernatural. Keep that in mind especially for a wartime scenario. It is all too easy to focus on the action and soldiering aspect of the game – which is also fun – but to forget that it is a horror game. That said, I will also recommend *Proximity to the Supernatural* levels at certain stages of the game as part of the BtS Flair Info.

Setting the Stage

In this chapter there is more detailed background information on the situation of the Second World War as it is when the adventure starts and how characters with knowledge of the supernatural can be tied in.

Storm of Steel

Dark days are upon you and it seems that only worse lie ahead. It is the summer of 1941, the 18th of June to be precise. The Second World War is raging. The nations of the world have clad themselves in steel. Blood is spilled on many fronts, and a storm of lead has been unleashed, unparalleled by anything in human history. It is not a good war for the Allies so far. The Axis has triumphed again and again. France has been overrun last summer, German troops paraded in triumph on the Champs-

Élysées in Paris only a year ago. Britain is battered but resilient. It survived the terrible thrashing of Dunkirk and won the Battle of Britain on the last tether. Poland has ceased to exist, again. Spain is fascist but remains “neutral.” Italy is fascist and allied with the Third Reich. Europe is very much under the sway of the Nazis and their evil empire.

During the last few weeks, in the terrible Battle of Crete, the important Mediterranean nexus has been taken out of British hands. German and Italian troops have taken command of the Island at considerable cost, but resistance there is now virtually non-existent. Since 4pm on 17th June, it has been also clear that Operation Battleaxe has failed. The goal of this ambitious campaign in Africa had been to clear eastern Cyrenaica (basically Libya) of German and Italian forces. This would have had the benefit of lifting the siege from the important city of Tobruk. The Mediterranean theater, including Northern Africa, is embattled but for now the Axis has the upper hand.

In terms of military power, the “Allies” essentially consists of only Britain and its Commonwealth troops. The USA has not yet joined the war and is officially neutral although it supplies Britain. Churchill works very hard to convince the USA to get into the war. The general public and many politicians are opposed to engaging in another war but President Roosevelt is covertly preparing his country by strengthening military training and purchasing. The Soviet Union has not joined the fight against Hitler’s Germany and its allies, but has made a pact to divide Eastern Europe between the Third Reich and itself. There is every sign that the Third Reich has set its sights on its partner Russia next. This may bring Russia into the war siding with the Allies or at least drawing German attention away from Britain. Behind closed doors, some in the Soviet Union see that they need to start cooperating with the Allies. Yet, as it stands, the freedom of the world and the defense against fascism rests squarely on the shoulders of the British Commonwealth and it is definitely not looking up for the Allies at the moment.

German science is at the forefront of technological development. Rumors abound of “secret weapons of the Luftwaffe.” If rumors were not bad enough, British Intelligence has unearthed actual evidence that the Germans are developing some remote-controlled aircraft and there is a secret project called “Far-fire.” By craft and luck, Britain has cracked the Enigma cipher and gathers intelligence successfully in the more traditional manner despite robust efforts of the German counter-intelligence service. Britain gets much valuable data out of the German communications, much of it is disconcerting but at least Britannia is not blind.

Britain is desperate, but not without ideas. Churchill endorsed the idea to form a special force in July 1940, which became famous under the name Special Operations Executive (SOE) and takes a leaf from Irish guerrilla tactics in the 1920s. The SOE works in small units, sometimes operatives work alone and are tasked with infiltration, subversion, sabotage behind enemy lines, assassination – such as the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague – espionage, and building up resistance networks and local guerrilla units, such as in Crete or occupied France. Likewise, the first British Commando units were formed in June 1940 and tasked with coastal raiding and all sorts of special operations as well as being used as assault infantry; the so-called Layforce is one of the first examples of such units.

Strange & Disconcerting Intelligence

An English SOE agent on Crete – perhaps John Smith-Hughes, described later in this adventure – has radioed a strange and rather disconcerting message a few days ago:

“HUN DIG EAST CRETE STOP AHNENERBE SS COMPOUND AT KATO ZAKROS STOP HORRIBLE SCREAMS AT NIGHT STOP SECRET WEAPON PROJECT”

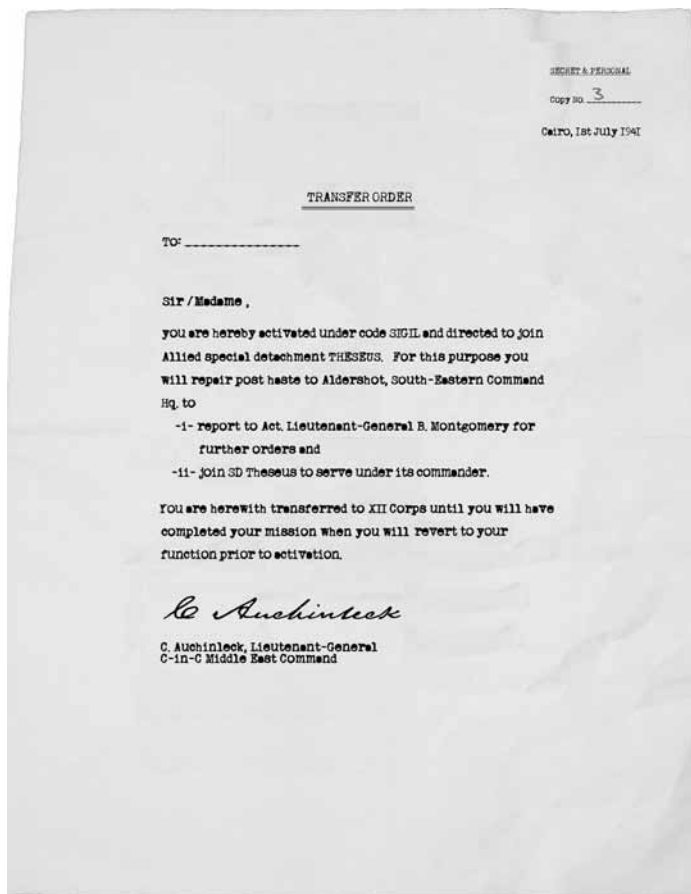
Maybe this message would not have raised more than an eyebrow under normal circumstances, but considering the state of the war for the Allies, Britain has to do absolutely anything possible to deny every further advantage to the Axis. Some very strange intelligence about an occult Ahnenerbe Project Wiedergänger was gained. “Wiedergänger,” a term from German and Nordic mythology, meaning literally “he-who-walks-back,” i.e. from

death to (un-)life, and referring to an immensely strong undead being, seems to indicate that either Ahnenerbe is working on the dead or to make the living more resilient. Either way, the Allies do not need even better or more German soldiers, either alive or as the walking dead.

Task Force “O”

Unbeknownst to most people, even those within SOE, Churchill has charged SOE command to identify “special talent” to build up a task force to fight the occult. To be sure, most members of government, if they know about it at all, do not take this effort seriously but Churchill never was a man to heed what others think. He knows that the Nazis delve into the occult and on the off-chance that “the Hun is onto something we don’t understand, we need to learn to combat it.”

When the psychologists of SOE found inexplicably and uncannily talented people among those applying for SOE, they were trained and flagged for later “Task Force O” use. While that task force has never been set up fully, there is data on soldiers and civilians eyed by SOE, within and without the Commonwealth, and even from Russia and the US, to be recruited for “O.” Those eyed for “O” have received basic parachute infantry training and SOE training months ago. The failure rate for those tested for SOE was very high and those who failed were sequestered for several months. The party will consist of men and women who have successfully braved this challenging crucible.



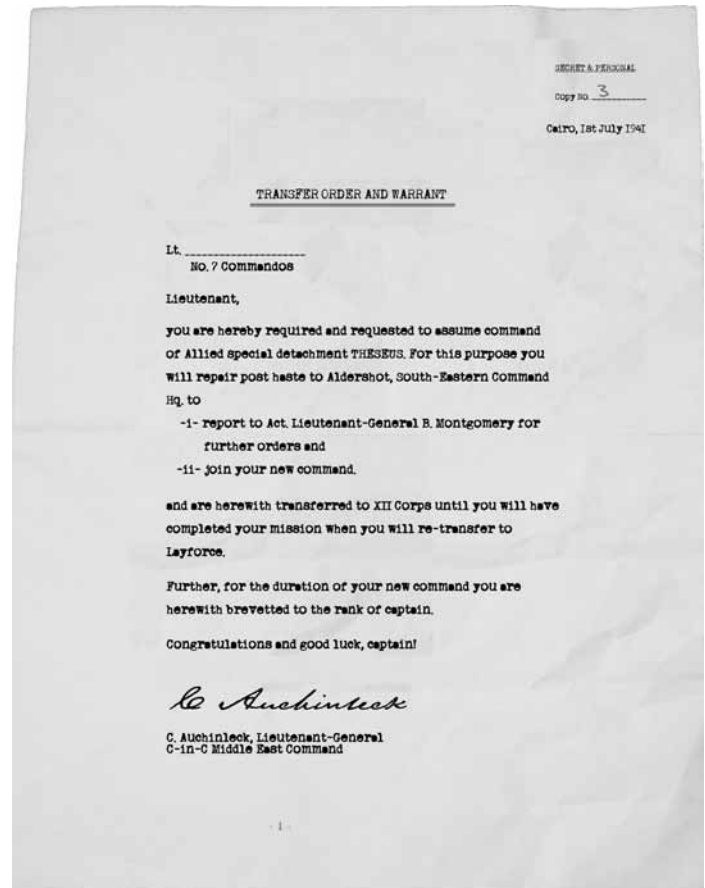
Welcome to the Army

His Majesty’s government has now activated “O.” Strings are pulled and the members of the new task force are “collected.” In the middle of the night, military policemen and secret service men knock on doors with rather urgent orders.

I recommend sending **Handout 1 – The Activation Order** to the players (but to the one you bump to captain, *see below*) in advance of the game. Perhaps you will want to send it to the players together with the invitation for the next gameday. This may serve to build excitement and

it does simulate the surprise of the characters to be “activated.” You may even put it in an envelope “stamped” with the text “ACTIVATION ORDER” (in red for effect if you can).

As the players are in the army now, commandeered civilians or not, they will have to follow chain of command and one of them should command the small unit. Make the highest-ranking character or best suited player’s character – your opinion matters, you are the whole high command rolled into one after all – the group leader, brevet him to the rank of captain (**Handout 2 – Activation Order & Brevetting** for brevetting whomever you choose). In any case, there will be one new captain in the party.



Some characters will only receive a phone call, others will be dragged out of bed in the middle of the night, and yet others may be picked up at work, literally plucked from their office desk. Another character may not come back from a walk with his dog, etc. If you do not play the adventure as a one-shot and have one or more long gaming nights of adventure ahead, by all means: play this out – it will increase the 1940s spy thriller / action movie flair!

BtS Flair Note: If you have time to play this out, remember that BtS is all about building up tension. Characters with automatic abilities – like premonitions, omens, etc. – will have a fitful sleep or may see the first signs of danger and the supernatural lurking to come into their life. Perhaps there are extra-dark clouds in the sky. Perhaps there is a sudden lightning storm and a blurry face can be seen suddenly illuminated in a dark corner, only to be gone when the lightning is. Maybe, when riding the Underground, it will stop unexpectedly and directly in front of a recruitment poster. Maybe there is a sign warning about enemy activity and something is dripping from it, slowly, like blood, etc. Alternatively, maybe a spider web is torn by a fly and the remains look uncannily like a swastika – add flickering light, a strange sound, you get my drift: make it eerie!

One way or another, within 24 hours, all the party members will have been brought to Aldershot, the “home of the British military.” Despite the bustle of the huge military compound Aldershot is quickly becoming, the party will find itself sequestered off to a very quiet part of the base, an old Victorian battalion HQ in a small park.

Which Characters are Suitable

All P.C.C.s are suitable. Notwithstanding, not all members of the party need to have psionic abilities. In fact, I played this adventure once entirely with Ordinary Persons (O.C.C.) and it worked really well.

It would be easiest if all party members are in or somehow attached to the army – British, Soviet, US or any other of the (future) Allies' side – for one or another reason. Some may be soldiers with or without commission, or a chaplain, a war correspondent, a pilot, a secret service man, an adventurous don from Oxbridge, etc. If your players have or want to make interesting civilian characters, you should also have no problem to get them into the service of the crown. A French or Polish refugee, a German “enemy of the Third Reich,” etc. would also be a great fit. It is wartime after all and SOE drew from *all* walks of life. However, you are not restricted to fit all characters into the SOE. Especially British commando units, like Royal Marines Commandos or a Layforce commando, are well suited.

Whatever the characters signed up for, they all signed a slip of paper that they might be activated at any time. It sounded adventurous at the time, but they are not so sure now.

Modern Skills in WW2

You can essentially use all the skills in a WW2 game, but for the most modern ones. All computer skills are unusable as science is not there yet (the first functioning computers by Konrad Zuse were built in 1941 (Z3) / 1943 (Z4) and ENIAC by Eckert/Mauchly between 1942 and 1946 – this knowledge would be rather esoteric at the time of this game). Another example for science not being quite there yet is Aircraft: Jet. Replace any skills you find not to fit with an appropriate alternative skill, such as Military Etiquette, or give a free choice from an appropriate skill family. That said, no skill would convey knowledge inappropriate to the year of the game. Mind, if a skill potentially covered certain knowledge but such would have to be considered to be very rare in 1941, e.g. restricted to elite scientists, give stiff skill check penalties (-30, -50 or even worse!).

Basic Parachute Infantry

Crash Course and SOE Training

There have been quick parachute infantry courses in the war, e.g. for chaplains for the (later) D-Day invasion. Such parachutists spent two weeks training at Hardwicke in Derbyshire. They had to complete training, go through assault courses, and do runs of up to 10 miles (16 km). They also had to pass psychiatric interviews to test if they were mentally suited for parachute operations. SOE training was a bit tougher and included hand-to-hand combat training, picking locks, forgery and radio set use. The following represents the knowledge gained in these two training courses.

Whether you make up new characters or modify existing ones, all characters, no matter what the occupation, get the benefit of some of the following skills at first level as *additional* Secondary Skills (unless you as G.M. deem this not appropriate for whatever reason, of course), i.e. the player will not have to spend a skill selection for it. Should a character already have one of the skills or rather invest a skill slot, they will receive a +5% one-time bonus to the existing skill and, obviously, have the advantage that the skill is not merely a Secondary Skill but either an Occupational or Elective Skill and, thus, will be used with more aplomb.

S.O.E. & Parachute Infantry Crash Course:

All characters will receive

- Military Etiquette
- Parachuting

All characters will further receive two of the following skills or a +5 bonus if already selected:

01-10% One Weapon Proficiency (choose from W.P. Rifle, W.P. Submachine-Gun, W.P. Pistol or W.P. Knife)

11-20% Forced March

21-30% Disguise

31-40% Pick Locks

41-50% Demolitions

51-60% Intelligence

61-70% Undercover Ops

71-80% Detect Ambush

81-90% Paramedic

91-00% Radio: Basic

[If the same skill is rolled twice the character will get a +10%. In case of a W.P. result, they get to choose a second W.P.]

Orders in Aldershot

In this chapter the party will get their orders and meet General Montgomery.

BtS Flair Info: The whole chapter is x1 *Proximity to the Supernatural*. Even though the characters are not literally placed under the microscope, they are in a “mundane,” albeit quite special, Army compound. Instinctively, they will not want to draw attention to themselves. Also, there is absolutely nothing supernatural around them.

Location Description: “Monty’s HQ”

The whole scene takes place in a Victorian house, a former battalion command, which has probably not been in use since the end of Queen Victoria’s reign.

The ground floor has been converted to quarter the party. They will find a sufficient number of well-furnished if dusty rooms, and, luxury of luxuries, each will get his own. There is also a large dining room that is used as a mess hall as well as a movie theater. There is no evidence as to what the mission is about on the ground floor. A set of rather unwelcoming military policemen, none below the rank of sergeant, guard the house and its perimeter. No one is allowed to enter without written orders or a special pass issued by General Montgomery. There are also two guards at the foot of the stairs to the upper floor at all times. All guards have sidearms and rifles and look prepared to use them. Apparently, whoever is in charge here means business and has something to protect. Characters ranking higher than the guards will be treated politely but the guards will not let them pass (“*I am sorry, Sir. Orders from the general.*”)

Messengers can be seen running to and from the 1st floor. The house has the air of an active military command post. The party will be well cared for. Orderlies are present in the dining room and will serve tea and biscuits, sandwiches or hearty meals at the appropriate times. Any rank and file soldier will also be served whiskey, tobacco, and such, but only on request by an officer or NCO.

A large staircase, covered with a plush Persian carpet, leads upstairs.

For the last two days, General Montgomery and his staff have used the upper floor to plan Operation Minotaur and assemble task force Theseus. The whole upper floor looks more like a field command post than anything else. Maps of Crete and the Southern Mediterranean theater hang from the walls, pins in it with small note papers showing estimated allied and enemy positions and numbers. There is a room with three secretaries typing up orders, memos, etc. Montgomery has his whole staff present; apparently, he is not only preparing for the operation of task force Theseus but for a whole campaign in Africa. No wonder, Operation Battleaxe just failed yesterday; the Empire scrambles what it can. Our party is part of what is perhaps a last ditch effort.

The cellar contains a goodly assortment of old wine bottles and old furniture, but nothing much else.

Flair Info: Props and Sources

What works best flair-wise are original pictures, movies, and maps. They are not reprinted here for copyright reasons. I have not given links for the same reason and because, over time, they may become outdated.

WW2 strategic maps and a map of Crete are easy to find on the net. Print one out and let Monty put it on the table.

In order to even better get into the spirit of things as G.M., you may want to further listen to General Montgomery speak. There is lots of footage of Monty on the net, including from 1941.

For the situation on Crete I really recommend to watch two 1944 movies by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS); just search for OSS and Crete on youtube. You could even show the OSS footage to the party! Admittedly, showing these movies in 1941 is a bit of a stretch, especially because the OSS as the forerunner of the CIA was not formed before June 1942, but, hey, it is a game. Also, General Montgomery is well connected. He conceivably could have received an advance copy of secret footage by the British Special Operations Executive (SOE) from 1941 which would later become part of the OSS report. In any case, these two movies form an excellent situational report that you could show to the new recruits of Task Force O. This may help your players get into the groove of the game. Perhaps you send the links to them before the game to watch in their own good time, or – for even more flair – darken the room on game day itself and show the movies then. For best effect, rearrange seating to make your game den appear a little more like an impromptu 1941 movie theater. What is the best way to do this must depend on your party's and your style and preferences. Some want action fast. You might not want to bother them with watching a total of 30 minutes of Second World War footage. Others will love it, especially history buffs like me.

In any case, you as the G.M. may benefit from watching these movies. The G.M. should also scan around a bit on the internet for pictures (moving or not) regarding Crete in the war and German paratroopers (Fallschirmjäger). It will give you a better feel of the lay of the land and what the characters will face. It may also be interesting to see how the German newsreel reported on the situation in Crete. I really recommend checking out "Die Deutsche Wochenschau," the newsreel as shown in German cinemas. Look for the editions of 30th May and 6th June 1941 on YouTube. It will also help you to get into the groove when you will see your players' enemies in action when conquering Crete. This will show you some wartime use of Wagner long before Apocalypse Now.

Theseus Rising!

The party members arrive at Aldershot, U.K., within a few hours from each other. They will arrive between the early morning and noon of the 18th June 1941 and be confined to the ground floor of the Victorian house described above. Don't give the players too much time at the beginning of the game, just enough to start worrying if whatever the powers-that-be want from them is about Crete and will be extremely dangerous and then brief them.

The player characters may know each other from SOE training or the parachute crash course, but you may decide they have not met yet. If they did not know each other, you would want to give them some time to get acquainted. A chat after the movie showing may be just it.

While the players get to know each other before or after the movie you could play some music of the era for added flair. There is a gramophone in the dining room! You could play a Vera Lynn record: "White Cliffs of Dover," "We'll Meet Again," or "After the Rain" – all were English hits in the war; play them if you dare.

You've barely had time to have a smoke and talk a bit. All of you wonder why you were shown a movie about the latest disaster in Crete when an orderly arrives saluting the captain, "Sir, with compliments from General Montgomery," and hands over an envelope.

Make a copy of **Handout 3** (Orders). This should further serve to help set the tone and scene. Normal protocol would be for the commanding officer – the freshly minted captain – to read the orders alone and then to instruct the men, but let the players do with that as they please. It is a special situation after all, and leeway will be granted to the valiant members of the just newly formed task force: Theseus. Besides, it is a

SECRET & PERSONAL

Copy No. 4

Aldershot, 16th July 1941

XII CORPS OPERATION INSTRUCTION NO. 27

Bvt. Cptn. Comd. Special Detachment Theseus

Reference Maps: Topographical Map of Crete, German Assault Plan May 1941, Allied Disposition May 1941

A. Situation

1. Axis powers took Crete on 1st June 1941. Axis forces have reinforced their position. At the time of this order we can assume only a remainder of token resistance by under-armed and untrained Greek civilian resistance units. Support is not available.

2. Crete has been divided into 4 prefectures by the Axis. The 3 western Chania, Rethymno, Heraklion are controlled by German forces. The easternmost province Lassithi is controlled by Italian forces. Lassithi is mountainous, mostly rural and sparsely settled. Vegetation is sparse. Roads are few and damaged.

3. Enemy strength is overwhelming; total c. 60,000 strong. The German prefectures are held by the 164th Infantry Division, known as Fortress Division Crete, under Generalleutnant Josef Flottmann, and not yet withdrawn elements of the elite German 1st Parachute Division. The Italian 51st Infantry Division Sienna, including the 141st CCNN, under General Gualtiero Gabutti, garrisons Lassithi. Avoid enemy contact.

4. Intelligence obtained reports that elements of the SS Panzergrenadier division Totenkopf death's head have been put under the command of Standartenführer SS Colonel Professor Horst-Helmut von Hummelburg. Hummelburg appears to have full use of, at least, a 120 men strong SS Sonderkommando special command of the 3rd SS Armoured Division.

5. Hummelburg is a high-ranking member of SS Ahnenerbe, the study society for Intellectual Ancient History, which has the personal protection and sponsorship of Hitler and Himmler. The purpose of Ahnenerbe is to experiment and launch expeditions with the intent of proving that prehistoric and mythological Nordic populations Aryans had once ruled the world. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler claims and promotes that the Aryans originally came from Atlantis and are beings directly from heaven, i.e. did not evolve as other humans did. Intelligence received that Hummelburg is conducting experiments to weaponize the occult.

6. A small task force will consist of men and women from various units of Allied and affiliated forces, including SOE and LAYFORCE. Most members of this detail have special capabilities. General Montgomery will disclose further details in person.

game – act as you see fit, i.e. what suits your party best. In any case, I suggest giving the party a maximum of 15-30 minutes to read and talk about the orders. I would not answer any questions by the party at this point; there is no one there whom they could ask after all.

As an alternative to doing it on gameday itself, to get to a quick start you may want to send **Handout 3 – Ops Order** to the players. I recommend sending Handouts 2 and 3 *only* to the designated party leader, i.e. the character you make captain. This will give them a head start and you can jump into the adventure faster. Only sending the orders to the officer in charge also increases the military flair.

The orderly arrives again. "If it pleases the captain, General Montgomery would like to welcome him and his men."

If they do not follow the invitation immediately, the orderly will inform them with crisp politeness and in no uncertain terms that the General is not used to waiting and does not take kindly to it. When you do not play this as a one-shot but in the course of a Second World War campaign, any obstinate or disrespectful character will learn the hard way that Monty is a very strict and quite unforgiving man (just read his autobiography; that man really was in touch with his inner grudge bear). He is also a dangerous enemy: as history tells us, only a year hence in 1942 Monty will command the 8th army and seal his way to the top with his victory at El Alamein.

However, let us assume that the party follows the "invitation" right away. They will be led to a simple and practically furnished study on the upper floor of the former battalion command building and meet General Bernard Law Montgomery. Monty will usually not speak before being saluted by the Captain but do not let that hold the game.

"Welcome! You have been selected to form task force Theseus. I assume you know your orders. These are dark days. Much depends on you to turn the tide. Questions?"

Montgomery will answer all the questions as best as he can, although he does not know much more than what has already been put in the orders. He will tell them, though, that they are to keep their priorities straight. They are to proceed as they see fit on the ground to accomplish their mission.

It bodes mentioning in this context that the Second World War knew no easy or readily available radio transmission; long-range communication tended to be difficult, so asking HQ what to do next will be difficult even with the SOE radio device they will get. Monty will inform them that the Greek, as best as he knows, are trying to form a small resistance movement but at this time they are quite inefficient. He will not tell the party that British military espionage has people in Crete to organize and aid Greek resistance. Notwithstanding, he will say that the contacts mentioned in the orders could prove invaluable, especially the farmer and his resistance group west of Zakros. Monty is sure that the farmer will have better information than he can hope to have of the immediate situation in the Zakros area. The group needs to be wary of SS or Italian patrols, but may even be able to contact the scattered remnants of Allied troops and find individual Commonwealth soldiers who may hide in the mountains. *“Poor devils. We did not get all of them out when the Fallschirmjäger (lit. parachute hunters, i.e. parachute infantry) swept us from the island.”*

“Not all you need to know is in the orders you received; not everything is fit to be written down. The following is highly classified. We have obtained information that the Nazis are experimenting on humans to make soldiers more resilient. They call this *Project Wiedergänger*. Find out about this project; obtaining more intelligence about it is paramount.”

BtS Flair Info

Those characters who know *Language: German* will know what *Wiedergänger* literally means (see under **Strange & Disconcerting Intelligence**). That should worry the party already a bit.

A successful roll on either *Lore: Mythology* or *Lore: Demons and Monsters* will yield that *Wiedergänger* is a term referring to various corporeal and non-corporeal undead, usually vengeful and out to kill the living, all quite disconcerting. The Nordic **Draugur** are described as the drowned dead coming back to land to kill with their supernatural strength, only to be killed when beheaded. Some are **Headless Horsemen**, as the Hessian from the story of *Sleepy Hollow*. Others are the **Huckopp** or *Aufhocker*, undead waylaying wanderers. The Huckopp usually had suffered a brutal death, like from murder. He will jump on the back of the living, holding on so tight that they cannot be shrugged off, and become heavier and heavier until their victim is crushed by their weight. Usually, the Huckopp will force the victim to carry him to the place where his corpse was hidden. Others, like the **Nachtzehr** (Night-eater), are more akin to vampires in their description but with a twist. They will telepathically link with a victim, usually the people of their own village, and draw on their life energy (P.P.E. perhaps) from afar while still sitting in their graves and gnawing on their own funeral cloth or bones. Victims will die either from emaciation after a few days or suffer from the plague. If a deceased is suspected to become a *Nachtzehr*, he will be buried face down. It is said that this makes it impossible for a *Night-eater* to rise.

General Montgomery does not believe in the occult. He is sure that this is only some crazy reference to something mundane. Probably, the Germans experimenting on drugs to make their soldiers tougher and stronger or on prisoners to make them fight for the Nazis. Mind, Monty does take this very seriously because, no matter what, the Allies must find out what is going on.

Knowing the average role-player, I would dare to bet that at least one in your party will ask for special equipment. Monty knows that at least some in the group are veterans and will listen to any reasonable request. If the party members overdo it, he may cut them short by saying, *“All the equipment you will need will be on the plane.”* Monty is not a lowly supply officer, after all. You as G.M. can decide which of the special wishes will be there as well. After all, the group is going to parachute in so they

have to be equipment-light. Monty will also say that, quite unfortunately, resupplying the group will be out of the question. He relies on the party’s ingenuity and resourcefulness. He advises the party that the Germans have supplied their troops by parachute drops for a while, so medical, food, arms and ammo supplies may be had if the party can find a misplaced airdrop. An old airdrop is also a neat trick up the G.M.’s sleeve to provide needed extra equipment to the party in a credible manner later; it is also a side adventure opportunity, if you want it.

After the little Q&A session, Montgomery will send them to pack. An orderly comes in and speaks to the General under his breath. Monty nods to the orderly in thanks and addresses the party:

“The orders have already been changed slightly, men. We had to advance the schedule. Fritz is sending 3 more Jagdgeschwader* to Crete. If we do not hurry now, we might not be able to deliver you at all. It is a close call as it is, to be quite honest. Do not waste the time gained. The Nazis have crack troops on that island and every hour will increase the chance of detection. Use your best discretion. Remember, this is mainly a recon mission. RAF will taxi you out tonight; you leave to the airfield in 10 minutes: make ready and Godspeed! Dismissed.”

*Jagdgeschwader = lit. hunter squadron, i.e. a fighter squadron.

Parachuting into Crete

The party will board the plane of wing commander Huxley and fly out of Aldershot to Gibraltar, refuel, and then fly towards Crete. Leaving in the evening of the 18th, they will jump into eastern Crete about 36 hours later before dawn on the 20th. Flying somewhere took a lot longer in 1941 than it does today.

BtS Flair Info:

(1) The whole chapter is x1 *Proximity to the Supernatural* but for the moment when the characters are actually parachuting; this is a life and death situation, any jump kind of is, and touching down on “supernaturally beset Crete” deserves a x2 *Proximity to the Supernatural*. Make sure you describe the adrenaline rush and the uncanny feeling they have. While “proximity to the supernatural” is not a Geiger counter for the supernatural, you can use a cool description, without giving the multiplier, to build tension and give them a signal that “something strange and dangerous” is happening. Mind, the characters will probably not be able to use the extra points gained through the x2 I.S.P./P.P.E. during the jump, but gaining power is not the only reason to give the multipliers. The multiplier will revert to x1 a few breaths after landing.

(2) This chapter contains an optional encounter. Whether or not you play it, is your decision. You may decide to speed up the game and forego playing out the encounter.

(3) As said, BtS is all about building tension. Build it up like a steady drumbeat in the background that gets more and more intense. Make sure to ask the players what they do during the flight. They will probably check equipment and get to know each other. Give them a little time, maybe 10 minutes, to role-play getting better acquainted and talking about the mission, but make sure to put them in the right frame of mind before that. Now, imagine yourself in the situation of our heroes. They have just been taken out of their normal lives and this is their first mission. They did not have much training, but now go straight into mostly unknown danger. Nothing is worse than waiting – the long hours of the flight will be stressful. Drive that point home to them. I am sure one or several players will play it super cool and say that they will catch some sleep. That makes sense but it is also a golden BtS G.M. opportunity.

(4) Characters with automatic abilities (Diviner: Omens & Portents; Latent Psychic: Precognitive Dream; etc.) may see/dream something about the future during the long flight. They are getting closer to Crete

and to the supernatural, after all. For the benefit of the whole party, make it at least one creative, but sufficiently unclear, nightmare. A character waking up shouting with fear in his eyes will go a long way to drive home to the party that this is not “just” a war game. A Psychic Medium may experience Olfactory Symbols & Omens; the odor of sweat in the plane will be all-pervasive to them. This odor stands for hard labor and confinement, which is certainly what is in the future for the party (hard work) and in the present (confinement). The plane does feel like a coffin, after all. Spelling out things like this may increase the tension. Use a calm voice, describe the flight, and end trailing off by saying, “It feels like a coffin...” It will work magic.

Equipment

The party will be surprised to see an Italian airplane, a Caproni Ca.133, a compact thing not unlike the Ford Trimotor 5-AT. As Huxley will explain grinning, gently patting the plane’s rump:

“She was captured in Egypt and may help us when German fighters or flak gets us in their sights. Get in and gear up. We will take off in a minute or so.”

Before the take-off, Huxley makes a pre-flight check and covers the Italian national emblems on the plane. Huxley will later have those blinds uncovered when leaving Gibraltar, i.e. on the last leg of the journey. On the plane, the party will find the following equipment:

- 1 parachute properly packed up in a rucksack for each soldier.
- 2 rifles with magazines for a total of 40 shots each.
- 2 submachine-guns with magazines for a total of 100 shots each.
- 1 suppressed De Lisle commando carbine with 3 extra magazines for a total of 44 shots (11 per mag).
- 1 sharpshooter rifle with scope with 20 shot magazine.
- 1 side arm per soldier.
- 10 pineapple hand grenades.
- 1 set of goggles.
- 2 torch lights.
- 2 compasses.
- 2 coils of rope of 10 meters length each.
- 2 med packs.
- Shoe polish, 10 lbs/4.5 kg. (Seriously! If you have been to the army, you will know that not everything must make, err, immediate sense.)
- 1 rucksack for each soldier.
- 1 special SOE radio set suitcase.
- 40 dry rations (total, not for each soldier).
- 10 water canteens for 34 ounces (1 liter) each.
- 5 folding shovels.
- A map of eastern Crete, Zakros area.
- 1 bible.

SOE radio set suitcase: This radio unit has been fitted into a small, brown leather suitcase. It has to be set up before use, i.e. the radio normally is not connected to its power source and the Morse tap device is not wired to the unit. The radio can only use CW, i.e. can only be used to transmit and receive Morse messages. Power is about 20 Watts; range works out to be between 300 and 1,000 miles (480-1,600 km).

Background: The SOE equipped its agents – usually one set per team – with a strong but simple radio set to transmit and receive radio messages. Being a radioman in the SOE gave you one of the most responsible and dangerous jobs the fledgling agency had to offer. Radio operators rarely survived for more than a few months when operating in enemy controlled territory. German counter-intelligence really had it out for them. When you transmitted you often had, at most, 30 minutes until the enemy would arrive at your doorstep, especially in the occupied cities like Paris, Prague or Warsaw, and it was even more risky in the German heartland. Radio operators were highly trained in Morse and used secret cyphers. Short bursts of messages were usually the most they would do. This is also especially important for the party. It will be very hard for

them to reach an Allied/SOE station and if they do, it will, as a rule, be Cairo HQ (c. 550 miles/880 km from Crete), but could also be a fellow agent on the island (G.M. decision). **The SOE radio gives the G.M. an option to either help the party along with information, change orders or even possibly provide some reinforcements – neatly, this is also a way to introduce a substitute character in case members of the party perish in the action.**

Radio Check(s): Whenever the party wants to use the radio, one or more Radio: Basic checks will be necessary. Under normal circumstances, no check will be necessary to set up the radio, open a channel and transmit a message. A G.M. may, however, demand checks for these actions, especially for encoding the message properly, and when the radio operator is under pressure. It is easy to make spelling mistakes in Morse, particularly when using code. A check will always be necessary to properly receive a message, i.e. to make “listening mistakes.” If such a check fails the message will be somewhat garbled; the worse you fail the more it will look like gobbledygook. The G.M. should write down the garbled response, so that the party has a chance to speculate, for example, on their new orders.

Chance of Detection by the Enemy: The German military and counter-intelligence on Crete are actively listening for and hunting down enemy operators. There is a cumulative 5% chance per every 2 minutes of using the radio for detection, i.e. roll detection checks after 2 minutes (5%), after 4 minutes (10%), after 6 minutes (15%), etc. This includes searching for “a connection” to a British station or leaving the radio on waiting for an answer to your transmission. Crete is still heavily patrolled and enemy units are strategically spread to control the island efficiently. When an enemy radio operator is detected by one of the listening posts, they will contact the closest unit and the unit will deploy, often in force, as the assumption is that the radio operator is not a lone agent but may be a British unit in hiding. The party has 1D6x10 minutes (modify by +30 minutes, or whatever you deem appropriate, if the Party is in a remote or difficult to reach position) to leave the area before a German or Italian patrol will arrive and search for the radio operator. Note, radio detection often does not allow for pinpoint accuracy. The party will, of course, usually not know when they are detected ... The best safety measure, and they have been trained to know that, is using the radio as rarely and shortly as possible and only when it counts.

Suppressed De Lisle Carbine: The De Lisle (commando) carbine is a British firearm with an integrated suppressor using subsonic 0.45 ACP caliber ammunition for extremely quiet action at an effective range of 200 yards (183 m). It has been said that this has been one of the quietest guns ever made (perception difficulty 17 to hear). It has an 11-shot magazine. It is a short, stocky weapon with a weight of ca. 8 lbs (3.6 kg) and a total length of 35 inches (88 cm). The version the party gets is an early prototype, real production would not start before 1942, and has a wooden stock. Due to its relative short length, it can be concealed under a coat. **Range:** 200 yards. **Damage:** Single shot 5D6, short burst 5D6x2, long burst 5D6x3.

Caproni Flight

The plane is not too uncomfortable or too windy, but the flight is long and loud. The plane is barely 6 years old, but creaking at every turn. The passenger compartment is smaller than could be expected. It smells of gasoline. It has obviously been refitted to carry much more fuel than normal. It may have a long range, but you fervently pray that it will not be hit.

If asked about the danger with all the fuel, Huxley will say,

“Don’t worry, when we should be hitting Crete the old girl here will almost be empty anyhow. There will be barely enough left to get to Cairo. Actually, the outer tanks will be used up first and may provide us with some extra protection against strafing hits.”

Give the party some 10 minutes or so to discuss during the flight. You can give them more time, of course, the flight is long enough after all, but any more than that usually takes away the pressure. The plane has a cruise speed of about 115 miles an hour (184 km). The flight to Gibraltar will take about 11 hours. The second leg will take c. 18 hours, with a touch down for refueling somewhere in the Sahara Desert on a small former RAF airport now tended by Bedouins faithful to the British Empire. Well, at least that is what the plan was...

Check if the party tries to sleep.

A Note on Sleep Deprivation

Whoever has not slept at least 6 hours per night will be at -1 on strike/parry/dodge until one night's full rest (6+ hours). Soldiers quickly learn to sleep whenever they can, as much as they can! Use the same rule for any of the following nights; the sleep deprivation penalties stack! Should the party not sleep at all for more than 36 hours, they count as stunned (reduce attacks per melee to one and no combat bonuses until they have slept for 6+ hours), after 48 hours of no sleep let them save vs insanity every 1D6 hours or they will fall asleep where they sit, stand or lie. I have chosen save versus insanity as at that time the only thing that would keep them upright is their determination and mental grit, i.e. M.E., as they would be beyond physical exhaustion. Obviously, there will be no roll on the insanity table as well. Not because of this, at least.

Shoot-Out in the Sahara (Optional Encounter)

If you do not run this as a one evening game, the party could run into a fight between a German Afrika Korps patrol and a raiding party of Bedouins. It is a British airstrip. The British forces have withdrawn. The Bedouins decided they have no chance to hold the airstrip against the Germans so they want, at least, to "save" the kerosene (perhaps even selling it to their friends, the British). The German soldiers are a regular patrol sent to retrieve the kerosene and to destroy the airstrip. It is too insignificant to hold, the Germans cannot spare the troops to hold it anyway, but they cannot leave it behind their lines.

The plane has no choice but to touch down as the fuel is almost empty. It needs to refuel badly! It is your G.M. choice what the situation on the ground is when the plane lands. The Germans may already have vanquished the Bedouins, the Germans may not have arrived yet but the Bedouins are already happily "collecting things," or maybe the plane touches down in the middle of a firefight between the two small forces. Take your pick!

The encounter should not be made too difficult – some lucky hits by the Bedouins could ensure that – as the adventure should go on after that. Make it exciting, though, with bullets ripping into the plane, the pilot having to roll a flight skill check to land safely, etc. Make it memorable!

Mind, the plane has Italian markings! This may be good or bad for the party. The Bedouins may think they are the enemy before they identify themselves as British. The Germans may think they are allies, which may give the group a chance to con its way through the encounter.

That said, the last leg of the journey will be about 9 hours. Enough time to apply some first and second aid.

German Africa Corps Soldiers (encounter)

Number Appearing: A skirmish patrol will consist of 1-3 groups of 1D8+4 soldiers each, including a sergeant or Fahnenjunker (officer cadet) as group leader.

Alignment: Any.

Attributes: One attribute at 16 (P.S. or P.P.), P.E. 12.

S.D.C.: 25

Hit Points: 15

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Automatic Pistol, W.P. Shotgun, W.P. Rifle.

Level of Experience: 2nd (01-60%), 3rd (61-80%) or 4th (81-00%). Bonuses below are for 2nd level characters. Add one level for ranking officers.

Bonuses: Typical Soldier: 4 attacks, +3 parry/dodge, +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +1 to strike with guns.

Typical Sergeant: 5 attacks, +3 parry/dodge, +2 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +2 strike, +2 disarm, 1D6 punch, +1 to strike with guns.

Equipment: Each group will have a Schützenpanzer halftrack (see below). The soldiers will be equipped per group with: 2 MG 42 machine-guns (damage: 1D8x10+5 per 10-round burst, 1D4x10+5 per 3-round burst; can only make bursts; caliber: 7.92x57mm Mauser; range: 6,000 feet (1,829 m), 11,500 feet (3,505 m) with tripod and telescopic sight; weight: 25.6 pounds (11.6 kg); notes: machine-guns are not made for close combat and not suitable to be shot from the hip but always from a resting position; man-portable; named "Hitler's buzzsaw" by the Allies). 4 MP 40 submachine-guns (damage: 3D6 per 3-round burst, 5D6 per 5-round burst; caliber 9x19mm parabelm; range 600 feet (183 m); 32-round magazine; burst fire only). 6 Karabiner 98 kurz bolt-action service rifle (damage: 5D6; caliber 7.92x57mm Mauser; range 1,500 feet (457 m), double range with telescopic sight; 5-round stripper clip, internal magazine); the NCO will also have a side arm Luger P08 semi-automatic pistol (damage: 3D6; caliber 9x19mm parabelm; 8-round detachable box magazine or 32-round detachable drum; range 150 feet (45.7 m).

Description and Disposition: The Africa Corps wears the German tropical uniforms – you will have seen them many times over, for example in Raiders of the Lost Ark. The German soldiers are a Panzergrenadier unit, experienced veterans, and part of the 21st Panzer Division, formed out of the 5th Light Division (active since 1937). The Africa Corps was the German expeditionary force in North Africa under the command of lieutenant general (his rank at the time) Erwin Rommel; the motto of the Africa Corps was "Chivalrous in War, Vigilant for Peace." Its aim was to save the Italian troops from destruction by the British and Commonwealth forces and, probably, also to gain control over oil in a long-term strategy.

Schützenpanzerwagen Sd.Kfz. 251 (halftrack): A.R.: 15, **Weight:** 7.4 tonnes, **Length:** 19 feet (5.8 m), **Max. Speed:** 32.6 mph (52.5 km/h), **Max. Range:** 199 miles (320 km) on roads, 112 miles (180 km) off-road. Stops anything under a 0.5 caliber machine-gun round. Underside is vulnerable to mines. **S.D.C. by Location:** Main Body: 700, Tracks: 150 each. **Typical Armament:** 2 MG 42 machine-guns (stats for the guns, see above). **Notes:** A Schützenpanzer is a well-armed transport vehicle for motorized infantry. It is one of the iconic Wehrmacht vehicles; you will have seen it in movies like Indiana Jones. The passenger compartment is open or covered with a canvas like a light truck. The vehicle provides full cover to those inside as long as they duck behind the armored sidewall. The tracks are characteristically long. The machine-gun serves to provide suppressive fire when the light or heavy rifle squad dismounts.

Bedouins (encounter)

Number Appearing: 2D6+5

Alignment: Any.

Attributes: Average.

S.D.C.: 20

Hit Points: 10

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, W.P. Sword, W.P. Rifle.

Level of Experience: 1st (1-60%), 2nd (61-90%), 3rd (91-00%). Bonuses below are for 1st level characters. Add one level for a chieftain, who will be present in important raids.

Bonuses: Typical Bedouin: 4 attacks, +2 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, +1 to strike with rifle, +1 strike/parry with knife and sword.

Equipment: Aside from their beautiful swords and curved daggers, Bedouins will proudly use rifles if they can get them. Usually, these rifles will be well cared for older models, mostly from old 1st World War army stock, bolt-action rifles (e.g.: 0.5 caliber French Lebel 1886, the 0.318 caliber German Gewehr 88, or the English Lee-Enfield). Most

likely, however, they will have a .303 Martini-Enfield, which was the gun of choice of Lawrence of Arabia's Arab Irregulars during the Arab Revolt of 1916–1918: **Martini-Enfield bolt-action rifle** (6D6; 5 round en-bloc clip; range 3,000 feet/914 m). They wear no armor. They have horses. **Melee Weapons:** Khanja (curved knife) (1D6) and scimitar (2D6).

Description and Disposition: They wear the typical Bedouin “dress,” i.e. a thob of white cotton with a kufeya held in place by an ighal. The ighal is made of camel wool and sometimes richly decorated. The kufeya is a square of usually also white fabric folded into a triangle with a point on each shoulder. The Bedouins are straightforward and clear-minded people. They want to raid the airfield for the kerosene which they hope to sell to the British forces. Due to Lawrence of Arabia, they hold the English in higher esteem than anyone else, but not so high that they will do this without hope of being paid. They do not shy away from an honorable fight but they will not fight to the death against the Germans (or anyone else).

Canopy Up

After another 9 hours, task force Theseus is above eastern Crete and has to make ready for parachuting into enemy territory.

The plane has been darkened, light and noise discipline applied for over 2 hours now. Of course, you can smoke and talk, shutters are enough, but nobody really feels like it. You may have that sinking feeling in your stomach. It is a combat jump, enough to make anyone nervous. For about two hours all you hear is the constant droning of the engines. Every minute now we must be over Crete. No hits so far. Seems to be going smoothly... The red light goes on. Huxley shouts into the hold, “GET READY! GREEN LIGHT IN 5 MINUTES!” The captain gives the command to sound off for equipment check. You check your mate’s pack whilst another checks yours. You would not have thought that you remember all that, but you do. Your fingers take on a life of their own and you do the check up just like the SOE specialists drilled into you months ago. You shout your number. “One, ok. Two, ok...” Then the light turns green and one by one, you jump from the plane in a neat stick. All the canopies seem to have deployed just fine. You progress from the noise of the plane into the peculiar calm of gliding down; the only sounds come from the creaking of your parachute straps and the strong propeller of the plane, which is now quickly vanishing into the night. The stars above you and only enemy territory beneath you, you grip your weapon tightly.

Flair Info: This is a good moment to play the Band of Brothers theme.

Parachuting Check

The canopies have probably all gone up just fine (check below). The standard dispersal of the stick will be 1D6x10 meters from each other. Distribute the characters as you see fit having the resulting dispersal ratio in mind. It is time to roll a parachute check to see how the landing will go:

Made the parachuting check: Great! You land well and where you want to land.

Failed by 10 or less: You land in an olive orchard hanging from a tree or in the brambles for some scratches or from a rocky cliff protrusion dangling away (G.M. choice, make it interesting but not really dangerous: scratches for 1D6 S.D.C. are to be expected).

Failed by 10-25: You land dispersed from the rest of the party by 1D20x100 meters. This may well (G.M. discretion; chance 25%) land the character in the middle of *An Italian Welcome* (see below)!

Failed by 26+: Your leg is hurt, it might even be broken! You will be able to function (-2 to Dodge, Spd -50%, -10% on skills requiring

footwork) after getting medical attention and a splint. Before that, you will need a crutch to walk. A rifle works as a substitute for a crutch for a short while.

Special failure, rolled 01: The parachute silk tears and the character plummets to the ground! Roll again, if the result is a double (11, 22, 33, etc.), the character will crash into something soft, like a big dung heap in the olive grove, breaking his fall and will survive but takes 1D6x10 damage and has quite the story to tell! Otherwise, the character dies.

If you do not want to even have a slight chance of death by parachute, you should ignore the “01” result and treat it as “failed by 26+” result. If you want the special failure but less deadly, turn the second roll so that the parachutist survives the fall *unless* a double is rolled.

Unless you get a strong dispersal (or worse) with lots of failed parachuting rolls, the party will be lucky. They will land not too far away from the village of Sitanos (check a map of Crete – you will quickly find Zakros on the east coast, Sitanos is a few clicks west from there), where they are to meet the farmer contact to the Greek Resistance.

Special Information about Crete

Getting Caught & Imprisoned on Crete

There is a danger of being caught during this mission. Depending on the situation on who catches a party member, the captured character might be shot right away or, more likely, imprisoned. The Axis powers on Crete know that England may send search & rescue teams to get important British staff out of the island or maybe send reconnaissance troops. For all they know, Britannia may even prepare a bid to reconquer Crete. Any enemy soldier or agent captured is seen as a valuable source of information and will, normally, be interrogated before being subjected to a court martial or sent to a P.O.W. camp. There is, however, a chance that the rest of the party or a motivated third party may try to rescue our SOE agents.

Some Help: Greek Resistance and British Agents

The Greek Resistance is small and not organized; at the time of the adventure, there are essentially several Cretans unhappy with the situation but there is little active resistance. As a substantial resistance has not yet started, nor have the later brutal Nazi reprisals. What is there in terms of resistance are several very small groups who due to lack of radio communication are not coordinated and in many cases not even communicating with each other. There is no armed resistance force. Small groups often consist of only a few villagers who talk more about doing something than really acting on it. These groups are also extremely badly equipped.

Kostas’ group (for more, see below in *The Greek Resistance Group* chapter), for example, aside from Kostas’ stupendous cudgel, has only one pistol, an old hunting shotgun, one First World War bolt-action rifle with 13 shots, an old muzzle-loader rifle with a handful of bullets and some knives. This is typical. However, Kostas and his wife Adelpha are better connected than other group leaders. His brother-in-law is Georgios Stephanos, whose wife Afrodite is Adelpha’s sister. Georgias is in touch with a British SOE agent, John Smith-Hughes, who landed on the island a couple of weeks back and now tries to gather information and helps to form a Cretan resistance. Georgios has an oldish radio transceiver in a secret room of his tavern in Kato Zakros, which Smith-Hughes uses to radio information to London. At the time of the adventure, Smith-Hughes is spying on Italian positions in Sitia, aka Easter Crete. If you see that the party needs support, e.g. they might be caught and imprisoned after all, you might use Smith-Hughes alone or together with Greek Resistance to bust them out of jail, etc.

Captain John Smith-Hughes, SOE Agent

Alignment: Unprincipled (Selfish).

Attributes: I.Q. 18, M.E. 18, M.A. 13, P.S. 14, P.P. 11, P.E. 16, P.B. 16, Spd 12.

S.D.C.: 47

Hit Points: 37**Combat Skills:** Hand to Hand: Commando, W.P. Pistol, W.P. Rifle, W.P. Knife, W.P. Paired Weapons.**Skills of Note:** Automobile 82%, Boat: Sail Types 94%, Boat: Ships/Seamanship 69%/54%, Boxing, Combat Driving, Demolitions 82%, Detect Ambush 64%, Detect Concealment 59%, Disguise 59%, Escape Artist 64%, Forced March, Intelligence 60%, Interrogation 64%, Language: English 98%, Literacy: English 96%, Language: Greek 72%, Literacy: Greek 74%, Literacy: Latin 74%, Literacy: Ancient Greek 74%, Military Etiquette 69%, Paramedic 74%, Pick Locks 64%, Radio: Basic 84%, Truck 84%, Undercover Ops 64%, and Wilderness Survival 64%.**Level of Experience:** 6th**Bonuses:** 6 attacks, +4 to initiative, +2 to strike, +5 to parry/dodge, +4 to roll with punch, fall, impact, +3 pull punch, +1 disarm, Karate punch (2D4), Karate Kick (2D6), +2 to all foot strikes, +2 automatic dodge, +1 body flip/throw, body block/tackle, backward sweep kick (knockdown attack), +2 to save vs Horror Factor.**Equipment:** Luger P08 semi-automatic pistol (damage: 3D6; caliber 9x19mm parabellum; 8-round detachable box magazine or 32-round detachable drum; range 150 feet/45.7 m).**Description and Disposition:** John Smith-Hughes is a portly and precocious 23-year-old captain working for the SOE with a signatory self-deprecating humor, wry smile and keen intellect. One of his assets is that people are easily fooled by his soft kindness and portly frame. Smith-Hughes is a very well trained and quietly competent man with a suave charm (charm/impress 30%). He was also a very real person, check out his obituary (published in The Independent; just google the newspaper and his name).**Special Contacts:** The Greek Resistance in eastern Crete; several contacts in the SOE and other services but not relevant for the game

If you feel the party needs further help, you may want to introduce his contemporary, Ralph Stockbridge of the "Inter-Services Liaison Department," the then cover-name for MI6. Ralph is also a real person and you will find information about him easily.

Finally, if the party could use more firepower and you are of a mind to supply it, they could find a group of British soldiers hiding in the mountains, some of the few who survived the battle for Crete and did not get off the island.

BtS Flair Info: NPCs are a wonderful means to further the horror feel of your adventures without having to kill a party member. NPCs can be used to illustrate the horrible effects of supernatural strength, tear one to pieces when the party sees it. More mysteriously, an NPC can suffer a terrible death during the night and the party only finds the mangled corpse (use this carefully and only when and where that makes sense in the context of the game; e.g. an insane Scientific Draugur – see monster description at the end of this adventure – could pass by the party at night).

An Italian Welcome

The party will likely (mostly) land in an olive orchard about 2 kilometers away from the village of Sitanos (Lasithi Prefecture, Crete).

The orchard is set on a flat plateau overlooking a small valley with a river to the east of the plateau. The river is winding its way roughly from northwest to southeast and down the hills towards the sea, probably somewhere south of Zakros if the compass and the map reading worked out well enough. Following the flow of the small river upwards, you can see a steep slope where it rushes down as a waterfall. Just behind the steep slope, you are pretty sure you can see a couple of roofs and smoke from a chimney or two in the moonlight.

Let them go about their business for a few minutes (real time). See if they hold onto noise discipline or whether they will chat or shout. It is not a difficult task to assemble, but they have to do that, find each other, and help comrades entangled in trees or dispersed. Maybe they also think about hiding their parachutes, maybe not. You may use that against them later, there are patrols after all, but let us give the party a chance to learn about that firsthand. Perhaps that makes them reconsider a noisy approach in the future.

Not far from the party, underneath the plateau and near the river, a small Italian mountain infantry patrol is resting. The Italian soldiers are not afraid of anyone here, but for their comrades-in-arms of the German SS. The Italians have been stationed in the Zakros area for a few weeks now. Greek resistance is, as yet, not causing much of a problem. Commonwealth soldiers have not been seen at all. Maybe there are some, but then they would be much more occupied with surviving than attacking, let alone in a coordinated manner. In short, our Italian friends are pretty relaxed. They even have some Greek wine as well as a veritable picnic basket with Greek goat cheese and sausages: la dolce vita. They are a lot merrier than a soldier on duty is supposed to be at any time.

While you get your stuff together, you seem to hear a noise. You listen closer. You cannot believe your ears but you seem to hear someone singing Opera.

Flair Info

This is a moment where you may want to play an aria of your choice. Allow me to suggest a particularly wonderful one from Verdi's Rigoletto, "La donna è mobile," best sung by the exceptional Luciano Pavarotti.

5 Italian Bersaglieri (encounter)

Number Appearing: 1D6+2; a typical patrol consists of a group of 4-6 soldiers and a sergeant.**Alignment:** Any (the sergeant – Luca DeLorenzo – in this encounter is Unprincipled).**Attributes:** One attribute at 17 (typically, P.S., P.P. or P.E.).**S.D.C.:** 30**Hit Points:** 16**Combat Skills:** Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Automatic Pistol, W.P. Shotgun, W.P. Rifle.**Level of Experience:** 1st (1-20%), 2nd (21-60%), 3rd (61-80%) or 4th (81-100%). Bonuses below are for 1st level characters. Add one level for a ranking officer.**Bonuses:** *Typical Soldier:* +1 on initiative, +2 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, +1 to strike and parry with bayoneted rifle (1D6).

Typical Sergeant: +2 on initiative, +3 on Perception Rolls, +2 to roll with fall or impact, +2 to pull punch, +2 to strike and parry (any situation), and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Equipment: Carcano M91/41 bolt-action rifle (6D6; 6 round integral magazine, loaded with an en-bloc clip, 6.5mm; range 2,000 feet/610m) and bayonet (1D6) or Beretta 1938a submachine-gun (3D6 3-round burst, 5D6 5-round burst, 20 rounds banana clip, 9x19mm Parabellum, range 820 feet (250 meters); also designated Maschinenpistole 738 in German service) and bayonet (1D6); side arm for NCOs and officers: Beretta M1934 .380 ACP semi-automatic pistol (2D6+3; 7 rounds magazine). They wear a sturdy uniform that provides A.R. 6 and has 10 S.D.C.**Description and Disposition:** Bersaglieri (Engl. Marksman) are a proud, highly mobile and elite rifle unit, easily recognizable with the black capercaillie feathers attached to their M33 Elmetto helmet or flap hats.

Convey this information only if the actions of the party warrant it:

One of the Italians has jumped into the nearby river. He is bathing in the warm river rather fearlessly and carelessly singing an aria. He is not too loud about it, but it is well audible now where the party hides as he reaches a crescendo. The other four Italian soldiers are lying between some trees near the river. Two are sleeping as it seems and the other two are drinking wine and eating olives and bread and are laughing their heads off at the sight of their jolly sergeant who tries to turn this desolate part of Greece into an Opera stage.

Now, the party has various choices, I am sure, but it boils down to them either attacking the Italians or going to the village.

Attacking the Italians may attract attention; shooting, especially a prolonged firefight, definitely might get a second patrol to be sent to investigate (chance of 25% +5% per round of the firefight). The mountains here do not eat up the shots but let them echo along. There is always a chance that one of the Italians would get away to get help (no fixed chance given, decide according to how the fight would work out). Finally, even if all goes well and the Italians are killed, they do have to report back to their base at the town of Zakros and a stronger search patrol of 12 men will be sent out if they are not back at dawn. Mind, such a patrol is more used to picking up sleeping patrolmen and putting them in the can than anything else, but at least some are bound to be wary as not all trust their good luck on this posting.

Instead of going in for a fight, the party may just try to circumvent the Italians. As they are not really keeping their ears open and eyes peeled for any trouble, let alone enemy movement, this should be easy. Modify any necessary prowl rolls by +50%. Prowl rolls can even be avoided completely if the party keeps more than 500 meters distance to the Italians and merely states they are using cover; count that as an automatic success.

The party may also capture and interrogate one or more of the Italian soldiers. It is up to you what they get out of that and will depend on their methods and interaction with the Italians. The chance for each of the Italians to speak very little English at all is 10%. The chances to interrogate them would be better with French, Spanish, or perhaps even Latin. Flair Info: At a low language level or when using a different language (Latin or another Roman language) to try to understand the Italian, make sure that you build in some misunderstandings and just give the party the general gist of what they are told. A good trick to keep the party on their toes is to give a very short, general summary but to make sure they understand that what they were told in Italian was a lot longer. “Playing hard to get” with the information: There is another nice option if the party does not find a clear way of communication. Should you speak Italian or want to take the time to use an internet translator for the following sentences, you might simply answer in Italian.

This is what the Italian soldiers know about the Germans and the area: “The German garrison is a large SS company in the hills near Kato Zakros.”

“There is a digging site. Some old ruins of a palace. I heard the German commander is an archaeologist.”

“Kato Zakros is the harbor town east of the town of Zakros. Kato Zakros is roughly 20 km east of here.”

“No, we did not walk here. Our patrol is for the Sitanos – Karydi area. We have our truck parked in Karydi.”

“We have a small outpost in Karydi; 7 men are stationed there, including us 5. We have to be back to Zakros at dawn to change with the day shift.”

“There is an Italian regiment at Palekastro to the north-east. Division headquarters is at Sitia on the northern coast.”

Asked about the Germans’ emblem: “You mean aside from the swastika? Well, they also wear a Minotaur’s head with crossbones underneath. Must be their unit.”

“We see the Germans in town sometimes, but they are not neighborly. I think they have been forbidden to talk. Very serious people these

Germans. Always wear uniforms, even off duty, provided they know what “off duty” means.”

“I have not been to the compound. I don’t know if any Italian has ever been there, but I have heard it is very big. When the weather is good, we can see the compound from afar when patrolling on the ridge. It has an airfield, a big warehouse, and some barracks. All that is directly above the digging site. The dig is about some ancient palace.”

If asked about anything supernatural, any Italian will laugh wholeheartedly.

Remember, a prisoner without hope may well lie as much as he can to damage his interrogators after his own death. For example, the interrogators could be made to believe that the German garrison is somewhere else, be led to believe somewhere is safe when it is not, be given wrong passwords, etc. Further, a prisoner under torture will after a while, always say whatever he believes the torturer wants to hear. If he has enough information about what the interrogators want this may lead to good information. If he does not, he will invent anything in hopes that this will make the pain go away.

The Greek Resistance

In this chapter, the party can meet the local leader of the Greek Resistance, Kostas Tephnikos. Kostas can give the party up-to-date information on the Nazi encampment, and valuable information on the possible routes to that place. Kostas or his son Niko may also serve as a guide to the Nazi site.

Location Description “Sitanos Village”

Sitanos is a small village of a dozen simple farms nestled on the slope on the other side of the hill. It is in the middle of the mountains where the settlements are small and few and far in between. All houses have thatched roofs, some are built of clay bricks, and some are wattle and daub constructions. Aside from such main buildings, each of the small farms has a goat pen, an outhouse, a small stable for the donkey(s) and to keep straw, etc.

The farm of Kostas is no exception, but he is the village headman and is comparably wealthy: he has 17 goats and 3 stout donkeys. His main building, not unlike the other farms, is a simple 3 room construction with two bedrooms and a living room with a kitchen area. Kostas’ family consists of his beautiful and intelligent wife Adelpha, their only son Niko, a stubborn 13 year old, and Kostas’ mother, the acerbic and black-clad widow, Filomena. G.M. Note: Play these NPCs to the hilt. Breathe life into them. Think how three-dimensional and vibrant the characters in Walking Dead are; the Greek resistance group are simple but very brave people, they deserve the same attention to detail.

A Note on Riding a Donkey: Maybe the party will use some of the village donkeys later in the game. Use the Horsemanship: General skill. No different skill from horse riding is necessary. However, donkeys can be difficult and stubborn, thus, modify any horsemanship rolls by -10. Without horsemanship, the rider will be at the mercy of his donkey. When nervous or angry, donkeys tend to bray, which may alert the enemy. Use this as a funny interlude or a risky irritant, but do not overdo it. If needed, use the stats for a mule on page 205 in PFRPG *Monsters & Animals*.

The Sitanos Communist Resistance Group

Sitanos is a chance for the party to rest a little, feel among friends for a moment of respite, get information, a guide ... and if they linger too long: into danger.

Kostas, Sitanos Communist Resistance Group Leader

Alignment: Unprincipled (Selfish).

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 17, M.A. 16, P.S. 22, P.P. 11, P.E. 17, P.B. 18, Spd 10.

S.D.C.: 51

Hit Points: 25

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Pistol, W.P. Rifle, kick attack (1D8+7).

Skills of Note: Kostas is a farmer by trade. He has all the skills of the Farmer occupation from the *Dead Reign® RPG*, page 91-92), so he is no stranger to hard work (+2 P.S. special and Physical Labor skill; bonuses already calculated in above) and can deal pretty well with animals and crops. Worthy of special mention: Drive: Truck 72%, Language: Greek 92% (he cannot read/write), Language: English 62%, Jury Rig 55% (+15% when he jury rigs his own truck as he knows it in and out), Philosophy: Communism 70%, Prowl 45%, Wilderness Survival 60%, Wrestling.

Level of Experience: 4th

Bonuses: 5 attacks, +7 damage, +2 parry/dodge, +2 pull punch, +3 roll with punch, fall or impact, +2 to strike and parry with blunt weapons; wrestling: Body Block /Tackle (1D4+7), Pin/Incapacitate on natural roll of 18-20, Crush Squeeze (1D4+7).

Equipment: Heavy, spiked cudgel (2D4+8 damage), Beretta M1934 .380 ACP semi-automatic pistol (2D6+3; takes 7 rounds magazines, of which Kostas has three); he also has an old Ford Model A Panel Truck (truck conversion type, built 1929, 3-speed sliding manual gear, balloon tyres, theoretical top speed: 65 mph (104 km), but usually does only half of that unless Kostas can jury rig some of its many issues; a pair of high quality German Zeiss binoculars Kostas won from a German officer in a backgammon game at Zakros harbor.

Description and Disposition: Kostas is an impressive and confident man; barrel-chested, powerfully built and about 40 years of age. He has black hair, sports an imposing full beard and curly long hair. His hands are big as shovels and he looks as if he can snap a neck as an after-thought; yet, he has a friendly demeanor, is soft-spoken, and a natural leader who knows how to turn on the charm (charm/impress 40%) and gain the trust of people (trust/intimidate 40%). He looks like you would have found his ancestors either fighting in a phalanx or wrestling at the Olympic Games. Kostas is a communist and his heart does not beat the strongest for the British, but he would have them in Crete at any time rather than the fascists. He will do everything in his power to damage the fascists. He believes that his best course of action for now is to help the party.

Special Contacts: See in the chapter “Some Help: Greek Resistance and British Agents.”

Adelpha, Kostas' Wife and Ardent Resistance Fighter

Alignment: Scrupulous (Good).

Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 16, M.A. 14, P.S. 14, P.P. 16, P.E. 13, P.B. 22, Spd 25.

S.D.C.: 31

Hit Points: 24

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: none, W.P. Shotgun

Skills of Note: Adelpha is a farmer by trade. She has all the skills of the Farmer occupation from *Dead Reign* (DR core book, p. 91-92). Worthy of special mention: Horsemanship: General 55%/35%, Language: Greek 94%, Literacy: Greek 89%, Language: Ancient Greek 62%, Literacy: Ancient Greek 58%, Language: English 62%, Literacy: English 58%, Language: German 62%, Literacy: German 58%, Language: Russian 62%, Literacy: Russian 58%, Lore: Mythology 48%, Philosophy: Communism 68%, Prowl 43%, Running, Swim 68%.

Level of Experience: 3rd

Bonuses: 2 attacks plus 3 non-combat actions per round, +2 to dodge, +1 to parry/strike, +2 to strike with shotgun.

Equipment: Medium Hunting Shotgun (4D6 damage, 8D6 when both barrels are fired at once, 200 feet/61 m range, payload 2).

Description and Disposition: Kostas' wife Adelpha is a dark-haired Greek beauty who does not sit by demurely when the men talk. As her husband, she is a communist and, contrary to more traditional mores, believes in the equality of men and women. She may have not many fighting skills but she has a fierce pride, is outspoken, quite

direct, and possibly the best brain in town. Her wit, charm and beauty allow her to charm/impress her way through almost anything (60%). She is worried for her husband and her son, but she is as strong an advocate of resistance as her husband, willing to lay down her life for the freedom of Crete and world revolution. Adelpha had a very good education; her father was the local teacher at Zakros harbor. Her plan is to support the Allies now to gain credibility for the resistance group and curry favor that can be later traded in for more tangible help, especially to arm the Cretans.

Special Contacts: See the chapter “Some Help: Greek Resistance and British Agents.”

Nikos, Teenager Dreaming to be a Greek Hero

Alignment: Principled (Good).

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 13, M.A. 12, P.S. 13, P.P. 10, P.E. 15, P.B. 13, Spd 15.

S.D.C.: 32

Hit Points: 18

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Basic, W.P. Archery.

Skills of Note: Climb 45%/35%, Imitate Voices & Sounds 56%/50%, Language: Greek 89%, Literacy: Greek 82%, Language: Ancient Greek 53%, Literacy: Ancient Greek 45%, Language: English 53%, Lore: Mythology, Hunting, Jury-Rig 30%, Prowl 32%, Wilderness Survival 35%; he also has some general farming knowledge, especially Herding 35% but is still learning so is not good at his father's job yet.

Level of Experience: 1st

Bonuses: 4 attacks, +2 pull punch, +3 roll with punch, fall or impact; wrestling: Body Block /Tackle (1D4), Pin/Incapacitate on natural roll of 18-20, Crush Squeeze (1D4); +1 Strike (Archery, 2 shots per round).

Equipment: A compass, a short bow (1D6 damage, range 340 feet/104 m), but will be equipped with rations, etc. if he became the guide of the party.

Description and Disposition: Nikos is Kostas' and Adelpha's only child, 13 years of age. His parents love him dearly. As cheeky as he may be sometimes, and he will argue wildly with his father, he will be quiet immediately on one of those long looks from his mother. His father has taught him wrestling and he loves to hunt with his bow; still, he will insist on having a gun if he became the guide of the party. He will also insist to be treated like a grown-up – “war makes men” as he would say. He is a brazen teenager. He believes he can take on the world all on his own and his head is full of the stories of the ancient Greek heroes. He has a penchant for taking crazy risks and following through with harebrained plans, he thinks all will go heroically-well. (**Note:** Use this to make things a little more risky but do not overdo it – he can be convinced to not do whatever he came up with and he usually brags about his plans before acting on them.)

Filomena, widow, Kostas' mother

Filomena is old and frail. She does have a sharp tongue, however, and while she dearly loves her family, including her daughter-in-law, she loves to dish out. I give no stats as she would be utterly useless in a fight but for cursing and vituperation, and perhaps some advice, which she would gladly give from the comfort of her rocking chair, which she rarely leaves these days. Conversation with her can be interesting, but tends to be disjointed as her mind is slowly fading. She is a proud Greek, proud of her heritage. Filomena knows a legend that “*the ancient Minoans, like all Greeks, were very far advanced already in ancient times – they were favored by the gods and some lived among them teaching them secret knowledge.*” “Which? Oh, I am old, I can barely remember where my shoes are. How am I to remember all of antiquity? DO I look that old? ... What a nice hat you wear.” She also knows that Kato Zakros once was the site of a great temple and palace in antiquity, “*a gem of this rich island.*”

Konstantinos, Resistance Fighter & Goat Herder

Alignment: Aberrant (Evil).

Attributes: I.Q. 10, M.E. 9, M.A. 10, P.S. 19, P.P. 16, P.E. 16, P.B. 14, Spd 18.

S.D.C.: 55

Hit Points: 31

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Black-Powder Weapons, W.P. Rifle, Boxing, "Karate" Punch (2D4+4); Wrestling: Body Block/Tackle (1D4+4), Pin/Incapacitate on Natural roll of 18-20, Crush/Squeeze (1D4+4).

Skills of Note: Language: Greek 91%, Prowl 40%.

Level of Experience: 3rd

Bonuses: 5 attacks; +6 parry/dodge, +3 to strike, +4 damage, +2 to disarm, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact, +1 to strike and parry with bayoneted rifle (1D6+4), +1 to strike with the musket.

Equipment: Flintlock Musket: Misfire 10% (1-2 on D20 on the strike roll), range 100 yards (91 m), straight barrel, no rifling, caliber 0.7 (damage: 7D6). Use the Black-Powder Firearm and Misfire rules from the Flashing Blades of Horror article in *The Rifter*® #79 (pages 32-35 and 41) or the rules from *Transdimensional TMNT* (page 68). Should you not have either of these books, treat a misfire as the shot just fizzling out, i.e. the bullet does not fly or just drops to the ground in front of the gun, and the shooter will then need 1D6 actions to make the weapon ready again to shoot as cleaning, reloading, priming, etc. takes quite a while. Normally loading takes 5 actions, shooting is always 1 action.

Description and Disposition: Konstantinos is a young goat herder, uneducated but very willing to help and knows the area like the back of his hand. When Kostas calls Kostas and Philip to his hut to discuss what to do next and who will be the guide, Konstantinos will come in the Greek gendarme uniform of his grandfather, complete with an ancient muzzleloader. It may look worn, even ridiculous, but these are simple people with nothing but their bravery, pride and traditions to face an overly powerful enemy. From the Cretan perspective, the rebel alliance had an extremely easy time against the empire. Konstantinos is fiercely proud and cannot wait to kill the enemy and he does not care about the means at all. Konstantinos is a good fighter, his grandfather taught him expert hand-to-hand techniques as well as boxing and wrestling. He cannot read or write.

Philip, Resistance Fighter and Goat Herder

Alignment: Scrupulous (Good).

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.E. 10, M.A. 14, P.S. 9, P.P. 12, P.E. 14, P.B. 12, Spd 10.

S.D.C.: 16

Hit Points: 16

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: None, W.P. Blunt.

Skills of Note: Language: Greek 89%, Prowl 30%.

Level of Experience: 1st

Bonuses: 1 attack and 2 non-combat melee actions.

Equipment: Staff (1D6).

Description and Disposition: Philip is also a young uneducated goat herder and very willing to help, knowing the area like the back of his hand. Philip is a soft-hearted and romantic Greek. He is devoted to Kostas and the cause. He does not care too much about Communism but, like young Nikos, is inspired by Greek heroes and legends. He is a bit simple-minded and no use as a fighter, but extremely brave. When told exactly, and in simple terms, what is needed, he will do it. He cannot read or write.

What the Cretans know

The Nazis have a big compound on a plateau over the digging site. The dig is the old Minoan palace of Kato Zakros. The palace consists mostly of ruins and is quite large. There is at least a full company of

SS there as well as several scientists (white lab coats) and mechanics. On the compound are six barracks, a big warehouse and a laboratory. No Cretan has ever been on the compound ... or, at least, none they could talk to has left. It is guarded by a high fence topped with barbed wire and two watchtowers manned with machine-guns and search-lights. The Cretan resistance group has no idea what the scientists do there, but sometimes screams can be heard from the laboratory. The mechanics work in the warehouse and there are regular truck deliveries from Zakros harbor when German supply ships bring boxes. The boxes have various sizes; some are so big that each truck can carry only one box. A few days ago they saw a strange plane race through the clouds over the mountains. Visibility was not good and the plane was extremely fast, they only saw a blurred black shape and the aircraft's lights.

Guide

Any of the resistance group can lead the party to the Nazi compound. Choose how you think it will be best dramatically and fit your party's nature most. However, it is likely that Nikos will be the party's guide. He knows the area extremely well and his absence will be less suspicious than his parents' would be and neither Konstantinos nor Philip speak English. However, should the party need more support than by one NPC, feel free to throw in Kostas himself and/or Konstantinos and Philip.

A Visit by Hungry Soldiers (Optional Encounter)

Our heroic agent-commando unit will have landed in the middle of the night. Thus, they will arrive at Sitanos likely in the small hours before dawn. Perhaps having in mind the stern warning of Montgomery that they should waste no time, they may decide to press on as soon as possible.

If the party visits Kostas but presses on, you can forget about the hungry soldiers encounter. Both parties at the Open House, however, followed the advice of Kostas and his wife to stay in their house during the day and travel under cover of the night. Kostas will hide them in a secret part of the cellar.

If the party stays for the night and hides, they will witness a quarrel between Kostas and Konstantinos around midnight; even if they will not understand it unless they speak Greek, they will get the gist. The latter insists on traveling to Karydi during the night to take his lookout post in that village. Kostas does not want that as he thinks it is too dangerous now that the Brits are here, but will ultimately relent. Konstantinos will storm out of Kostas' house; Kostas will tell the party what this was all about if they ask.

Early in the morning, around 5 am, the night patrol with the opera singer (if the patrol survived the above encounter) will knock on the door. They are still partially drunk and are extremely hungry. They need water and want to eat some meat. They will also ask for fresh wine. If the party fought the patrol but the patrol, partially or all of them, survived that bout, the patrol will be angry, cautious, and look for the attackers.

This can be a very exciting moment for the party. Imagine them sitting in their hideout in the cellar. They will hear voices from upstairs: the gruff, drunken Italians and their new friend Kostas, maybe there is some shouting, perhaps some threats. Unless the party attacked the Italians earlier and the Italians survived the encounter, there is no real danger as Kostas will give them what they want to protect the party and his family. Yet, who knows how our party will act? Play this to the hilt but do not force the party into action. This encounter serves more to provide flair, and set the tone, than to be a shoot-out, but it may very well turn into one (with the same consequences as described above in the chapter *An Italian Welcome*).

Messenger Stopped at Karydi

A handful of miles northeast of Sitanos is the slightly bigger village of Karydi. Karydi lies at a “traffic junction” connecting Zakros and the town of Sitia. Sitia is the capital of Lassithi province and were the Italian HQ is located. Kostas’ men are always on the lookout in the area around Sitanos, including Karydi. Normally, they never attack anyone, but this night it is different – Konstantinos is angry and wants to show Kostas how valuable he is as a fighter and “man, thinking for himself”.

Konstantinos returns to Sitanos on a German Bike in Time for Breakfast

Konstantinos shoots a German messenger biker in the woods west of Karydi in the wee hours of morning. Konstantinos has made sure that the messenger “disappeared” but will take the German bike as well as the messenger’s uniform and weapons and his messenger bag back to Kostas in time for breakfast. Konstantinos wants to prove to his leader how bravely he conducted himself after all! He will arrive at Sitanos shortly after the hungry soldiers will have gone their way (if they appeared at all). His clothing is torn and he is wounded (he fell with the motorbike a few times before he got the hang of it).

Instead of Konstantinos carrying the messenger bag to the party, you may decide to let the party do the work. Especially if your group is acting with less emphasis on covert action, you could let them encounter the German messenger rider. Maybe they ambush him, maybe they chance upon him while he is resting. In any case, make sure that the party somehow gets Hummelburg’s letter.

Special Feldpost

In the messenger bag are several letters. All letters are German “Feldpost,” i.e. soldiers’ letters home to their loved ones as well as some low-level official stuff, like supply requests, letters to inform relatives of the passing of their son in action, etc. If the party takes the time to study the official correspondence, they will learn that...

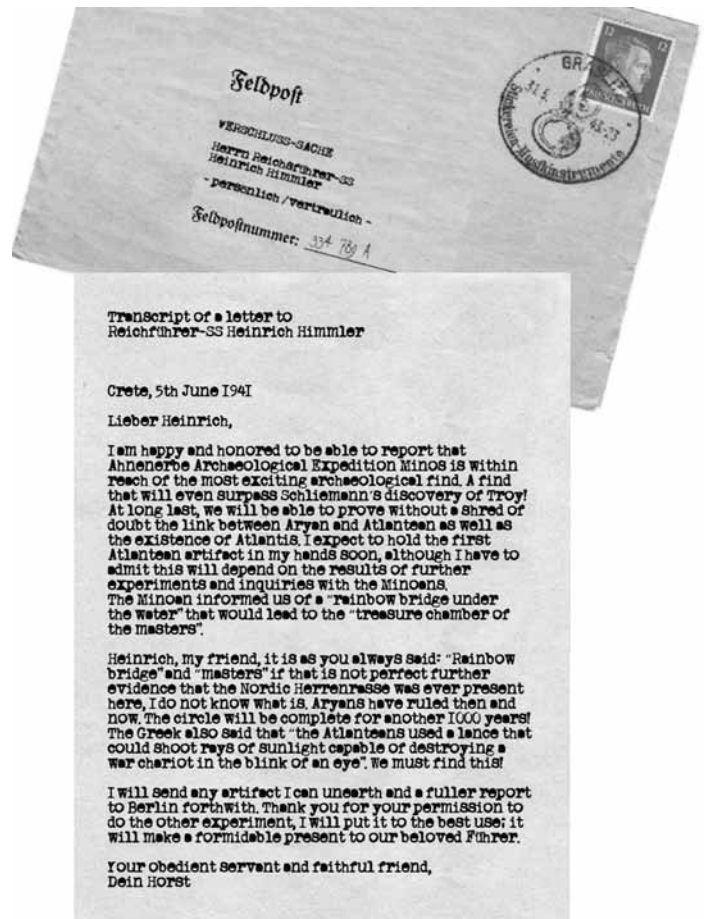
- The SS company has a strength of 120 men.
- A “zoo transport cage, steel-reinforced, size: elephant” has been requested for delivery at the earliest.
- A letter to a General Baron von Hackelburg informs that one Leutnant der Luftwaffe, named Hans von Hackelburg, died in the service of his country while on a crucial test flight due to an explosion of the aircraft during vertical lift off – the letter is signed by “SS-Sturmabführer Artur Emil Hartlaub, commanding.”
- A lot of high-quality aircraft fuel has been requested.

Even if no one of the party is able to read German, Adelpha will be able to translate for the party.

Further, there is a very intriguing letter by an SS Colonel and scientist named Heinrich von Hummelburg, which cannot be older than a couple of days. Here is the translation:

“... *Lieber Heinrich, I am happy and honored to be able to report that Ahnenerbe Archaeological Expedition Minos is within reach of the most exciting archaeological find. A find that will even surpass Schliemann’s discovery of Troy! At long last, we will be able to prove without a shred of doubt the link between Aryan and Atlantean as well as the existence of Atlantis. I expect to hold the first Atlantean artifact in my hands soon, although I have to admit this will depend on the results of further experiments with the Minoans. The Minoan, the one I wrote about, informed us of a “rainbow bridge under the water” that would lead to the “treasure chamber of the masters.” Heinrich, my friend, it is as you always said: “Rainbow bridge” and “masters.” If that is not perfect further evidence that the Nordic master race was ever present, I do not know what is. Aryans have ruled then and now. The circle will be complete for another 1,000 years! The Greek also said that “the Atlanteans used a lance that could shoot rays of sunlight capable of destroying a war chariot in the blink of an eye.” We must find this!*”

blink of an eye.” We must find this! I will send any artifact I can unearth and a fuller report to Berlin forthwith. Thank you for your permission to do the other experiment, I will put it to the best use; it will make a formidable present to our beloved Führer. Your obedient servant and faithful friend, Heil Hitler! Dein Horst ...”



For the best effect, use **Handout 4 (Hummelburg’s letter)** as provided here.

BtS Flair Info:

(1) The letter was in the hands of von Hummelburg, he wrote it personally, and he was the last owner.

(2) This is one of the many instances where Sensitive Psionics may come in handy. Remember, sensitive psionics may sometimes seem like a thorn in the G.M.’s side as the party is sometimes getting high-level information but actually, this is an asset. The G.M. controls what exactly the vision, dream, etc. yields and he should use this actively to increase the tension and mounting feeling of horror.

(3) If anyone in the party has *Object Read* and uses it, this will be a good moment to shine and for the G.M. to pass on ominous but, at least partially, helpful information. *Clairvoyance* may yield a clairvoyant vision or a clairvoyant flash of insight when focusing on the letter and the compound, which the party will soon visit. *Precognition – Premonitions about the Future* will yield better results, though; this would probably be a dream vision. Remember, dream visions may also occur unintentionally and uncalled for, i.e. the G.M. can call it and pass on an eerie precognitive dream vision of the compound or perhaps of the laboratory experiments to a character with this sensitive psionic ability, even if the player did not think about using it himself! This may even lead to the chance to use *Remote Viewing* later.

(4) Knowledge is power but the right bits of knowledge work to foster fear or excitement. If the party uses its abilities and gets to know more about what is really happening here, the G.M. may decide – depending

on what they “see” – to crank up the *Proximity to the Supernatural* level to x2. After all, they are now investigating the supernatural. I recommend raising the proximity multiplier to x2 before the party uses the abilities. The letter is a focal moment and this will spark their sense for the supernatural.

(5) However, after 1D10x6 minutes, the *Proximity to the Supernatural* level will revert to x1, unless anything sparking it again happens in the meantime. Do not let them get too used to the added I.S.P./P.P.E. as that only helps in the wrong way and would make what should be special the rule. Never blunt the senses for the supernatural!

Atlanteans & Red Herrings

One way to make a BtS Adventure more exciting is not to make it a clear-cut “go to X and kill Y.” Part of the fun horror feel is to give the players just enough information that they have to speculate what they will face. The human mind is an active thing, fear works in the mind: allow that to happen (in game terms only, of course). Throwing in some, not too many, red herrings helps with this as well. As to the mentioned Atlanteans, it is up to you whether the Atlantean legend is true. You can do some pretty wild and interesting things with that. You could even use Atlantean magic and artifacts from *Rifts*, translating them to S.D.C. values. For example, there could be an Atlantean temple underneath the ruins of Kato Zakros (perhaps accessible through the old well) or accessible through a cave in the Gorge of the Dead. The Atlantean temple could be trapped and you could turn this into an Indiana Jonesy side-quest, complete with a bare escape after having grabbed an Atlantean artifact.

Patrols during the day (possible encounter)

The party might have to dodge the day patrols on the journey.

Likewise, if the party killed the night patrol, the morning is the time when they should have reported back at the Italian base at Zakros. If the night patrol is not at Zakros by 7 am at the latest, the larger of the two-day patrols – the truck patrol – will be doubled in size and start a search and rescue expedition. They will not immediately assume that their comrades have been attacked. Natural disasters or, simply, oversleeping have been recent causes for patrols that were late or did not come back. There was not a single event of a serious attack from Cretans or remnants of British troops in this area. Still, the patrol will be careful and react competently to any attack by the party. As sloppy as the night patrol was, the Italian contingent on Crete is competent. The Bersaglieri (engl. Marksman) are a proud elite unit after all.

In either case, during the day the party will have to dodge the Italian day patrols.

Two patrols (see above for stats for the Bersaglieri) are about:

- The larger one consists of 8 soldiers in a military truck. It is a 5-man group headed by a sergeant, plus a lieutenant and a driver – it will arrive in the area of Sitanos around 8 am. They are the relief force for the night patrol with the opera singer. As said, if the night patrol did not report back, there will be a second truck with another 7 soldiers, i.e. 5 riflemen, 1 sergeant and 1 driver. Half of the men carry rifles, the other half submachine-guns. The NCOs and officer have side arms as well.
- The smaller patrol is a 4-men Bersaglieri bicycle unit using the off-roads and scouting the area. They use submachine-guns.

If the party has a chance to interrogate any of the Italian soldiers, they have the same information as laid out regarding the night patrol above.

The Gorge of the Dead

Their guide will want to take the party through the Gorge of the Dead. It is a long canyon starting near the village of Ano Zakros and ending right at the village of Kato Zakros. Conveniently, the Italians do not go there because it really is a small side track inaccessible to cars and, as the Italians feel, not worth the effort to patrol. The gorge also ends close to and slightly above the German encampment and the Minoan palace digging site.

The gorge is both imposing and beautiful, with steep cliffs on either side. It has its ominous name from a burial custom of the ancient Minoans. The Minoans used the many caves in the steep cliffs to bury their dead. Getting to the caves would be difficult and dangerous (-30 to climbing checks).

BtS Flair Info:

(1) Upon entering the Gorge, the party members will feel uneasy, especially those open to the supernatural. It is a beautiful but haunting place. Raise the *Proximity to the Supernatural* level to x2 and keep it there now.

(2) Upon meeting the Minoan, raise the *Proximity to the Supernatural* level temporarily – starting from seeing Bansabira and as long as the encounter lasts – to x3.

(3) **A note on Firewalkers and the use of anything that goes flash or bang:** Use your common sense! Things or events that can be heard or seen from afar, such as a big fire in the gorge, might be perceived either by a patrol in the mountains or by the guards at the Nazi compound. The encounters so far should have done the job to show the party that they have to be careful. They have received ample warnings about the strength of the German compound. Not every party, however, has a penchant for acting covertly or even in a restrained fashion. Personally, I think not cutting them too much slack would be fair, but you probably will want to decide to give them a last warning. Use a premonition or similar to show how the SS garrison slaughters them before you have to do it yourself. Should no one with psionic abilities be present, which is possible if the party should be composed entirely of the Ordinary People O.C.C., also very cool, use a normal dream or flash of soldierly insight! If the party then still acts like they are playing a first-person shooter on easy difficulty... it will be on them.

Meeting a Minoan

Here, the party will encounter a **Scientific Draugur**, in this case a re-created ancient Minoan scholar to be precise. For a full description of this new monster, please see at the end of the adventure.

Walking down the Gorge of the Dead, which winds its way through these parts of the mountains of Crete, just when they turn a corner, the party sees an old man in a one-way pinafore sitting on a stone. The old man looks disheveled. His long, white, curly hair is an unkempt mess, and his naked arms and legs are bloody with scratch marks (from the barbed wire fence and crawling through the thorny underbrush). He is crying softly, sobbing and moaning pitifully. Getting closer, one can see that he has several bite marks from dogs.

Bansabira, the Minoan scholar (Scientific Draugur)

Alignment: Scrupulous (Good).

Attribute: I.Q 12, M.E. 4, M.A. 5, P.S. 23 (Supernatural), P.P. 9, P.B. 8, Spd 3.

Armor Rating (A.R.): None.

Hit Points: 12 remaining. He is at his end and will lose 1 H.P. per minute starting upon encountering the group. You could use an alarm clock to count the minutes. However, if you do so, make sure that the party knows “the game is now in real time.” This will increase the sense of urgency. You can add a few real minutes if the players ask

out of game questions, of course, as you will, but don't make it too long. No rest for the wicked!

S.D.C.: 5

Discorporation: Upon reaching 0 H.P., will collapse into a steaming pulp of ooze.

Threat Level: x3

Horror Factor: 13 if dissolving is witnessed.

Size: Human-sized.

Weight: A slender old man, 130 lbs (58.5 kg).

P.P.E.: None.

Natural Abilities: None.

Vulnerabilities: As any human being.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalent (do not improve with experience):

Speaks Minoan 98% (understand modern Greek at a level of 10%); can manipulate objects but is on his last tether.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 3

Attacks per Melee: 3 actions (1 attack).

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): None.

Damage: Already too weak to cause any.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Note: Bansabira is a Minoan scholar, a philosopher who served at the royal court of Knossos. He thinks he was called back from the after-life – he remembers dying – by demons who look like men but are cruel magic-users and speak in strange tongues. Their high priest (von Hummelburg) spoke to him in a strange way. Bansabira does not know that Hummelburg used *Commune with Spirits*, but he can describe it. The demons seem to worship an evil form of the snake goddess. Their symbol seems to be two snakes entwined. They wear it on the sleeves of their tight black or white priest robes and with a red, white, and black (swastika) armband. They have tortured him and asked him many questions about Crete and Minos and the palace and temple of Zakros. They even knew of the Atlanteans and their powerful weapons. Obviously, this is all part of a battle of the gods. The demons from the underworld want to steal the heaven fire of the Atlanteans. In spite of all the pain he had to endure, Bansabira has prayed to the Bull to give him strength and told them nothing. He was able to flee. The god bull has given him humongous strength and he tore the metal straps from his arms and feet. Then he ripped off the arm and then the head of one of his captors. He never was a warrior, even when young, but at that moment, he had the strength of a thousand men. He threw the second demon out of the window and ran away into the night. There was a metal woven fence: he ran straight through it. He is proud of all this but now his strength is waning. He was followed and the demons threw “magic stones that tear a hole in the air” with their magic wands after him. They also sent their Hellhounds, but they did not get him in the end. They were not as savvy of the area as he is. Having grown up in the Zakros area he went west. He ducked away into the gorge and hid his tracks in the river and then hid a while. When they had given up the chase, he thanked the gods and walked onwards. He only wanted to find the cave where his family, nobles of Zakros, were buried. His time is coming, he feels it. He is happy to die and wants to meet his ancestors and family in the afterlife. If only he could get to his family cave, he would be the happiest man in the world.

The language that the ancient Minoans spoke is about 1,000 years removed from Ancient Greek. Nobody knows whether there even are some words that are similar. For the purposes of the game, however, we will assume that there is some rudimentary overlap with Ancient Greek. Either one of the characters speaks it or their guide might try to translate (if he knows Ancient Greek, which will depend on which of the Greek resistance group is with them at the time). Using Ancient Greek for understanding or speaking Minoan will be prone to misunderstandings and top-level information only. Leave parts out, make some mistakes. This will add to the game. Notwithstanding, this is the chance for the party to get at least some of the above information if they handle themselves well. Bansabira cannot be coerced into giving information, but he will volunteer it if the party somehow befriends

him. The “easiest” way to do that will be to promise to inter him in the cave of his ancestors.

BtS Flair Info: If the party uses *Commune with Spirits* or *Telepathy*, both work on Draugur, to communicate with Bansabira, the Minoan will be mortally afraid of the party and recoil from them in horror as that is how von Hummelburg talked to him. It will depend on good role-playing then whether the party can get his trust at all – mind, he is not a trusting person or in a situation that makes it easy to trust strangers.

If possible, Bansabira will try to make sure that he is in the cave of his ancestors before he will draw his last breath. He might start to walk away from the party after a minute or two of catching his breath to get there in time as he feels the end is near. He realizes, though, that he will hardly be able to make the climb up to the cave, so there is a chance he may actively want to enlist the party's help, strangers or not – he *is* desperate. The cave is 82 feet (25 m) above the bottom of the gorge. The climb is dangerous (-20%) unless the party uses climbing aids which may influence the success chance for the climb positively.

If brought to the cave – or if you as the G.M. decide that whatever else the party does will win Bansabira's trust. Convincing him that the party will fight the demons may work.

When his Hit Points reach 0, Bansabira will slowly melt like so much heated wax in front of the heroes' eyes. It is a terrible sight. Describe this to your heart's content. A breathing and living human being literally melts, consumed from within as every molecule has a slow meltdown, and the victim feels every bit of it! The screams of the good scholar will fill the gorge. If the screams are not muffled, there is a (35%) that the Nazis will send a patrol to investigate and a separate (25%) if Italians are still out patrolling or searching for the party that an Italian patrol will (also) investigate. If that happens, I suggest not to force the situation into a combat encounter, but just to let the party feel the occupying forces breathing down their necks, delaying the party's actions. Patrols will not search the caves!

BtS Flair Info

(1) Bansabira is a very gentle and intelligent person. Like the Greek resistance group, this is a good NPC to touch the heartstrings of the party. If the G.M. succeeds in that, Bansabira's death will be even more horrible and, thus, add to the party's motivation to end the evil on Crete.

(2) No Horror Factor check is called for when the party meets Bansabira – he looks normal after all, but do not forget to let the party roll Horror Factor checks when they will see Bansabira pass. Modify this roll with -1 if the party bonded with the Minoan or -2 if they bonded and have to hold his mouth shut or similar to muffle the pained cries of the scholar. Your description alone should haunt them for a while.

(3) The death of Bansabira is a good moment for a break as it is a good horror moment. Allow good horror moments to sink in! After Bansabira's death, *Proximity to the Supernatural* will revert to x2.

The Nazi Encampment

This is the description of the compound of the SS at Kato Zakros.

General Location Description

The compound is large, about the size of three football fields. It contains three large, corrugated galvanized iron (often abbreviated “CGI” or called “wriggly tin” in UK military slang) barracks, one for each platoon of the SS Company, one headquarters building with a mess hall, offices and five bedrooms for the officers and scientific staff, a large warehouse-like structure (actually: the hangar) as well as a small laboratory complex of three smaller interlaced buildings (lab area, laboratory staff rooms, holding area). The encampment is guarded by two towers with searchlights and a machine-gun each. Each tower is constantly manned by two soldiers. The compound is patrolled by 2-man teams with one German Shepherd guard dog; when not on patrol the guards are in the guardhouse at the main gate which has a full detail of 7 men and two dogs.

German Waffen-SS Soldiers

Compound Guard; SS-Sonderkommando Minos, detachment of 3rd SS Armored Division

Number Appearing: 120 available on site, number appearing will depend on the situation.

Alignment: Any.

Attributes: P.S., P.P., P.E. all 16 (elite unit).

S.D.C.: 40

Hit Points: 20

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Rifle, W.P. Submachine-Gun, Boxing.

Level of Experience: 2nd (01-60%), 3rd (61-80%) or 4th (81-00%). Bonuses below are for 2nd level characters, sergeants are 3rd level or higher. Add one level to ranking officers.

Bonuses: *Typical Soldier (2nd level):* 5 attacks, +3 parry/dodge, +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +1 to strike with guns.

Typical Sergeant (3rd level): 6 attacks, +3 parry/dodge, +2 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +2 strike, +2 disarm, 1D6 punch, +2 to strike with guns.

Equipment: The soldiers will be equipped per group of 10 with: 2 MG 42 machine-guns (damage: 1D8x10+5 per 10-round burst, 1D4x10+5 per 3-round burst; can only make bursts; caliber: 7.92x57mm Mauser; range: 6,000 feet (1,829 m), 11,500 feet (3,505 m) with tripod and telescopic sight; weight: 25.6 pounds (11.5 kg); notes: machine-guns are not made for close combat and not suitable to be shot from the hip but always from a resting position; man-portable; named "Hitler's buzzsaw" by the Allies); 4 MP 40 submachine-guns (damage: 3D6 per 3-round burst, 5D6 per 5-round burst; caliber 9x19mm parabelum; range 600 feet (183 m); 32-round magazine; burst fire only); 6 Karabiner 98 kurz bolt-action service rifles (damage: 5D6; caliber 7.92x57mm Mauser; range 1,500 feet (457 m), double range with telescopic sights; 5-round stripper clip, internal magazine); the group leader, an NCO, will also have a side arm Luger P08 semi-automatic pistol (damage: 3D6; caliber 9x19mm parabelum; 8-round detachable box magazine).

Description and Disposition: The soldiers either wear the infamous black SS uniforms or camouflage fatigues. The SS men tend to be fanatically loyal to the Third Reich and each one is prepared to do anything as ordered – the "anything" part being what will give most of the men an evil alignment. Those few with neutral or even good alignment might show mercy or be conflicted to the point of either hesitating at the "right" moment or even helping the enemy, i.e. the party, to some extent, although the latter is unlikely and would require very special circumstances – it is an SS unit after all and there is a war going on. However, when "good" men witness von Hummelburg's ritual and see the Minotaur the first time or change, i.e. when the Possessing Entity takes over, they might not make their Horror Factor check. Perhaps, they will run. Perhaps, they will start shooting the monster. In any case, the company is very loyal to Hartlaub personally. If Hartlaub orders them to do something, for example to shoot the Minotaur or arrest von Hummelburg, they will obey, especially the few good men amongst their number.

Guard Dogs

Size: Body: 3-4 ½ feet (0.9 to 1.4 m); tail: 12-19 inches (30-48 cm).

Weight: 30-60 pounds (13.5 to 27 kg).

A.R.: Not applicable.

Hit Points: 3D6+4 [18]

S.D.C.: 2D6+10 [18]

P.P.E.: 3D6 [12]

Attacks per Melee: 3

Damage: Bite does 2D4+2 points of damage; claws do one point of damage.

Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +2 to dodge, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 30 feet (9 m), Prowl 45%, track by smell 80%, Swimming 65%, can leap 4 feet (1.2 m) high and 6 feet (1.8 m) long, and like most canines, can perform a leaping pounce.

Speed: 50 (35 mph/56), and maximum speed is 55 (37.5 mph/60 km).

Behavior: These dogs are used as guardians and protectors as well as companions. German shepherds, as all shepherds, are anything but dumb – play them with some canine cunning!

Note: The guard dogs on the compound are all German shepherds. They are well trained and tough; use the stats in brackets.

The Laboratory

The laboratory has the following rooms:

Interrogation room 1 with a metal slab in the center and equipped to double for forensic medicine examination. The subject can be bound to the table, there are metal clasps for head, arms and legs.

A large vat with a thick, slightly luminous, greyish ooze – squirming like a can of worms and bubbling sickly as if it had a life of its own – is on one side of the examination table. Thick rubber tubes are affixed to the vat and, when not in use, are coiled up neatly over a metal hose hanger and shut with rubber caps. When the caps are opened, the observer will see that the rubber tubes end in thick needles. Another rubber tube leads from the vat to a weird gramophone-like construction. Mystical symbols are inscribed on the cone of the gramophone. The vat is cold to the touch and closed with a thick glass cover plate.

Ectoplasm Encounter

The ooze in the vat is half-solid ectoplasm, in a state between the vaporous and the solid form. It is held in this state by the temperature of (and certain mystic symbols on) the vat. When the covering plate is opened, tendrils of half-solid ectoplasm will slowly rise from the ooze and spread through the room. The longer the ectoplasm is out of the vat, the more will it revert to its full vaporous form, i.e. become invisible to those who lack psychic or supernatural abilities and means, but this will take a minute or two.

Semi-Sentient Ectoplasm

S.D.C.: 80

Hit Points: 5

Attacks per melee: 4

Bonuses: Dodge +5, Parry +1, Strike +1.

Threat Level: x3; Supernatural Predator.

Horror Factor: 12

Vulnerabilities: 1. Not very bright.

2. If the gramophone is turned on, the ectoplasm will withdraw into the vat like a snake-charmed snake coiling into a basket and start to boil within 1D6 minutes. Unless the lid is closed again, containing the ectoplasmic energy, the vat will explode within another 1D6 minutes, causing 1D6x10 psychic damage to everyone in the room.

Discorporation: Upon reaching 0 H.P., including when it explodes, it will dissipate without trace but leaving behind a smell of foul eggs on anything or anyone close to it (or in the room when it explodes), which will linger for a few days.

Natural Abilities: Vapor inflicts no physical damage, but can touch, tap or pick up and carry objects weighing up to 9 ounces (255 grams). Solid ectoplasm inflicts 1 point of damage in combat or by weapon and can carry as much as 40 lbs (18 kg) – the semi-solid tendrils count as solid ectoplasmic limbs for these purposes. They can attack everywhere in the room (range 90 feet/27.4 m or 45 feet/13.7 m if the light is on).

Note: The ectoplasm is an entity of its own. It is not controlled by von Hummelburg, but will act as if controlled by an evil mind and will behave with a devious cunning and an inherent aggression – see the ectoplasm description on pages 109-110 of the *Beyond the Supernatural™ RPG, 2nd Ed.* – and use it against any human being in the room.

Interrogation room 2 with a dental chair and corresponding equipment. The subject can be transfixed as in interrogation room 1.

Medical lab with several workbenches and the full monty of appropriate research equipment (vials, test tubes, centrifuges, etc.).

Laboratory staff room. The laboratory is sized to accommodate 3 laboratory assistants, 3 orderlies and one laboratory head. Von Hummelburg fills the latter position, 3 SS-men work as orderlies.

Holding area with 4 cells. Each cell has a zoo-type, reinforced steel door with a porthole secured with bars. The locks are simple (+15% to Picking Locks) as they were built to hold animals.

Bathroom with 3 toilet stalls and a military walk-in shower room for six.

Von Hummelburg's office: A functional office with a bulky, teak-wood desk and leather swivel chair. In a desk drawer, there are von Hummelburg's notebooks containing detailed information in German shorthand about the dig and his experiments. The party will probably not be able to read it but it is very valuable intelligence. There is also a hefty bookshelf with German, French, and English books about archaeology, medicine, chemistry, and the occult, including von Sterns' notes on ectoplasm and the creation of Scientific Draugur. As to the dig, the notebooks are full of speculations and plans only as he did not have time to do much real work yet. The experiments are detailed with horrid precision in a detached and cold scientific manner.

Frankenstein Moment:

Witnessing the Creation of a Scientific Draugur

When the party arrives at the wrong (or right, depending on perspective) time, one of the lab assistants of von Hummelburg is in the middle of the creation of a Scientific Draugur. Von Hummelburg has tasked his most trusted assistant, Dr. Gerd Schmid, with continuing the experiments, as he has to prepare for the great ritual. You can easily turn this into a highly dramatic moment, including the possibility to interrogate the assistant for further information. As a trusted underling of von Hummelburg, he will know when the ritual will happen and how making a Draugur works. You may alternatively turn this into a combat encounter if you let a crazed Scientific Draugur get unleashed, but this scene is better used to witness (and stop) the cruelty of the Nazi "scientists"!

Dr. Gerd Schmid: I.Q. 18; use the stats for the German SS soldiers above; also knows all skills befitting a medical scientist at 90%.

BtS Flair Info: Imagine the party seeing a body – probably a corpse – strapped to the slab in laboratory 1. A man in a white lab coat coldly orders the orderlies through the process with crisp and well-studied commands while making notes and checkmarks on his clipboard. The ooze in the vat starts to boil. Ooze is pumped into the body on the slab. Like so many insects crawling under the skin, the ooze spreads out within the body. Suddenly, the body heaves. Gasping, as if air and life were unnaturally rammed into its throat, the body opens its mouth and screams... Roll with this! Make it as horrible as you imagine something dead coming to uncanny life. *Proximity to the Supernatural* at x4 for this event.

The Hangar and Workshop

This is another quickly erected, wiggly tin building and easily the largest of the structures in the compound with the size of a two-story warehouse or barn, i.e. a 82 x 82 foot (25 x 25 m) base and 33 feet (10 m) high to the slightly slanted rooftop. It has a grey concrete floor and two huge sliding doors, each is 20 feet (6 m) high and 10 feet (3 m) wide, as well as a normal door on one side.

The purpose of this building is not easy to discern. Were it not for the absence of an airstrip, one might easily conclude this is an aircraft hangar. There is, however, a large, open concrete area in front of this building. As choppers did not see much of any military use before 1944, an observer might very well hold this to be a parade ground or truck loading area.

The hangar is, in fact, an experimental facility. There are two strange-looking aircraft here.

Miethel-Belluzzo Flying Disc Design Zero: A.R.: 15. **Capacity:** Pilot and gunner. **Weight:** 6 tonnes empty, 11.5 tonnes fueled up, armed and manned. **Length:** 46 feet (14 m). **Max. Speed:** 619 mph (990 km) in flight, cruising speed about half that. **VTOL climbing rate:** 3 m/sec. **Max. Range:** 1,250 miles (2,000 km) at cruising speed, but aerial maneuvers will reduce the range and VTOL/hovering will burn up fuel at a fast pace. Mind, the range is untested and only theoretical as there is an ungodly chance of **Malfunction:** 5% chance every 5 minutes in use. In case of a malfunction, roll D100 for 01-25%: disc malfunctions weirdly. The engine seems to fail then sputters to life again. Lights blink like it's Christmas. Emergency landing recommended (-15% piloting chance), 26-50%: fissure occurs, disc loses fuel, which may ignite (30% chance, doubled if disc is under fire), 51-75%: a number of the small turbine exhausts fail, hovering and VTOL impossible, landing will likely be a crash (-60% on piloting skill check to land), 76-100%: the high strain from the powerful engine tears the disc apart, pilot may eject but disc explodes. **S.D.C. by Location:** Main Body: 700, Cockpit: 200, Pods: 150 each. **Typical Armament:** prototype Düsenkanone 88 (a largely recoilless, rotary-magazine, heavy caliber cannon, which fires a conventional 88mm shell at 500m/sec. The DüKa 88 looks like a gun barrel sticking out from a cocoon-like rest, which is mounted on the underbelly of the disc. It weighs about 1 ton. It can be rotated 360 degrees; has a 10-shot magazine with automatic in-air reloading capacity; reloading takes 1 round; damage: 3D4x10 per shot or 1D4x100 per 3-round burst; range: 492 yards/450 m). 2 MG 42 machine-guns controlled by the gunner or pilot from the cockpit and mounted on the front of the disc (damage: 3D6 per 10-round burst, 5D6 per 3-round burst; can only make bursts; caliber: 7.92x57mm Mauser; range: 6,000 feet/1,829 m, 11,500 feet/3,505 m with tripod and telescopic sight; weight: 25.6 pounds/11.5 kg).

Notes: The disc can hover, turn around swiftly on its high axis in flight and is capable of vertical takeoff and landing (VTOL). Theoretically, no aircraft at the time would stand a chance against this beast. It uses a main Rene Leduc jet engine and has several secondary jet exhausts mounted around the circumference of the disc. These can be turned so that the exhaust is directed at the ground to create the VTOL capability and allow it to hover. It can hover at a height of about 130 feet (40 m).

Background Story for the Weird Flying Object: The Luftwaffe (German Air Force) started to support several projects for new air force technologies even before the war, such as for choppers (check the Focke-Wulf Fw 61 project, etc.). This intensified during the war. As legend has it, one of the experimental fields started in 1941 was the development of flying saucer-style wingless aircraft and something that might have been drones. The latter have become known as "foo fighters." Mind, this belongs rather more into the field of conspiracy theories than real science or history – when you read about these "UFOs" a connection is usually drawn to Area 51 and to some rather far-fetched technological advances like anti-gravitation devices – but for the purposes of our game, we will assume some "weird tech" did actually exist.

However, it was a reality in the Third Reich that there was a lot of in-fighting between the various branches of government and the military, all vying for glory and to shine in the eyes of the dictator. One very energetic branch was the SS. The SS branched out like a kraken; the longer the Third Reich lasted, the more competencies the SS claimed for itself. Aside from the SS basically becoming an armed force beside the armed forces, doubling all functions but for the navy, its holdings went from becoming the largest mineral water producer in the Reich to maintaining various more-or-less scientific units – from the above-described Ahnenerbe to rather scrupulous "medical" units. In the SS fight for internal dominance, it enviously looked at all projects not under its leadership and tried to either take them over or to copy the efforts to be first through the finish line. This is exactly what's going on here.

While the Schriever-Habermohl flying saucer Luftwaffe project commences at a Prague facility around the time of this adventure, the SS got into contact with an Italian engineer, a certain Professor Giuseppe Belluzzo, a specialist on turbines and hydraulics. Belluzzo had met Dr. Richard Miethel, an air force colonel and V-Weapon engineer working for the SS, at a conference in Rome in the late 1930s. The two men had

stayed in contact. Belluzzo told his friend about his flying disc design. Miethe asked for and got SS permission to collaborate with Belluzzo. It was organized so that the first designs were shipped to Crete shortly after Crete had been captured. While dangerous, the designs might be captured by the enemy after all, the Axis powers thought differently. Crete has recently been captured and quickly come to be a heavily reinforced Axis stronghold under joint German and Italian control. If the UFO worked, it could be combat tested right away and perhaps yield a glorious and immediate result, furthering SS political aims. If it did not work, the research was so far away from Berlin that the matter could be swept under the rug quietly. Based on Belluzzo's very advanced design, Miethe and Belluzzo finished a fully working and armed test disc in mere weeks. They left the site 3 days ago to report about the result in Berlin and move the research to Germany. They took all drawings and notes. They left only three discs, three mechanics and one test pilot at the site on Crete. The discs will be shipped away from Crete in about a week's time. For now, however, the secret yield of their collaboration is still sitting in the hangar: one finished, armed and fully working Belluzzo flying disc and one prior design, which may fly a bit if the pilot is very lucky (Malfunction chance for the second disc is 50%!).

3 Mechanics: Use the stats for the German SS soldiers above; know all skills befitting an aircraft mechanic at 80%.

Hans Gebhart, the Test Pilot: Use the stats for the German SS soldiers above; knows all skills befitting a pilot for all kinds of aircraft at 80%.

Barracks

There are 6 long, wriggly-tin buildings, typical quickly built barracks. Each has room for two groups, i.e. 20 men.

HQ Building

The HQ building was also built out of wriggly tin. It contains a mess hall sized to accommodate 40 men at a time, a kitchen with 3 SS-men as cooks, and a large office accommodating the company administration with 2 SS-men as clerks. At the back there are 5 bedrooms for the officers and scientific staff.

Freiherr Professor

Dr. Horst-Helmut von Hummelburg

Standartenführer (SS Colonel), Psychic Parapsychologist P.C.C.

Alignment: Miscreant (Evil).

Attributes: I.Q. 24, M.E. 17, M.A. 16, P.S. 10, P.P. 14, P.E. 13, P.B. 12, Spd 8.

S.D.C.: 30.

Hit Points: 16

I.S.P.: 40

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Paired, Fencing, W.P. Sword, W.P. Pistol.

Skills of Note: Anthropology 110%, Biology 115%, Forensics 110%, Medical Doctor 125%/115%, Technical Writing 102%, Language: German 118%, Literacy: German 120%, Language: English 100%, Literacy: English 110%, Language: Ancient Greek 100%, Literacy: Ancient Greek 110%, Language: Latin 100%, Literacy: Latin 110%, Lore: Cults & Secret Societies 95%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 110%, Lore: Entities & Ghosts 110%, Lore: Magic 100%, Lore: Magic Arcane 80%/100%, Lore: Mythology 110%, Lore: Paranormal & Psionics 115%, Parapsychology 120%, Pathology 110%, Psychology 120%, Research 115%, and Sensory Equipment 110%.

Level of Experience: 10th

Bonuses: 6 attacks, kick attack (1D8+3), +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact, +3 to parry/dodge, +2 strike, +3 disarm, karate kick (2D6+3), Critical Strike on a Natural 18-20, body flip/throw (1D6+3), +3 damage (already calculated in with damage dice); needs a 12 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +3 save vs Horror

Factor/hypnosis, +2 save vs magic/curses, +3 save vs possession, +2 save vs mind altering drugs, +6 to Perception Rolls.

Psionics: Sixth Sense, Medical Hypnosis, Commune with Spirits, Desiccation Touch, Mind Block Auto-Defense, See the Invisible, Speed Reading, Thought-Reading, and Total Recall.

Equipment: Saber (2D4+1D6+3; +4 to strike, +4 to parry, +2 to strike when thrown), Luger P08 semi-automatic pistol (damage: 3D6; +5 to strike; caliber 9x19mm parabellum; 8-round detachable box magazine; range 150 feet/45.7 m); MP 40 submachine-gun (damage: 3D6 per 3-round burst, 5D6 per 5-round burst; caliber 9x19mm parabellum; range 600 feet (183 m); 32-round magazine; burst fire only).

Description and Disposition: Freiherr (baron) von Hummelburg fought in WW1 as a cavalry officer with the rank of Rittmeister (captain); he was seriously wounded in one leg in 1917 – he has a limp to this day (hence also his low speed), which he calls “my little gift from ze English.” He is 5 feet, 8 inches (173 cm) tall and wiry but thin to the point of an ascetic's or runner's gauntness. His eyesight is not the best and without his glasses, he sees everything blurred beyond the reach of his hands and beyond 15 feet (4.6 m) as if in a dense fog. Instead of glasses, he affectedly prefers to sport a monocle. While anything but strong and quick anymore at 62, he is a most competent fencer and deadly with his saber.

He wears his old, white SS summer tunic – although this uniform has officially no longer been in use since 1940, but at a certain rank you can get away with some eccentricities – with black breeches-type trousers, jackboots, and usually also wears his saber and a Luger sidearm. He will only take off his saber when doing deskwork or conducting experiments. Even though chiefly a scientist, one must never forget that he is an experienced veteran officer as well and very well aware that he is in a war zone.

Von Hummelburg is highly intelligent. Make sure to play him as an utterly ruthless genius. He likes to appear avuncular, and he likes to smile and tell nice stories of “*ze good old days before ze war*” (he usually refers to the time before 1914). Even when irritated, he will always stay polite if perhaps piqued. “*Ve could have been friends, Herr Englishman, why did you have to insist on disturbing my experiments – how callous of you.*” “*Would you like a tea or perhaps something stronger?*” “*Ve have time for a cigarette before you will be interrogated.*” “*It will be painful, zat is true – must be effective, ja – but there is no reason to be uncivilized about zis.*”

He is, without question, a brilliant scientist ready to use *any* means necessary to break the barriers of current knowledge and paradigms. He is also a strong believer in the occult as well as a talented psychic. He considers his psychic powers to be “merely special skills.” He knows that the supernatural exists and plans to harness it to the cause of the Third Reich. He is utterly convinced that he is only “a good man working diligently for a righteous cause.” Notwithstanding, or perhaps because of this, he is willing to sacrifice anyone and anything in the name of his scientific studies and the Reich.

He does not draw a difference between science and the occult. After all, the “occult” is merely what is yet secret to us, i.e. unknown, and he will see it all revealed. As he would put it; “*ze old Greeks believed zat Zeus throws ze lightning. Laughable for us now, ja? Just so. Now we command ze lightning. It is our calling to command tomorrow what we do not yet understand today!*”

G.M. Tip: Use the horrible German accent of the movies!

Deal with the Devil

Professor von Hummelburg found a book to bind a demon to his will years ago in a dusty old bookshop in Leipzig. He studied it deeply and learnt it by rote. He left the book – “Um Faustens Willen: Von Dämonen und wie sie gebunden werden können” (By the Will of Faust: Of Demons and how to bind them), Leipzig 1666 – in his library at Berlin. He did not want to attempt summoning a demon as that was inaccurately described in the treatise and he deemed it far too dangerous. Yet, he has

always believed that an auspicious opportunity would arise sometime, and so it did on Crete. When von Hummelburg diligently conducted his experiments, he caused indescribable pain to his victims. The Scientific Draugur process of re-creation is based on making use of intense emotions and often leads to a horrible death. The resulting P.P.E. emissions and the highly charged emotional emanations drew a Lesser Demon, to be precise the Possessing Entity, from the Minoan ruins where it lingered like a hungry bear to the proverbial honey pot.

As luck would have it, the Entity tried to possess the good professor but Hummelburg saved successfully against possession. A battle of wills ensued – should you need it in the course of the game, use the rules on Battle of Wills, Maintaining Control and Subservient Creatures (*Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, pages 141-144), but note that Hummelburg does not have the protective aid of a protection circle – and the Possessing Entity reluctantly became subservient to Hummelburg. It still negotiated the condition of its service with Hummelburg. The German scientist offered a mighty host body (the Minotaur) to the demon, which the demon would get in a great ritual at midnight a few days hence, and the demon accepted.

Hummelburg is extremely intelligent, considerably more intelligent than the Entity. He also is well read on the subject of demons. He is aware that the Entity is diabolical and malevolent and will do what it can to twist every command intentionally to cause trouble to Hummelburg or just to spite him. This could include the Entity sending a warning message to a party member via *Telepathy*, etc. However, the Entity will do nothing that endangers either its own existence or it getting control of the juicy Minotaur host body.

Hummelburg clearly commanded the Entity to remain subservient to him when in control of the Minotaur, but what happens thereafter will be interesting. It will be up to you as G.M. to decide if and how Hummelburg might botch future commands, especially in the heat of battle, should such ensue. If von Hummelburg is killed during the ritual, even before its completion, the result of the “ritual” will not change. The ritual, even if Hummelburg believes otherwise, is neither necessary to cause the demon to possess the Minotaur nor to extend the Minotaur’s life span. It is far simpler: the Entity thinks the Minotaur is an ideal and attractive host body. However, without Hummelburg around, the demon-Minotaur would wreak absolute havoc and show no restraint. Interestingly, in such a case – as happened at the Open House games – the demon will be free to do what it wills, including attacking the German SS soldiers.

Possessing Entity

Alignment: Diabolical (Evil).

Attributes: Not applicable to the Entity in energy form; extremely intelligent with an I.Q. of 18. Invisible in its natural state, intangible in energy form with a speed of 50 (35 mph/56 km). Otherwise has the physical attributes of the host body it controls – though not the skills or memory of that individual. Its control of the body gives it Supernatural P.S.

Armor Rating: Not applicable.

Hit Points: 130 for the Entity itself, Hit Points of the host body are per that individual.

S.D.C.: As per the host body.

Discorporation: Only people who can see the invisible can see the Entity, a long, smoking blackness with a hundred small legs, pincers and tendrils, giving it a sort of ghostly centipede appearance. When destroyed, they simply vanish in a puff of light and wisp of black smoke.

Threat Level: x4; Haunter and Cruel Prankster, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 11

P.P.E.: 3

Size: About the size of a basketball when in energy form or as per host body.

Weight: Not applicable.

Natural Abilities: Hover and fly in energy form at a speed of 35 mph (56 km), its natural state is invisible and it is impervious to physical and energy attack.

Possession (special): The ability to seize control. Potential victims roll to save vs Possession and need a 13 or higher (plus bonuses, if any). A failed roll means the victim is possessed! Successful possession gives the Entity complete control over the body and turns the body’s P.S. into Supernatural P.S. to be used when needed.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 90%. May communicate via *Telepathy*, but may also speak using its host body and his voice.

Also see *Psionics*, which may be used in energy form and while in control of a physical body.

Vulnerabilities: Against the Possessing Entity, mainly Exorcism and psionic attacks. Against the poor soul who is possessed, any methods suitable against a foe with a physical body are options.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Basic Math 85%, Dance 70%, Escape Artist 60%, Find Contraband 60%, Gambling 70%, Gambling: Dirty Tricks 55%, I.D. Undercover Agent 50%, Land Navigation 70%, Seduction 60%, Streetwise 55%, and understands all languages 90%, but cannot read.

Equivalent Level or Experience: 5

Attacks per Melee: 4 physical attacks per melee round in a host body or 2 psionic attacks in physical form (4 psionic attacks in energy form).

Damage: By psionics, the physical body, or weaponry.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to any attribute bonuses of the host body): Supernatural P.S., +2 to initiative, +1 Perception Rolls, +2 to strike, +4 to parry/dodge, +2 to pull punches, +2 to roll with impact, +2 save vs magic, +2 save vs psionic attacks, +10 save vs Horror Factor and is impervious to possession and mind control. All apply to the physical form, too.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attack. I.S.P. base is a mere 30, but the Possessing Entity can draw on the I.S.P. and or P.P.E. of the host body (if applicable) or the ambient P.P.E. around it to perform psionic feats. This means it has virtually unlimited amounts of I.S.P. when on a ley line. P.P.E. conversion is one P.P.E. point = 4 I.S.P. points.

Limited Psionic Powers: Empathy (at no I.S.P. cost), Death Trance (1), Empathic Transmission (6; described on page 174 PFRPG), Bio-Manipulation / The Evil Eye (10; described on page 172 PFRPG), Impervious to Fire (4), Levitation (varies), Mind Block (4), Sixth Sense (2), See the Invisible (4), Telekinesis (varies), and *Telepathy* (4). Equal to the Entity’s level of experience.

Enemies: None per se but hates humans and all beings who are good and/or attractive.

Allies: None per se, typically a loner.

Habitat: Anywhere. Rare.

Artur Emil Hartlaub

Sturmbannführer (SS Major) and commanding officer of special command Minos, Ordinary Person O.C.C.

Alignment: Aberrant (Evil).

Attributes: I.Q. 16, M.E. 14, M.A. 20, P.S. 20, P.P. 17, P.E. 17, P.B. 12, Spd 30.

S.D.C.: 51

Hit Points: 22

Combat Skills: Hand to Hand: Expert, W.P. Pistol, W.P. Submachine-Gun, W.P. Rifle, Boxing, Fencing, W.P. Sword, and W.P. Paired Weapons.

Skills of Note: APC & Tanks: 79%, Athletics (general), Automobile 89%, Body Building & Weight Lifting, Combat Driving, First Aid 92%, Forced March, Language: German 99%, Literacy: German 100%, Language: English 79%, Literacy: English 87%, Language: French 79%, Literacy: French 87%, Tracked Vehicles 101%, Military Etiquette 82%, and Running.

Level of Experience: 9th

Bonuses: 7 attacks, damage +5, +3 strike, +5 to parry/dodge, +3 disarm, +3 pull punch, +3 to roll with punch, fall or impact, kick at-

tack (1D8+5), karate punch, karate kick (2D6+5), Critical Strike on a Natural 18-20, W.P. Paired Weapons, backhand strike (1D4+5), and body flip/throw (1D6+5).

Equipment: Luger P08 semi-automatic pistol (damage: 3D6; +5 to strike; caliber 9x19mm parabellum; 8-round detachable box magazine; range 150 feet/45.7 m). MP 40 submachine-gun (damage: 3D6 per 3-round burst, 5D6 per 5-round burst; caliber 9x19mm parabolium; range 600 feet/183 m; 32-round magazine; burst fire only). Saber (2D4+1D6+5; +8 to strike, +9 to parry, +5 to strike when thrown). SS Knife (1D6+5; +7 to strike, +10 to parry; +7 to strike when thrown). *Bonuses above are already calculated in for the melee weapons here.*

Description and Disposition: Artur Emil Hartlaub is 6 feet, 2 inches (188 cm) tall, dark haired, clean shaven, meticulously dressed in his crisp black uniform and always freshly shined boots, broad shouldered, and has a chiseled face with a nutcracker chin. He is well-trained and a fanatic about staying in shape as he knows out-of-shape means death on the field. He always wears his sidearm and SS dagger. He will wear the sword only on formal occasions, like the ritual.

Major Hartlaub is a career soldier. Born in 1896, he enlisted in 1914 and made his way up through the ranks. Although not of noble birth, he was sent to officer training due to his exemplary conduct as a soldier and earning the Iron Cross when still a sergeant (Feldwebel) in 1915. He wanted to get back to the front as quickly as possible and after receiving his commission in 1916, received his first platoon command, rising quickly to the rank of captain. In 1918 he received the Ordre Pour Le Mérite for superior bravery facing the enemy while in command: he and his company took out a French battalion in a daring night raid. Hartlaub is an extremely competent and courageous officer. He is also very proud of his accomplishments. As a member of the Order of Merit, one of the highest-ranking medals, he is due special military honors; knights of the order have to be saluted first, even by officers outranking them and guards have to shoulder their rifles, which normally was only reserved to directly superior commanding officers and members of a ruling noble house. Consequently, Hartlaub refuses to salute von Hummelburg first and he enjoys this on a personal level.

Hartlaub was heartbroken when Germany had to go through the shame of an unconditional surrender and fell into a deep depression when Kaiser Wilhelm II abdicated; when the German army was reduced to 100,000 men, he was out of a job as well and lost not only his livelihood but the very definition of himself. Artur is a soldier through and through and cannot conceive to do anything else. Without cash he had to leave Potsdam and lodge with his uncle in Munich. He soon joined the extremist Freikorps group where he found like-minded officers and listened to a certain Adolf Hitler, an eerily gifted orator, speaking for one of the many new political parties, while drinking a beer. He joined the Nazi party as one of the first 100 members “to reclaim German honor” and has been a member of the SS since its first formation. Others with whom he joined the SS rose farther than him. Artur is friends with quite a few SS Generals, as they were more “in line” politically.

As ruthless as the Major is as a soldier, he is a man of a strong personal honor and will keep the Prussian officer ideal and code at all costs. At his heart, Hartlaub is still a loyal monarchist and would wish for nothing better than the return of the Kaiser. It seemed an option for a long time. Hartlaub knows for sure that His Majesty had waited for the call to return until his dying day. When the Kaiser died only 1 month back, in June 1941, Hartlaub’s last dream that everything could return to how it should be was crushed. More than that, even if it is “a good war,” i.e. going well, it is slowly dawning on him that the Nazis may not be the saviors of Germany and the more he sees, the more he detests their methods. The only thing that is left to him now is to soldier on as he always has, do his duty, serve the Reich and win this bloody war. However, since being “awarded” with this duty station a few weeks back, he heard and saw what von Hummelburg is doing. Hartlaub is appalled.

He does not like what von Hummelburg is doing. Hummelburg and his ilk, in Hartlaub’s opinion, are murderous swine without due regard for honor and proper soldierly conduct. One does not kill civil-

ians for sport or research. A soldier should face the enemy and not the meek. While he would never not do his duty, “pressing other needs” might allow him to not protect von Hummelburg. He would gladly see that torturer pass.

He is highly respected by his men, even if his command style is “old school” strict. The Major is very loyal to his men. His clear and irresistible command voice is legendary and when he speaks calmly or privately, it is clear that he always speaks honestly (trust/intimidate 60%).

Not Evil Enough?

Hartlaub is the strange example of a good and honorable man who has to be considered evil by association; his strict and obedient adherence to duty and the breakdown of his world in 1918/1919 led him to complicity and into being a part of man-made darkness. Although he perceives himself as honorably “good” and Germany to be “right,” he is conflicted. If the right things happen, he might be led back to the “light.” This makes him an interesting NPC and, perhaps, even an ally from an unexpected place. With the right role-playing, who knows, maybe Hartlaub can even be “turned” to work for the SOE. If you feel uncomfortable with this, play him as straightforward evil as you like and ignore his conflict as described herein.

Too Evil?

If you feel uncomfortable with having a company of SS around in your game at all, change them to a Parachute Infantry unit and make Hartlaub a regular Wehrmacht officer. This would underscore his conflict with what von Hummelburg is doing. I recommend leaving von Hummelburg to be the intentionally exaggerated evil arch-villain he is. This worked very well for the players in my various runs of this adventure.

“The Dig”: Ruin & Ritual

About 5 minutes’ walk down-slope from the Nazi Encampment is the digging site, i.e. the partially unearthed ruins of the Minoan temple and small palace at Kato Zakros.

It is a small site and von Hummelburg did not have much opportunity to dig up anything much yet. The structures one can see, as described in the following, were above ground already when von Hummelburg arrived only a few weeks back. Actually, “the dig” is really a cover-up for the Professor’s evil experiments and the flying disc project at this time. This would only change if von Hummelburg was to get confirmation about his wild Atlanteans Theory and information where to dig to find Atlantean remnants. At the moment, he has nothing on that.

There are the remains of an open temple with Greek columns and a gorgeous floor tile mosaic. In front of the temple is a wide marketplace with a well. Opposite the temple are the ruins of a Greek amphitheater with a half-round of tired stone steps/seating, which will accommodate up to 150 people.

If the party comes to this area before the night of the ritual, they may find the Minotaur chained to the walls of the temple structure in the Minoan palace ruins. He will be guarded by a group of 6 vigilant SS soldiers.

During the day, Professor von Hummelburg normally went about his Draugur-experiments and, in his spare time, speculating about the secrets of Atlantis. Now, close to the ritual, all his work is about preparing the ritual. He has already brought the Minotaur back to life. He plans to wed a demon’s essence to the Minotaur’s body to extend the life span of the Scientific Draugur and to make it more powerful as described. The ritual will occur at high midnight on the 22nd June.

Starting at 2200 on the 22nd, Hartlaub will order most of his men to march to the amphitheater. Only one group of 12 soldiers will remain behind to guard the compound: (1) four men will man the guard towers (two each), (2) another four will patrol the area in groups of two, each with a guard dog, and (3) two will stay in the guard room at the HQ building playing cards and, knowing the “old man,” will not be back for a while, having

a few bottles of beer. Two more men are standing at attention in front of the laboratory building, waiting for Colonel von Hummelburg.

The men marching to the amphitheater will wear dress uniforms and rifles at shoulder rest. About a third of them will carry torches, turning the march into a procession. They are led by Major Hartlaub, six drummers and two flag bearers. The flag bearers carry the company ensign and the Nazi flag. When arriving at the theater, two groups of 5 men will each take positions on the far left and far right side of the stage. They have been ordered to watch the Minotaur and shoot the beast should it not follow von Hummelburg's orders. Another 10 men with torches will take positions on the topmost tier of the stone seats of the theater, casting an eerily celebratory light on the scene. The men with the flags will take positions in front of the stage standing at attention. The drummers drum during the procession. When all arrive at the amphitheater, Hartlaub orders his men to sit. Silence will then fall on the theater.

At 2330, Von Hummelburg will leave the compound, accompanied by the invisible Possessing Entity and his two guards to go to the temple. Each guard carries a rifle and a satchel. The satchels were given to them by von Hummelburg when he left the laboratory and contain what he needs for the ritual – jars with blood, several candles and a ritual knife. He enjoys the walk as this is the day of his greatest accomplishment so far and the fulfillment of a lifelong dream, and so he takes his time to go to the temple, arriving there at 2340. He will then communicate with the Minotaur, calming him, with *Commune with Spirits*. The Minotaur knows he is “ill.” Von Hummelburg said he would be able to heal him with a ritual. The Minotaur does not fully trust the little man, but he seems to be a powerful priest. So, the beast has decided to chance the “healing.”

At precisely 2350, the drummers will begin drumming with a slow and steady drumbeat. Hummelburg will arrive at the theater – again accompanied by his guardsmen, the Entity and, now, the Minotaur – 5 minutes later. The guards put the satchels down close to von Hummelburg at front center stage. Von Hummelburg will then show the Minotaur to stand in the middle of the stage. The drumming will rise to a roll at this point.

At midnight, the Colonel will command silence, give a respectful bow to the four points of the compass, turn around towards the Minotaur and start chanting in Enochian, a language of magic, at first in a low voice. He will then take the jars and other implements out of the satchel and start drawing a circle around the Minotaur with his ritual knife, dipping it in the blood in the jars. He will also draw wards, likewise in blood. He will never cease his chant. When the circle is ready, he will finish it by placing 8 candles on its circumference and light them. When the candles will have been lit, he will rise, spreading his arms in a summoning gesture. His chanting will rise to a crescendo and with a final clap of his hands, the ritual will be complete. At this moment the Entity will take possession of the Minotaur.

BtS Flair Info: Characters with *Lore: Magic* or *Lore: Magic Arcane* may recognize that he chants in Enochian, if they roll well enough (G.M. decision), they may actually understand what he says, at least in part. Enochian is a magic “angelic language,” which was revealed to the English magician Dr. Dee in the 16th Century. Von Hummelburg is “enchanted” wards of power and drawing a “circle of protection” while evoking the protection of the fallen angels of hell. None of this really works, but von Hummelburg believes it. The only real demon is already present and excitedly circles von Hummelburg invisibly. The Entity cannot wait to take over the Minotaur. Characters who can *See the Invisible* will witness this. *See Aura* will detect the Entity.

Well, at least the above is the planned choreography. Let's see how the party messes it up. Every time I played it, it was a wild ride. Enjoy and G.M., expect the unexpected.

The Minotaur

Also Known as: The Minotaur-Wiederganger.

Alignment: Diabolical (Evil).

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.E. 15, M.A. 11, P.S. 25, P.P. 20, P.E. 30, P.B. 10, Spd 15.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 12 (natural).

Hit Points: 75

S.D.C.: 75

Physical Appearance: Muscular, humanoid giant with dark bluish-grey to black skin, black hair, yellow eyes and the head of a bull. The yellow eyes glow sickly.

Discorporation: Upon reaching -30 H.P. will collapse into a steaming pulp of ooze.

Average Life Span: If possessed by the Possessing Entity, the demon's ability to draw in P.P.E. from dying creatures and the surroundings will keep the Draugur alive, potentially for up to another 200 years (natural remaining life span); if not possessed, he will live for merely another 2 days (see the rules for the New Monster: Scientific Draugur at the end of this adventure).

Threat Level: x4; Supernatural Predator.

Horror Factor: 13 (14 after the ritual).

Size: 11 feet tall (3.4 m).

Weight: 800 pounds (360 kg).

P.P.E.: 4

Natural Abilities: Superior physical strength and endurance, nightvision 60 feet (18.3 m; can see in total darkness), good overall vision and hearing, superior sense of smell, recognize scent 22%, track by blood scent 54%, fire and cold resistant (does half damage); Supernatural P.S. if possessed by the Possessing Entity.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Man-made weapons that penetrate its A.R. inflict full damage, as do magic, psionics and physical blows.

2. Arrogant; tends to underestimate the “puny humans.”

3. Cannot really hide well and actually has no intention of doing so.

4. Automatically gets into a berserker rage when his S.D.C. reaches 0. Will stand and be able to keep fighting until negative P.E. (-30) Hit Points, damage +6, and strike/parry/dodge -6. A supernatural Minotaur in a berserker rage has all the finesse of a raging bull but it is a sight no character will ever forget!

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalent (do not improve with experience): Language: Minoan 50% (haltingly with bullish grunts and a thunderous rumble), and Climbing 60%.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 10

Attacks per Melee: Six attacks per melee.

Bonuses (including attribute bonuses): +13 damage, +3 pull punch, +2 roll with punch, fall or impact, +7 parry/dodge, +6 strike, +3 disarm, Critical Strike on a Natural 18-20, +8 save vs magic/poison, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, and is impervious to possession if the ritual is successful.

Damage: Claws/punch (2D6+13, if possessed 5D6+13), kick (3D6+13, if possessed 6D6+13), head butt (3D6+13, if possessed 6D6+13), charge with horns (2 attacks; 5D6+13, if possessed 8D6+13), also has a 60% chance of knocking the victim of the charge down (victim loses one melee attack and initiative).

Magic: None.

Psionics: None. Needs a 15 or higher to save vs psionic attack.

Allies: None per se.

Enemies: None per se.

Habitat: Crete.

New Monsters

Scientific Draugur

The Draugur (plural of Draugur) are undead from Germanic/Norse mythology. The meaning of the word is “ghost” but it came to describe the animated dead. It means something between a seaman who has died in the water and came back as an undead and a barrow-wight. If you will, the Draugur is sometimes seen more like a wraith and sometimes as the powerful Norse version of a “zombie.” Another German term is *Wiedergänger*, the one-who-walks-back (from death to (un)life). Draugur are terribly resilient and supernaturally strong. The creature as described

herein is not the undead from mythology but a monster created by paranormal technology. Nazi scientists – Nazis always had a somewhat sick penchant for Germanic/Norse mythology, twisting it to their ends – have managed to use paranormal technology to – if only temporarily – raise the dead. For them it was logical to choose a “Nordic” name.

Scientist Dr. Ralf von Stern first found a way to recreate a body by computing a basic cell soup to form along the dictates of as little as a tiny sample of DNA. So far, it has only been tried on human DNA. The DNA can be quite old; it can have been embedded in another material, such as amber, etc. As long as it is technically possible to get to a piece that contains a sufficiently sized DNA sample, the body can be recreated. The amount available needs to be a spatula-sized sample. The chance of success for re-creating a body is:

100% - [2% per every 100 years of age of the sample]

For Example: Let us say that a DNA sample of a soldier of the early 1st Century AD would have been 1,900 years old in 1940; thus, the re-creation chance would be $100-[2 \times 19]%$, i.e. 62%. Unless the G.M. awards special bonuses, the limit of this technology is the recreation of bodies with an age of less than 5,000 years. However, we all know how quickly technology can advance and potentially... even Dinosaurs could be recreated.

A Nobel Prize-worthy piece of scientific work – just imagine the possibilities for research – but that is not where von Stern stopped. Von Stern was given a weird half-scientific treatise speaking of how to distill emotion into ectoplasm. At first, he dismissed the idea as nonsense and did not see the use. However, one day, after “encouragement” by an occult-loving superior, he tried it out. He theorized that every emotion has an occult echo and the stronger the emotion – either because it comes from multiple sources or is individually intense – the more and better the resulting ectoplasm should be. Using the available recording technology as a model, he built a weird gramophone-like construction. Mystical symbols (from the treatise) are inscribed on the cone of the gramophone. The gramophone is then set up as close as possible to where emotions are emitted. It then “catches” the externalized emotions – screams for example – and galvanizes their echo into ectoplasm that is pumped into a nearby vat through rubber hoses attached to the body of the machine. Von Stern observed that the ectoplasm seemed to have a life of its own, squirming like a can of worms and boiling like the primordial ooze. Maybe, he thought, ectoplasm is in fact identical to “the” primordial ooze, and if so, perhaps it can be used to recreate life. Out of sheer curiosity he was impelled to pump the ectoplasm into a recently recreated body. Under heavens of what must have been tremendous pain, the body was rocked back into life. Its eyes opened and it gargled some first words. The monster was uncannily strong and destroyed half the laboratory, almost killing von Stern, before it could be restrained. Further experimentation, which was then immediately and robustly funded – the aim was to create a cheap army of supernaturally strong soldiers – quickly led to the current results. The recreated body, imbued with false ectoplasmic life seems to even have some intelligence of its own that mirrors broken shards of the knowledge the creature had in life. Many can even speak (60%) but only in their mother tongue, most can manipulate objects according to their former knowledge (80%) and all will likely follow simple orders (90% per order) if the “operator” can communicate in the language of the Draugur. The current process has two main drawbacks: 50% of the Draugur are insane (1D4 insanities) and all will “die” after a period of 1D6-1 days (if the result is “0” the body will collapse after a few hours).

The program is now down to lower funding again. It turned out that the energy requirements were very high, thus the cost. That would not have been so bad but without speeding the process up, getting the insanity rate down, and achieving a higher (un)life expectancy, the results were just not sufficiently viable for soldier mass production. Still, the program has its uses for the Nazi secret service and the historical research program of von Hummelburg. Both *Telepathy* and *Commune with Spirits* works on the Draugur.

Scientific Draugar (stats below for human)

Also Known As: The Pumped up Zombie, Ecto-Frankenstein and Nazipulp.

Alignment: Any, as in life.

Attribute: I.Q. 2D6, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 3D6+6 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd 1D6.

Armor Rating (A.R.): None, unless armor is worn.

Hit Points: 24 H.P. per day alive remaining. (Lives 1D6-1 days; if the result of the die roll is “0,” H.P. are 12 and the creature collapses after 1D10 hours. A Draugur regenerates like it would have in life, but every dawn the creature loses 24 H.P. If that gets it under 0, it will disincorporate.)

S.D.C.: 3D6+10

Disincorporation: Upon reaching 0 H.P. it will collapse into a steaming pulp of ooze.

Average Life Span: 3 days.

Threat Level: x2 to x3; the supernatural horror or threat is present more when the re-created start to dissolve (takes a couple of minutes at the end of their life span) or when they are raging insanely, use x3 then.

Horror Factor: 10 (13 if creation or dissolving is witnessed).

Size: Usually human-sized.

Weight: As per the body in life.

P.P.E.: None.

Natural Abilities: As per the person in life.

Vulnerabilities: As any human being.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience):

Chance to speak their mother tongue is 60%; chance to be able to manipulate objects according to their former knowledge is 80%. Those who fail have lost the knowledge to speak or use objects; all skills that employ objects like W.P.s, use a screwdriver, etc., but also balancing on a tight rope, or climbing a ladder, do not work.

Equivalent Level of Experience: As person in life -3 with a minimum of 1.

Attacks per Melee: 3 (4 if a warrior in life).

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): As person in life.

Damage: As person in life.

Magic: As person in life.

Psionics: As person in life.

Allies: None.

Enemies: Nothing special.

Habitat: Nothing special.

Note: The Draugur can act like they did when in life unless they are insane. However, the recreation process only calls them back imperfectly, i.e. skill levels will usually be lower and a few cannot speak and some have lost all ability to manipulate objects.

To New Horizons: 194x Eerie Company BtS

The 20th Century was torn by war, none greater and more devastating than WWII. Man dealt horrible blows to Man, but the horror of the battlefield paled in comparison to the industrial genocide created by the Third Reich. The free world fought for its survival against an implacable and seemingly over-mighty enemy. However, where there is darkness there is also light. Many feats of great heroism from this struggle are told to this day. Your players have the opportunity to add to these tales in 194x Eerie Company BtS. You as G.M. have the chance to take them back in time to the war-torn 1940s to face an evil greater than many supernatural enemies, dark secrets and ancient mysteries worthy of a tall tale.

Game Flavors

There are many ways to play a BtS campaign in WWII and it can take one of the following flavors:

The Soldier Campaign: The characters are part of a unit of the armed forces of an Allied force. This is, basically, a military campaign and you could let the players fight their way from the start of the war up to Hitler's "Eagles' Nest" in the Alps. Watching Band of Brothers is a great preparation for this kind of campaign, especially if you want to set the theme around an airborne unit. The flair of this campaign will be distinctly military. Let the horror slowly creep into this kind of game. Over time, every military unit staying in action becomes veteran, more proficient at its job, and more practically minded: hardened. You can charge such a unit with some special combat missions.

Covert Operations: There have always been irregular troops in human history, but WWII saw the rise in force of what has been called "ungentlemanly warfare." Britain was in extremely bad straits in the first years of war and had every reason to fear invasion. Churchill was first to endorse the idea to form a special force in July 1940, which became famous under the name Special Operations Executive (SOE) and took a leaf from Irish guerrilla tactics in the 1920s. The SOE worked in small units, sometimes operatives would work alone and were tasked with infiltration, subversion, sabotage behind enemy lines, assassination – such as the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich in Prague – espionage, and building up resistance networks and local guerrilla units, such as in Crete or occupied France. Likewise, the first British Commando units were formed in June 1940 and tasked with coastal raiding and all sorts of special operations as well as being used as assault infantry; the so-called Layforce is one of the first examples of such units. In 1942, Canada and the USA formed their own commando unit together, the 1st Special Service Force known as the Devil's Brigade, and the USA set up the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) with much the same job as the SOE and a predecessor of the CIA. A campaign around commandos is close to a SOLDIER CAMPAIGN and an SOE/OSS type of action shares a bit with the ESPIONAGE CAMPAIGN.

The Espionage Campaign: Think Ian Fleming and you are spot on. This kind of adventure is set around all-out cloak and dagger spy activity. Ian Fleming, in fact, was a spy in British Naval Intelligence as well as a Royal Marines Commando. The James Bond stories are, at least to some extent, based on hands-on experience. This could also lead to a crossover between *Ninjas & Superspies™* and *Beyond the Supernatural™*.

The Subversive Socialites' Campaign: Not everyone can be a soldier and not everyone remains entirely honest in a war. The Subversive Socialites' Campaign probably has some overlap with the ESPIONAGE CAMPAIGN. Imagine Casablanca plus the supernatural. Play it again, Sam!

The Supernatural in WW2

You can use all the creatures in the book. You may even use the Old Ones from *Palladium Fantasy®* or Vampires from *Nightbane®*. The supernatural works the same way in 194x as today. However, the many conspiracy theories, especially about weird science, and the evil of Nazism provides a phenomenally rich and well-prepared era to play in.

WW2 offers you a special background for your horrors and supernatural events. For example:

- The group can be pitted against a horrible Nazi cult employing occult weapons.
- Maybe the occult has nothing to do with the Nazis per se, but is awakened by the thousandfold deaths and pain caused by the war.

- There could be ghouls on the battlefield, long-legged things that rise from ancient graveyards and ruins.
- Maybe there is a super soldier program after all and the players are thrown against it.
- The weird science experiments of the Nazis may allow them to recreate a dinosaur (see the Scientific Draugur above) or let loose horrors worthy of the island of Doctor Moreau, whose descendant could be a Nazi collaborator.

A Longer War Campaign: Dilettante Draftees turn into Veteran Soldiers

In the war, most soldiers were draftees and sent into battle after a, more or less, short military schooling – dilettante soldiers, if you will. If you played a longer campaign and the characters would make it past several battles and from war year to war year, these soldier-specific skills should gradually be treated like occupational skills, i.e. professional rather than dilettante skills. In peacetime, the route to professionalism will probably take the same time as any apprenticeship. In war, however, experience is more concentrated and, if you survive, you will become a pro fast or perish.

Turning Operation Minotaur into a Campaign

If you plan to turn this adventure into a whole campaign, I will recommend playing the whole adventure out, especially the *Welcome to the Army* chapter. Take your time to let the players sink into the WW2 flavor.

You might even consider starting the game with a prologue, for example playing through their training. This technique worked very well for the Curahee start of Band of Brothers – it made the characters three-dimensional and gave them roots.

Especially for characters coming from the European theater, I suggest to let them "feel" the war. Give them a motivation why they would join the army or a special service like the SOE. Let the characters experience the Blitz attacks on London. Let one of the characters fight a dogfight over the Channel. A French character might have seen German troops march through Paris. Trust me, the game will be more intense if the characters have a real motivation from experience!

That said, for an ongoing campaign it might be a cool if one of the great villains survives, either Major Hartlaub or even Professor von Hummelburg. Recurring villains are always a nice touch and good motivation for the party. Make sure that such villains reflect whatever happened in the encounter (does he have additional wounds, frailties, an insanity, etc.?); he may even actively be out for revenge against the party.

Another nice touch is ending the adventure on a cliffhanger before you go to a following adventure. Alternatively, an open end, like the boat leaves the harbor, away from Crete and slowly makes its way to Cairo under the hot Mediterranean sun serves well; it gives some sense of accomplishment (like "cowboy riding into sunset") but leaves you to turn the next page. Maybe the next adventure has something to do with Egyptian mythology, pyramids, a mummy or a theft from the Cairo museum, and maybe all that against the backdrop of an aggressive campaign by Rommel.

Good hunting!

FIN

Note: See the back of this PDF for full size, color versions of the handouts for this adventure!



Saving the World ...with the Secret Operative

Optional Material for Heroes Unlimited™

By Matt Reed

He hadn't heard of this Spook Squad before, and it grated at him. Helsin reflected that it was too late for second thoughts. Rule Six: Verify the Lead. And so he did, enough to know that there had to be some truth to their words. Upside down on a climbing harness, the operative saw his target enter from the back of the stage. He'd ascend the podium, announce his candidacy for Congress, and there'd be a round of applause. He'd snipe the monster posing as a civil servant, retract his line, and disappear. It was simple. Rule Two: It was never simple. He drew his rifle, and waited. The politician took the stage, and the sight was upon him. Helsin paused again. It wasn't right, something made his skin crawl about this guy, but it wasn't enough to gamble that he really was more than your usual sort of monster. Rule Eight: You can always withdraw. Helsin hit the retract button on his harness. He'd pull back, research, and return if he deemed it necessary. There was always tomorrow.

The Secret Operative, another classic archetypal hero, has been a staple of high-budget films since the 1960s. A character of skill, bravery, and charm that can move through social scenes, the slums, and military outposts with equal ease. This is a non-powered agent, armed with custom weaponry and gadgets, that is able to bring low assassins, henchmen, and villainous organizations. For those players who enjoy high-risk intrigue and overcoming the odds, the Secret Operative is a perfect choice in the world of *Heroes Unlimited*™.

The training and ability set of the Superspy isn't as varied as the Super Sleuth or the Stage Magician, for most, if not all, spies have the same basic training. Espionage, military skills, piloting, all with a government or corporate backer to ensure the most out of their agent. That said, there is still a variety of ways to build a Superspy, whether one wishes to focus on the brutally efficient hand to hand skills of Jason Bourne, subterfuge and disguise like Ethan Hunt, or the versatility of James Bond himself.

However in order to reinvent the Secret Operative, certain meta problems need to be addressed. How does a player fulfill one of the key aspects of the Operative? Such to say, a Superspy almost never finds himself in a position where he is completely unfamiliar. The spy is stranded in Prague? He was part of a mission here months ago. The spy discovers custom advanced weaponry? She's trained in something similar. The spy is undergoing reentry in a space shuttle? Trained, but never had the chance to do it until now.

Historically, the Superspy has the training to handle any situation that presents itself. Now, one can't just give the Secret Operative every single piloting, weapon, and cultural skill in the game. While hardly game-breaking, it would encompass almost every skill the spy could possibly learn. The truth of the matter is that there is no way to predict exactly what a player is going to come across in a game, and as such, to represent the solution to this issue, one has to also approach it from the meta viewpoint as well.

The answer is one of the Superspy's signature skills, **Ubiquity**, which will be defined later. Ubiquity gives the Secret Operative a way to adjust to his mission, twice per level. I expect several situations to arise from a player trying to decide if he wishes to spend Ubiquity on whether or not he knows how to use the laser rifle, or hold off on that, in case he comes across the alien flying ship that he is trailing.

In addition to Ubiquity, there's a higher focus on the stealth and surveillance abilities of the spy, with the superskill **Infiltration**, which is one of the Secret Operative's other main abilities, able to be augmented further to help specialize your spy.

Specialized equipment in the form of Gadgetry also gives the Operative more definition and versatility, a customized make-your-own Gadget system that the player and the G.M. can work together on in order to create a virtually unlimited range of support.

Secret Operative abilities are seen here just like with the other Special Training rewrites, and as always, these abilities help define the character further in smaller ways overall, but can end up multiplying the effectiveness of the Operative.

These other aspects of the Operative have been adjusted and defined in order to emphasize something the Superspy has that most of those "powered" heroes do not: Skill. As with the Sleuth and the Stage Magician, a game mechanic called "Skill Quality" will be referenced repeatedly throughout this article.

Perception, Intuition, Skill Quality, and Contested Skills

Playing Palladium for a number of years, my group had realized a few things that were hard to resolve properly. One of which was that a character with a 98% in Prowl was almost constantly invisible if its player so wished. No matter how many guards were at the gates, no matter who had a keen eye, the 98% Prowl character would be able to do as he wished. There was a terribly low chance of ever noticing him. The worst that a G.M. could do is to assign a negative to Prowl. Yet those guards, they had no chance to notice him on their own.

The second problem was when skills were used against each other, but there was no way to determine resolution. If you roll Camouflage and succeed, and I roll Detect Ambush and succeed, what is the resolution? It leads to a gray area in the rules, and as such, has been defined a bit further. The skill that succeeds the highest, is the victor in this example.

When a character has 98% in Prowl, she is most likely exceedingly confident in her ability to move quietly, and remain unseen. At this point, what matters is how good the character's opposition is. The second character would pit a skill against the Prowl roll. If the character has Advanced Hearing, he might opt to use the percentile skill listed there to keep his senses sharp.

This also works for contested Computer Hacking rolls, Piloting, Gambling, and more. Of course, the G.M. can rule that something is a "simple check" therefore only requiring a basic roll on your part to succeed, and ignore any opposition rolls.

Example: White Witch is attempting to Prowl past Eagleeye, a henchman of the organization she's infiltrating. White Witch rolls a 64% on Prowl. Eagleeye has Heightened Sense of Hearing, and as such, he can generally detect most sounds within 360 feet (109.7 m). We'll use Estimate Distance of Sound for Eagleeye, which he has at 70%. He rolls that and succeeds with a 15%. White Witch beats Eagleeye's roll, and so she slips past. The G.M. may have Eagleeye feel cautious, perhaps sensing a presence, and may continue to seek out White Witch, due to his mutant ability, but as for now, she is eluding him.

Calculating Perception

The average person does not have Heightened Sense of Hearing or Surveillance Systems. They have a natural skill of Perception, a skill first drafted in the *Nightbane*® RPG. Everybody has Perception, though average civilians may only have it at 5%. As a D20 roll, it is hard to use in its current state to compare against percentile rolls. I recommend taking the Perception bonus, and multiplying it by 10%, making it into a

percentile roll. A +3 to Perception becomes 30%. Be sure to add the I.Q. bonus (using the numbers from the M.E. chart next to it). A smart Operative who has taken a few abilities can easily see his Perception start at 70% or above. However, even with a 98% in Perception, the character doesn't automatically see everything, because the skill is still contested.

In the previous example, an incompetent gate guard might have a Perception of 15%, unless he's geared up with optical sensors. This does still give the infiltrator a chance to fail. If the Superspy rolls 01-14%, the guard still has a chance to spot her if he succeeds on Perception. It's a small chance, but it will never be an automatic success.

This is where one of the hallmarks of the revised Special Training power categories come into play. Skill Quality bonuses add to your die roll when successful, to help give your character an extra boost to what they're good at, without making it impossible to fail. Power categories that may be considered very perceptive (Stage Magicians, Super Sleuths, Operatives, etc.) warrant a +20% to Perception upon creation. Perception increases by 10% at levels 3, 9, and 15.

Example: White Witch is attempting to sneak past several guards with optical gear. She's taken precautions beforehand to wear a heat-reducing skin-suit, otherwise the guards' thermal scan would immediately pick her up without a roll. She rolls Prowl again, and rolls a 23%. While not a bad roll, it is one that could be beaten fairly easily by the guards. Fortunately, she has an ability that adds +10% to her Skill Quality for Prowl. This turns her 23% success into a 33% success.

As predicted, the nearby guards roll Perception, and succeed with a 30%. Due to White Witch's Skill Quality ability, her 33% beats their 30%, and they miss spotting her for the moment. A dangerously close encounter, one that emphasizes the importance of the Secret Operative's extra training in the art of infiltration.

A *superior* form of Perception would be if the situation could call for Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Surveillance Systems, or possibly even Read Sensory Equipment. In some situations, you could use these skills which may very well have a higher chance of success than a natural skill like Perception. This represents the extra training that a character may acquire. However, Perception works in a multitude of situations, such as against Pick Pockets (if using this rule, negate the 67% chance of discovery on a failure), Prowl, Camouflage, etc.

Calculating Intuition

Intuition is the social equivalent of Perception. While sometimes a "gut skill," it can also be the subconscious collection of subtle cues of the person you're dealing with.

A *superior* form of Intuition is Psychology or Criminal Insight (see *Hitting the Streets in The Rifter*® #81), both of which can more thoroughly analyze a person's behavior. As with Perception, Intuition uses your I.Q. to determine your initial Intuition. Using the attribute chart, note any particular bonus for I.Q. using the M.E. chart beneath it (e.g. +1 for an I.Q. of 16, up to +8 for an I.Q. of 30). Multiply the bonus by 10%. This is your starting Intuition. Power categories that have a focus on social skills, such as Stage Magicians, Super Sleuths, Operatives, etc., warrant a +20% to Intuition upon creation.

Intuition helps counter such skills as Acting, Seduction, Disguise, Fast-Talking, Trust, Impress, Charm, and other social skills that are deceptive in their nature. An intuitive character may not know for sure if someone's lying, but he can get a hunch that such is the case. Only telepaths can fully understand the thoughts of another person. Intuition increases by 10% at levels 3, 9, and 15.

The Chase Scene & Vehicular Combat

One of the hallmark abilities of spy movies is the chase scene, where one of three things occurs. The Operative is attempting to flee the enemy, get to a destination before another, or chase down an opponent. Half the time, the Operative is also dealing with gun-wielding foes and vehicular weaponry attempting to make his life miserable. Either way, it's guaranteed to be a high-octane scene.

Ninjas and Superspies™ has a very in-depth system for vehicle chases, however a revamped and simplified version is available below.

The Chase Meter

A chase is mostly about the distance between the two parties involved. The *Getaway* is the term for the party attempting to flee, and the *Pursuit* will be used for the party attempting to catch the Getaway. The easiest way to determine relative distance is to use the Chase Meter, a scale that abstracts the actual distance between the two parties. The G.M. may determine the length of the Chase Meter to determine how difficult the chase is. A short chase across a single city could use the scale of 1-10 counts, while an interstate chase over several hours could use the scale of 1-30. When the Chase Meter lowers itself to one, then the vehicles involved are able to perform bumper-to-bumper combat, characters can leap from one vehicle to another, and the Pursuit can attempt to capture the Getaway by running them off the road, or otherwise boxing them in. When the Chase Meter gets to its maximum, the Getaway leaves the Pursuit in the dust, and the Chase ends for now.

When starting a chase, establish the initial distance between the two parties. If the two parties both leave at the same moment, they start at one. If the Getaway managed to sneak out of a building beforehand, the G.M. might decide that the distance starts at 4. If the Getaway also hobbled the Pursuit's vehicles to garner an extra delay, the G.M. might choose a distance of 6.

Overall, the concepts are simple. The more advantages you have, the faster you move steps closer to your goal. The more risks you take, and the more penalties you take, the greater the rewards if you succeed.

Standard Mechanics

- Create a Chase Meter, with a total distance equal to how long the chase can be, anywhere from ten to thirty steps (for a lengthy cross-country chase).

- Assign the starting position for the Getaway. This abstract distance is represented by "steps," and explains how close the Getaway is from the Pursuit.

- The Getaway will constantly do things to try to move to the end number of the Chase Meter, while the Pursuit will constantly try to bring the Chase Meter to three, where weapons fire can occur, or to one, where car-to-car combat can occur.

- If a party makes a skill roll, the Chase Meter moves one step towards their favor.

- If a party fails a skill roll, the Chase Meter moves one step towards their opposition's favor. This means if the Getaway fails, and the Pursuit succeeds, the Chase Meter moves two steps towards the Pursuit (due to the Getaway's skill failure, and the Pursuit's skill success).

- If both fail a skill roll, the Chase Meter stays where it is.

- If both parties succeed, the party with the highest Skill Quality (mentioned above), moves the Chase Meter one step towards their favor.

- If either party chooses to go at Unsafe (-10%) or Reckless (-30%) speeds, the other party must do so as well, otherwise the Chase Meter automatically moves one step towards the opposition for Unsafe, or three steps towards the opposition for Reckless.

- If a party does a Stunt, they get a -10% to their Piloting skill. Parties may do multiple Stunts. If you succeed at the check despite the Stunt penalties, you move the Chase Meter one step extra towards your side per Stunt you took. If you fail at the check, you move the Chase Meter one increment towards your opposition, no matter how many Stunts you attempted.

Deciding Advantage

In a relative way, vehicle speed is the penultimate factor to a chase. No matter how well you drive a city bus, a sports car will gain ground on you easily. Common sense is required here. If the Pursuit only has a busted up VW Bug that can barely keep up with traffic, and the Getaway has a sleek, top-end sports car, there's not going to be a chase unless the

sports car is stuck in traffic with the Bug. When the chase starts, the G.M. must decide if one side has a distinct advantage or not. Having multiple vehicles involved, other vehicular support such as helicopters, or better equipped vehicles, can constitute an advantage for either side. The G.M. must decide which type of advantage that party has.

- A small advantage (such as having a significantly better performance vehicle) will allow that party to move the Chase Meter one step towards them every round, (meaning if the Pursuit has the small advantage, then the Chase Meter lowers by one automatically when this is applied).

- A significant advantage (such as having multiple vehicles spread out along the chase route) will allow that party to automatically gain or lose TWO steps on the Chase Meter every round.

- An overwhelming advantage (such as the ability to coordinate traffic in the city, multiple vehicles, and aerial recon all working together) will allow that party to automatically gain or lose THREE steps on the Chase Meter every round.

These advantages mean that the Chase is going to go decidedly in their favor unless the other party can use their wits and skills to eke out a win.

Basic Movement

In its simplest form, both parties roll an opposed Piloting skill. If one succeeds, the Chase Meter moves one step in their direction. If both succeed, the one with the highest Skill Quality moves the Chase Meter one step in their direction.

Applying Penalties

Every round, the Getaway and the Pursuit are considered to be in relative speed with each other. The actual speed is only important if it is deemed an "unsafe speed" on the terrain presented, by the G.M. Obviously, a completely clear freeway with a straight shot to the horizon is about the safest possible terrain to work with, and both parties can open up their engines much easier here than on a dirt back road in hilly terrain. If the terrain and the chase speed are both considered safe, then neither party needs to roll Piloting. In situations like this, the side with an advantage will slowly gain ground and resolve the chase without much need for flair.

Naturally, if one party hits the gas to unsafe speeds, the other party must do so as well or risk losing the Chase. These penalties affect both parties equally.

- If the vehicle speed is deemed unsafe for the current roads, both parties must make Piloting checks at -10%. If all parties fail, there is no change in the Chase Meter. If all parties succeed, the one with the highest Skill Quality moves the Chase Meter one step in their direction. If one party succeeds, they move the Chase Meter two steps in their direction.

- If the vehicle speed is deemed reckless for the current roads, both parties must make Piloting checks at -30%. If all parties fail, there is no change in the Chase Meter. If all parties succeed, the one with the highest Skill Quality moves the Chase Meter one step in their direction. If one party succeeds, they move the Chase Meter two steps in their direction.

Upping the Stakes with Stunt Driving

Outright speed is the penultimate part of the chase, but driver skill and daring is what wins and loses the chase. Either party involved may intentionally take an additional negative in increments of 10% to alter the Chase Meter by one step in their favor. Each increment is known as a Stunt. A driver on good roads that suddenly takes a -40% on his Piloting roll to duck down a narrow alley, can suddenly adjust the Chase Meter by four steps in their favor. This goes a long way to help counteract the other side having an advantage, but comes with the increased risk of failing that roll. If the party attempting this maneuver fails the roll, the Chase Meter automatically moves one step in favor of their opposition.

- Either party can attempt to take a negative on their Piloting check, in increments of 10%, to adjust the Chase Meter by one step per penalty. Eg: Taking -30% to Piloting and succeeding would allow you to adjust the Chase Meter by three steps in your favor. The other party may attempt to

take these same penalties to keep up with their adversary. If all parties fail, there is no change in the Chase Meter. If all parties succeed, the one with the highest Skill Quality moves the Chase Meter one step in their direction. The daring attempt gains or loses no ground, though the G.M. may feel a change of road condition applies now, or an unsafe/reckless situation.

Resolving Chase Rounds

Chase rounds resolve simultaneously between the Pursuit and the Getaway. Initiative is only necessary when the vehicles are in weapons range of each other. The Pursuit and the Getaway both announce their intentions, and may attempt to up the stakes on each other before they both choose to resolve. After both parties roll, the outcome is reflected on the Chase Meter. If the Chase Meter reaches three or less, ranged weapons may be used between the two parties, if the Chase Meter reaches one, the vehicles may engage in vehicular combat. If the Chase Meter reaches its maximum, the Getaway wins the chase.

Example: Fran, Mike, and the G.M. are involved in yet another car chase. Fran and Mike are the Getaway, the G.M. plays the Pursuit.

G.M.: As you take off in your souped-up hot rod, you note that the garage doors open up on the motor pool, with three sets of lights coming on.

Mike: Cripes. Can we tell what sort of vehicles they are?

G.M.: They appear to be military jeeps.

Fran: Okay, so we have an advantage on that, right?

G.M.: If there were only one you would, but there are three of them. Not to mention other vehicles on patrol. I'm giving the Pursuit a slight advantage.

Mike: Could be worse, it could've been like Prague.

Fran: Don't remind me. Alright, so we totally have a lead on them. What are we looking at for the Chase Meter?

G.M.: You did get some precious seconds of lead time, and you're still heading for the docks, I assume? This'll be a 15 step Chase. I'll set the current distance at three. The terrain here is pretty bad as well. Are you going to be going at unsafe speeds?

Mike: You bet. I'm the wheelman here, time to put my skills to the test. I'm going reckless!

Fran: I'm buckled into my seat, I want to be clear on this.

G.M.: Very well, that's a penalty of 30% on your check. Do you want to up the stakes any further?

Mike: Sure, I'll use the handbrake to slide around that hairpin turn we saw earlier. I'll raise the stakes by Stunting for 10%.

Fran: The one on the cliff side?

Mike: The same. I've got Steel Behind the Wheel AND Combat Driving, so road environment doesn't scare me.

G.M.: Okay, so those speed penalties are halved due to that ability, and the stunt penalty is halved by Combat Driving. So be it.. 30% plus 10% then halved.....You're at a negative 20% to your roll. Pursuit is not going to take that extra penalty, they've got an advantage and they're going to lean on it. They're rolling with just the reckless speed penalty of 30%.

Mike: Succeed with a 47%.

G.M.: Succeed with a 52%. A close round. You gain one step on the Meter to flee due to that stunt. They gain two due to the advantage and flat-out beating your roll. The jeeps pull forward, closing the distance to two...

Vehicle-to-vehicle combat is unchanged.

Note

This method works best when the two sides are comparative, and when common sense is used for unusual chases. A helicopter is going to be able to chase a car much easier overall, unless its view is obstructed or the car is much faster than it. In these situations, its more standard vehicle-to-vehicle combat instead of an outright chase.

There will naturally be times where multiple vehicles are used by one party. Players in their own vehicles act as normal, but the opposition may instead supplant their Piloting skill with an assigned coordination skill to

use their assets effectively. Military Tactics is a good skill to use for this, but if one is not currently present, the G.M. may assign a skill of 60%-90% to represent the opposition's overall tactics and communication.

Step One: The Usual

The Attributes: Determine the eight attributes as usual. However, write the physical attributes down in pencil, because they will be adjusted with bonuses from physical skills. In addition, some attributes have been increased by the Operative's lifestyle. The lifestyle of a Secret Operative is exceedingly demanding, and those who manage to make the cut for it are generally superior across the board.

- +1D4 to P.S.
- +1D4 to P.P. (Minimum of 14)
- +1D6 to P.E. (Minimum of 14)
- +1D6 to M.A. (Minimum of 16)
- +1D4 to M.E. (Minimum of 14)
- +2 to P.B.

Hit Points: P.E. Attribute +1D6 per level of experience. The character also gets a one-time bonus of +2D6 to H.P.

S.D.C.: Determine the character's S.D.C. last, because it will be altered by skill bonuses. The character's starting S.D.C. is 1D6x10+40.

Additional Bonuses: +2 (or +20%) to Perception. +1 to Saving Throw vs Poison. +1 to Saving Throw vs Psionics, +20% to Intuition.

Step Two: Education & Skills

The Secret Operative falls into the educational category of "Special Training," with an emphasis on tradecraft, covert actions, and surveillance. The following skill selections reflect the narrow training.

DO NOT roll to determine education level and skill programs. Only the following skill areas are available to the Operative. These skills are in addition to Infiltration and Ubiquity, below.

Common & General Skill Program

- Pilot Automobile (+10%)
- Pilot: Two of choice (+10%; any).
- Mathematics: Basic (+15%)
- Speak/Write Native Language (+25%)
- Speak/Write two other languages (+20%).
- Computer Operation (+20%)
- 1D6+6 Secondary Skills.

Military Program (Special)

- Running
- Climbing (+20%)
- Military Etiquette (+20%)
- Radio: Basic (+25%)
- W.P. Pistol
- W.P. Semi- and Automatic Rifle
- W.P. Energy Pistol
- W.P. Energy Rifle
- Demolitions (+15%)
- Two Military or W.P. skills of choice (+10%).

Espionage Program (Basic)

- Hand to Hand: Martial Arts
- Military Intelligence (+20%)
- Wilderness Survival (+15%)

Three Espionage or Communication skills (+15%), barring Prowl, Surveillance, or Tradecraft.

Rogue Skill Program

- Find Contraband (+20%)
- Pick Pockets (+20%)
- Seduction (+20%)
- Streetwise (+14%)

Two Rogue or Physical skills of choice (+10%; +20% for Escape Artist and Use/Recognize Poisons), barring Prowl.

New Skills

Piloting Skill: Pilot Civilian Drone – The use of simple remotely-guided drones has given even the normal person a chance to view sights that were hidden away. While primarily used as recreation, the use of commercially available drones also makes surveillance and reconnaissance that much safer. This skill provides basic knowledge and maintenance of all forms of simple, unarmed drones. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level.

Military Skill: Pilot Military Drone – In the ever-evolving field of battle, unmanned aerial vehicles have been used to reconnaissance an area faster and cleaner than ever done on foot. Military drones may be long-range capable, high-altitude, and armed with a number of modern weapons. Base Skill: 30% +5% per level.

Piloting (Advanced) Skill: Combat Driving – This skill replaces Offensive Driving, and supplements driving skills by helping to make the character a master of the roads when driving automobiles, jeeps, trucks, motorcycles, and other ground vehicles, giving a definitive advantage to him.

In game mechanics, skill penalties for tricks, vehicular attacks, and evasive maneuvers are reduced by half when this character is at the wheel, plus he is +2 to dodge when driving, +2 to roll with a crash/impact, can fire a weapon from a moving vehicle at only a -2 penalty, and can even make an Aimed or "Called Shot" (at -2 to strike) while in or on a moving vehicle. This skill has no progression levels.

Note: With Combat Driving and the "Steel Behind the Wheel" ability, the operative gains additional ways to negate penalties. Combat Driving focuses mostly on vehicular combat, while Steel Behind the Wheel focuses more on terrain and vehicular penalties.

Superskills

Infiltration 70% +2% per level

The Secret Operative is the character most likely to infiltrate enemy bases, deal with roving patrols, avoid security systems, and in short, be on their own and be expected to accomplish much in the process. As such, the Operative is expected to have a variety of skills at his disposal to ensure mission completion. As with the Super Sleuth, and the Stage Magician, the Secret Operative gains a superskill to help him on the job. His superskill is called Infiltration, which covers Prowl, Surveillance Systems, and Tradecraft, combining them all into one skill. At any time the Operative needs to roll any of these three skills, he instead rolls Infiltration. Covert reconnaissance, enemy avoidance, and years of spycraft training put before you, all at your fingertips, for use in your game. Any gadget or bonus that covers Tradecraft, Surveillance Systems, or Prowl, works for Infiltration in that situation. E.g., if you have a gadget that adds +10% to Prowl, when you use Infiltration to sneak around, you may add that +10% bonus.

Characters with Infiltration may also use this skill to help them understand what they need in order to gain access to areas. An Operative without Locksmith or Electrical Engineer may still glean information on how to deal with an unusual lock. E.g., special key cards, biometrics, or remote identification may be needed.

Ubiquity

The Secret Operative's second superskill is different than how most Superskills work. It doesn't have a percentage, nor a collection of established skills that it combines together. This is because Ubiquity represents one of the Operative's best advantages: versatility. There's no telling for an average character as to what you'll come across in your travels. The superspy, however, is always the character most likely to have proficiency in the high-tech weaponry that was discovered, or the Skee-Do that was parked nearby. Agents never seem to be at a loss when confronted with some item, place, or vehicle that others would consider to be unfamiliar.

To represent this, Ubiquity represents the means of a Secret Operative spontaneously learning a skill to accommodate the situation at hand, by retroactively declaring that the Agent has training with this topic at hand. Ubiquity gives Operatives two "free" skills per level, that can be claimed at any point during play, to declare that the Agent has had extensive training in a subject that has only recently come up.

Ubiquity can only deliver Cultural/Domestic skills, Weapon Proficiencies, Piloting skills, or Languages. Certain abilities selected may modify this. It cannot suddenly allow a spy to know complex analytical chemistry, welding, or computer hacking, as the point of it is to allow a spy access to areas they need to work within.

Example: White Witch, a level 2 Secret Operative, is stuck in Cairo. Right now, she sticks out like a sore thumb, as that white catsuit is drawing a lot of attention. She rolls Disguise to quickly modify her appearance. She blends in more, but as it stands she does not know any local languages, nor anything else that might help her here. White Witch asks the G.M. if she may use Ubiquity to learn the local language, the G.M. agrees, and the White Witch adds the language to her sheet at full proficiency (i.e., as if she had had it since creation). She could instead have used Ubiquity to declare that she knew the card game that the locals nearby were playing (Gambling), drive away in a nearby tuk-tuk (Pilot Motorcycle), or join in with a song that another group were singing (Singing, but the G.M. might dictate the necessity to speak the language first). With these variable skills in play, the Secret Operative gains a large amount of versatility in getting the job done and staying under the radar.

Limitations on Ubiquity

An Operative who intends to use Ubiquity to assist his actions must get the G.M.'s approval to gain the selected skill. It should be noted that the Secret Operative is the character archetype most likely to know how to pilot a space shuttle, a deep-sea vessel, and have a familiarity with secret high-tech weaponry. All of these concepts are right up the superspy's alley.

An Operative can only gain two skills per level in this fashion. Any skills not gained before next level are lost, and cannot be gained later. Skills added with Ubiquity are calculated as if they were gained at character creation.

As mentioned above, Ubiquity can only be used for Piloting, Cultural, Weapon Proficiencies, and Languages. All other skills must be gained in the standard manner.

Step Three: Define Abilities

As with the other redesigned power categories and the Ancient Weapon Master Specialist, the Secret Operative gains a pool of abilities to help customize the character when starting out, and to help flesh out the character's training as they grow in experience.

Abilities are useful traits to keep in mind when building a character, to help design the sort of agent you're wanting to focus on. Combining abilities with proper gadgets, and the unsurpassed ability to adapt to any situation with Ubiquity, the Secret Operative's ability to deal with the problems before him, have reached an all-time high.

Several abilities have multiple ranks to them, meaning that you can buy the ability a second time to get the greater bonus. When applicable, the next rank ability bonuses stack with what you already have. All Operatives start off with access to all the categories below at level one, except Advanced. They gain access to the Advanced category at level three, from which they can start purchasing more advanced and powerful abilities. Some abilities may mention a requirement, such as having two Wheelman abilities before you may purchase it. Having two ranks in the same ability counts as having two abilities. At level one, an Operative gains six abilities to choose from among the aforementioned categories. The player may choose to spread them out over all of the different categories, or focus on a few categories to specialize in certain areas. The Operative gains two more abilities at levels 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

Advanced

Brutal Interrogation

Requires Interrogator. You can get to the root of a confession sooner than most.

Rank 1: When performing an Interrogation (as per *The Rifter*® #81 article Hitting the Streets), on a successful roll, you deal 1D2 Mental Endurance damage instead of just one.

Clutch Shot (Assassin)

Requires three abilities from Assassin. Your best is always better than anyone else.

Rank 1: Once a day, you may negate all penalties (such as due to injuries, blindness, foe in motion, etc.) given to a single attack with a modern weapon.

Rank 2: This ability may be used twice per day.

Clutch Skills

Your best is always better than anyone else.

Rank 1: Twice a day, an Operative in imminent high-risk danger, (such as needing to leap through a car spiraling towards him, or carry someone to safety on a tightrope), may choose to ignore all penalties associated with the motion. This includes penalties from being stunned, wounded, or blinded. After combat ends, or five minutes after using this ability, the character becomes fatigued (halve attacks per round, combat bonuses, and foot speed for 1D4+2 minutes).

Rank 2: This ability may be used three times a day.

Clutch Skills (Faceman)

Requires three abilities from Faceman. Your best is always better than anyone else.

Rank 1: Twice per day, when you're in a social situation where penalties are applied to your Fast Talking, Psychology, other social skills, or Charm/Impress, Trust/Intimidate abilities, you may opt to ignore any penalties to a single roll.

Rank 2: This ability may be used three times a day.

Clutch Skills (Wheelman)

Requires three abilities from Wheelman. Your best is always better than anyone else.

Rank 1: Twice per day, when you're piloting a vehicle that you have the proper Piloting skill for, you may choose to ignore all penalties to one skill roll, except to gain advantage in a chase.

Rank 2: This ability may be used three times a day.

Deathblow

Requires having the Death Blow ability from hand to hand combat. Battles should be short, focused, and violent.

Rank 1: Your Deathblow range is increased by one.

Dodge Bullets

You've spent enough time running from automatic weapons fire to know how to throw off their lead.

Rank 1: Your penalty to dodge bullets is reduced by two points.

Rank 2: Your penalty to dodge bullets is reduced by an additional two points.

Extra Ubiquity

You train and train for the day you'll be needed to fire a blunderbuss in zero gravity.

Rank 1: You may learn one extra skill per level when using Ubiquity, with the standard rules for Ubiquity.

Rank 2: You may learn up to two extra skills per level when using Ubiquity, for a total of four per level.

Grace Under Pressure

Some people break under pressure, but you work your best under the clock.

Rank 1: You no longer can take penalties to skill rolls for stressful situations.

Increased Crit (Melee)

That satisfying sound of bones breaking.

Rank 1: Select one specific type of melee weapon, e.g.: club, knife, sword, or spear. Your Critical Hit range is increased by one while wielding that type of weapon. This ability may be taken again for another type of melee weapon.

Rank 2: Your Critical Hit range is increased by an additional one when wielding that type of weapon.

Increased Crit (Ranged)

Aiming for that sweet spot.

Rank 1: Select one specific type of ranged weapon, e.g.: pistol, revolver, shotgun, submachine-gun, or bow. Your Critical Hit range is increased by one while wielding that type of weapon. This ability may be taken again for another type of ranged weapon.

Instant Planning

Requires Man with the Plan, and one other ability from Pointman. The ability to come up with a plan on the fly is one of the most valuable skills.

Rank 1: Once per day, even without proper information, or if the enemy starts combat, you may still use Man with the Plan.

Rank 2: Twice per day, even without proper information, or if the enemy starts combat, you may still use Man with the Plan.

Instinctive Shot

Requires Keen Wits, and Situational Awareness. You've learned to tell when things are going to go down, and have learned to react violently fast.

Rank 1: If you have a ranged weapon in your hands at the start of a combat that is not an ambush against you, you may make a single shot attack at the moment initiative is rolled. This only counts for the first round of combat. You get no bonuses to strike with this attack, nor can you make any Called Shots.

Neck Snap

Those of lesser skill find themselves falling into your clutches easily.

Rank 1: When dealing with a mook (a generic enemy character of lower level than yourself) who is unaware of your position, you may attempt to outright kill him. The Operative may grab a foe from behind (usually a surprise move, and therefore unopposed), then on a successful, opposed

Hold roll, deal damage equal to 1D4+1 per level of Secret Operative + P.S. bonus directly to H.P. If you're using a light weapon like a knife or garrote, this damage increases from 1D4 to 2D6. You may not use this attack again on this foe, nor anyone who witnessed it, for a full day.

Solid Takedown

Requires Takedown. When they go down, they stay down.

Rank 1: Enemies you Knock-Out in combat stay that way for an extra round. Normally, foes are knocked out for 1D4 rounds.

Rank 2: Enemies you Knock-Out in combat stay that way for two extra rounds.

Slip Up

Requires two abilities from Faceman. Also available as an Advanced Stage Magician ability. Sometimes it's better just to hear it from their own lips.

Rank 1: Once per day, in a social situation when you are using Fast Talking, Impersonation, or Acting, and you beat your opponent's contested skill (such as Intuition or Psychology) by 50% or more. They accidentally let something useful slip, something that you can use to your advantage.

Rank 2: You may use this ability twice per day.

Takedown

Leaving a trail of bodies nets fear, leaving a trail of the dazed nets confusion.

Rank 1: When initiating melee combat behind an unaware foe, your range for Knock-Out increases by two points. I.e., if your standard chance for Knock-Out is on a 20, for this attack, it is an 18+. If you have no Knock-Out ability, you gain it on a Natural 20.

Rank 2: Your range for Knock-Out for this attack is increased by an additional one point.

The Slip (Ground Vehicle)

Requires two Wheelman abilities. Sometimes it just takes one solid move to escape pursuit.

Rank 1: Once per day, in a vehicular chase where you are the Getaway, if your successful piloting skill beats your opponent's Skill Quality by 50% or more, you may instantly lose the Pursuit and end the Chase. If there is a specific destination, this does not mean you automatically arrive there, just that you are no longer in close contact with the opposition. Example: White Witch is the Getaway, and rolls a 76% on Pilot Automobile and succeeds, the Pursuit vehicle rolls a 10%, and succeeds. The difference between the two successful rolls is over 50%, so White Witch may give her pursuers the slip.

The Slip (Air)

Requires two Wheelman abilities. Sometimes it just takes one solid move to escape pursuit.

Rank 1: Once per day, in an aerial chase where you are the Getaway, if your successful piloting skill beats your opponent's by 50% or more, you may instantly lose the Pursuit and end the Chase. If there is a specific destination, this does not mean you automatically arrive there, just that you are no longer in close contact with the opposition.

The Slip (Sea)

Requires two Wheelman abilities. Sometimes it just takes one solid move to escape pursuit.

Rank 1: Once per day, in a vehicular chase where you are the Getaway, if your successful piloting skill beats your opponent's by 50% or more, you may instantly lose the Pursuit and end the Chase. If there is a specific destination, this does not mean you automatically arrive there, just that you are no longer in close contact with the opposition.

Ubiquity Focus (Survival)

The training for arctic climates varies greatly from the standard woodlands, and a spy can end up anywhere...

Rank 1: You may take Wilderness Survival skills with Ubiquity.

Ubiquity Focus (Communication)

As technology advances, so do the needs of the Operative to be sure to stay in touch.

Rank 1: You may take other Communication skills (in addition to Languages) with Ubiquity.

Vanish

You're just walking along the street, a truck passes by, and then you're gone...

Rank 1: Once per day, while attempting to flee pursuers on foot, roll Infiltration. If you beat the enemy's roll to detect/follow you by 50% or more, you disappear immediately into the night, with no further checks required. G.M. discretion is always applicable as to when this ability may be used, such as if the Operative is unaware of how he's being tracked.

Assassin

Backstab

Requires Expert Training (Melee). One strike, one foe, maximum efficiency.

Rank 1: When striking a foe in melee that is unaware of your presence, add +10 damage to that initial hit. You may not use this attack again on this foe, nor anyone who witnessed it, for a full day.

Rank 2: Add +15 damage to the initial hit, instead of +10.

Coup-De-Grace

Requires Expert Training (Melee) or (Hand to Hand), and two other Assassin abilities. When they end up vulnerable, you move in for the kill.

Rank 1: When a foe has no remaining S.D.C., is helpless, or otherwise deemed vulnerable by the G.M., your next attack against him gains +2 to strike, and deals an extra +10 damage. You may not use this attack again on this foe, nor anyone who witnessed it, for a full day.

Expert Training (Melee)

Extra training with an instrument of death leaves you far more capable than others with your experience.

Rank 1: Select one ancient W.P. used in melee combat, you gain two levels of proficiency with it, meaning that a third level Secret Operative with W.P. Knife will use the bonuses for W.P. Knife at level five.

Rank 2: The W.P. previously selected gains an additional two levels of proficiency. The earlier example would mean the Operative has W.P. Knife at level seven.

Expert Training (Ranged)

Diligent training in modern weaponry proves itself as you advance in skill.

Rank 1: Select one Modern W.P., you gain two levels of proficiency with it, meaning that a third level Secret Operative with W.P. Pistol will use the bonuses for W.P. Pistol at level five.

Rank 2: The W.P. previously selected gains an additional two levels of proficiency. The earlier example would mean the Operative has W.P. Pistol at level seven.

Expert Training (Hand to Hand)

Advanced hand to hand combat training always pays off, no matter your style of combat.

Rank 1: Select one form of hand to hand combat you have. You gain one level of proficiency with it, meaning that a third level Secret Operative with Martial Arts uses the fourth level bonuses.

Rank 2: The hand to hand previously selected gains an additional one level of proficiency. The earlier example would mean the Operative's hand-to-hand combat would be at level five.

Snap Aim

With reflexes and training, it becomes second nature.

Rank 1: When using a pistol, once per round you may make an Aimed Shot that only costs one attack.

Silent Scope

Requires Expert Training (Ranged). The forte of the superspy is a silent kill.

Rank 1: When sniping a target unaware of your presence, you gain a +1 to Called Shots to the head of the foe, in addition to the Sniper skill bonus.

Rank 2: You gain an additional +1 to this Called Shot.



Faceman

Committed to Cover

Requires Covers. Never trusting your own thoughts when psychics could be nearby, you've steeled your mind to the identity at hand.

Rank 1: If a telepath or empath seeks to learn your true nature by judging your feelings or thoughts, they must probe your mind for rounds equal to your Secret Operative level before ascertaining the ruse.

Cold Read

Just by studying human nature and calculated responses, you've learned how to read a person's most likely responses.

Rank 1: Roll Psychology when you assess or talk to someone in particular. If you succeed, you may glean some basic information about his personality, such as “What interests does he have?” or “What is his profession?” Specifics may elude the Operative, but he can have a reasonable hunch. Cold Read may be attempted five times a day.

Covers

You’ve invested a lot of time in yourself, creating phony reputations you can slip into when the need arises. Basic Covers have a bare minimum of background attached to them, forged driver’s licenses, home addresses, old clearance IDs, etc. A little investigation can determine the identity provided is a sham. A dedicated researcher intent on exposing the cover can generally do so within 2D4x10 minutes. If you lose a Cover, it takes three months to establish a new one. Do keep in mind that a Cover is only blown if it is widely publicized in the right circuit.

Rank 1: You gain two cover identities. These covers may be determined as you gain them, however you may also bring them into play with the G.M.’s permission. These covers tend to be low level identities, ones that can be burned easily, as well as mostly unnoticed by the general populace. Janitors, office workers, dock workers, and other low visibility roles are recommended options.

Rank 2: You possess three basic cover identities.

Rank 3: You possess four basic cover identities.

Deeper Cover

Requires Covers. You cover your trail in triplicate forms, and grave markers.

Rank 1: When someone attempts to investigate your background trail to expose your lie, it takes them 50% longer to do so.

Rank 2: It takes them twice as long to expose your false identity.

Glibness

A quick lie can get an Operative into the most guarded areas, though sometimes those tend to be prisons.

Rank 1: Gain a +10% to Fast Talking.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% Quality bonus to Fast Talking.

Rank 3: Gain another +10% to Fast Talking.

High Society & Dive Bars

You’ve learned to mingle with the scum of the earth, no matter where they haunt.

Rank 1: You gain a +5% to all skills to help you blend in to a function or location where your disguise allows you access.

Rank 2: This bonus increases to a +10%.

Impressive Impersonation

Much like the ninjas of old, you’ve learned how to quickly assume a new role convincingly.

Rank 1: Gain +10% to the Impersonation skill. In one melee round and out of sight, you can assume a new basic identity (though clothing may need changed) believable to basic scrutiny. General types of basic identities are tourist, businessman, the elderly, street punk, and nondescript citizen.

Rank 2: Your new identity is so convincing that even telepaths are initially fooled by it. Anyone using telepathy on you must actively keep scanning your surface thoughts for a number of minutes equal to your level +1 in order to discover who you really are.

Occultism

All sorts of fringe groups believe in mysticism and monsters, and sometimes it pays to know what they know.

Rank 1: You gain three lore skills of your choice (Faerie, Demons & Monsters, Magic, Religion, etc.), all at +10%.

Professional Impersonator

Your own wants and desires fall away, as you subsume into a new role.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% bonus to your Impersonation rolls.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% quality bonus to your Impersonation rolls.

Rank 3: You gain a further +10% bonus to your Impersonation rolls.

Natural Born Actor

Most people take acting classes for a new career, you’ve just supplemented yours a bit.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% bonus to your Acting rolls.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% quality bonus to your Acting rolls.

Spontaneous Impersonation

Requires two other abilities from Faceman. You’ve seen enough pictures of old men in black and white photos that you can make it up as you go, more often than not.

Rank 1: You gain the ability to impersonate people you’ve never researched fully. Your skill of Impersonation is halved when you attempt to do so. This penalty can not be negated by any other ability.

Voice Control

You could’ve gone into voice acting, it would’ve been a safer choice.

Rank 1: Your disguise equipment can copy retinal scans and fingerprints, provided you can supply the proper information. After studying a target’s voice for an hour, with a successful Imitate Voices roll, you can fool voice analyzers (like audiotaping him for his voice patterns, lifting fingerprints, and catching a scan of his eyes while he’s unconscious).

Unreadable

Nobody knows what you’re thinking, unless they can read your mind. Maybe not even then.

Rank 1: People attempting to assess the truth out of you using Intuition, Psychology or similar skills suffer a -10% penalty to their roll.

Rank 2: When attempting to see through your bluff or otherwise discern your true intentions, foes must roll Intuition, Psychology or their skill of choice twice, and take the worse result.

Rank 3: The penalty for people attempting to read you is increased to -20%

Gadgetry

Extra Gadget Point

Every single thing on your body is wired for some nefarious purpose.

Rank 1: You gain an additional gadget point to use towards your equipment. This ability may be purchased multiple times.

Forward

Oh, those little drones, how you make them sing.

Rank 1: You gain a bonus of +10% to Pilot Civilian Drone, and Pilot Military Drone.

Rank 2: Any negatives to your Pilot Drone rolls are halved.

Rank 3: You gain another +10% bonus to Pilot Civilian Drone, and Pilot Military Drone.

Gadget Specialist

You’re even more well trained at using your gadgets than most agents.

Rank 1: When wielding a Gadget weapon, you gain an additional +1 to Strike. When using a Gadget item that assists a skill of yours, that bonus increases by an extra +5%.

Improved Bulwark

You've actually participated in live-fire exercises with your protective gadgets.

Rank 1: Gadgets that have the Bulwark trait usually provide an A.R. of 13, and S.D.C. of 90, when in use.

Improved Miniaturization

Now travel-sized for your convenience.

Rank 1: For your gadget items, the Miniaturization ability now shrinks items to 40% of their size, but they lose 40% of their potency.

Improved Supplanting

You spend extra times with R&D to ensure your gadgets tell you precisely what you need.

Rank 1: The skill the supplanting gadget provides to you is at 50%. Normally, if a gadget provides a skill, it is at 40%.

Persistent Gadget

You and your gadget are nearly inseparable.

Rank 1: Select one gadget you've created or requisitioned. You have another of this Gadget stored away in case the original is destroyed. If you have a safehouse, it is stored there. Otherwise it will require 2D4 hours to retrieve the item. Three months must pass before you may have another backup gadget. This ability may be purchased more than once, each time for a different gadget.

Potent Miniaturization

Requires Extra Gadget Point. Half the size for the same amount of bang.

Rank 1: Gadgets that have the Miniaturization ability no longer have a potency decrease. Gadgets that have the Improved Miniaturization ability have a 20% decrease in potency, instead.

Rank 2: Gadgets that have the Improved Miniaturization ability no longer have a 40% decrease in potency.

Potent Gadgets

You can always get a bit more juice out of your equipment.

Rank 1: Any gadget that requires a Saving Throw, increases the Saving Throw by 1.

Superior Gadgetry

You prefer your gear to be all-encompassing.

Rank 1: Select one gadget you've created or requisitioned. This gadget may have four traits, instead of three. You must still have the gadget points available to create this item.

General

Backers

You've either got the ear of Finance for your organization, or you've acquired your lucre under more... self-motivated avenues.

Rank 1: In one city of note, you are considered to live very well, with a well-furnished home, workshop, and three cars. You always have petty cash of 2D4x1000 dollars available for the month.

Rank 2: You have homes scattered throughout a country of your choice, each one complete with all the vehicles, and standard gear necessary for your adventures. (The exact amount is to be left up to the G.M.) You always have petty cash of 1D4x10,000 dollars available for the month.

Rank 3: You have homes all over the world, each one with all the standard gear for your adventures. (The exact amount is to be left up to the G.M.) Your monthly petty cash increases to 2D4x30,000 dollars.

Charming

Sixty hours spent practicing a humble, yet charming smile at work here.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% bonus to charm rolls. If you do not currently have a chance to charm, you gain it at 30%.

Rank 2: You gain an additional +10% bonus to charm rolls.

Contacts

You've put in a lot of time getting to know people. Maybe they've come to you, maybe you've approached them, but your job is a lot simpler when you've got friends watching your back.

Rank 1: You gain three contacts. These contacts may be determined as you gain them, but they may also be brought into play during play, with the G.M.'s permission. These contacts are generally low-level rank and file in the grand scheme of things. Allies in other countries, war veterans, black market dealers, and informants are the usual lot of contacts. These contacts are usually willing (if begrudging) to assist the operative in his mission. These contacts may be killed off or otherwise removed from play. The Operative may find a new contact after a month has passed.

Rank 2: You now have six standard contacts.

Rank 3: You now have nine standard contacts.

Counter-Intel Training

Only fools match wits with you when you're at their mercy.

Rank 1: When Interrogating/being Interrogated (as per *The Rifter*® #81 article Hitting the Streets), you deal one additional point of M.E. damage to all successful rolls.

Rank 2: When taking M.E. damage in an Interrogation (either as Interrogator or Suspect), you suffer one less damage, minimum one.

Emotional Reasoning

Also available as a Stage Magician or Super Sleuth ability. You've learned to trust your instincts when dealing with people.

Rank 1: +10% to Intuition.

Rank 2: +20% to Intuition.

Rank 3: +30% to Intuition.

Escape Training

Elaborate death traps and meat lockers are both typical places you're likely to visit involuntarily. It's better to be prepared for such things.

Rank 1: +10% to Escape Artist.

Expert Cardsharp

Anyone who sits at the card table with you is just another mark...and a fool.

Rank 1: +10% to Card Sharp.

Expert Observer

You know just the right places to look for just about anything that people like to hide.

Rank 1: +10% to Detect Concealment and Detect Ambush.

Rank 2: You gain a Quality bonus of +10% to Detect Ambush and Detect Concealment.

Expert Infiltrator

You'd be a legend among the community... if they had any idea who you were.

Rank 1: Any negatives bestowed upon an Infiltration roll, such as due to environmental hazards, are negated.

Garrote Training

A simple cord is a lethal weapon with surprise. Even without surprise, it can make do.

Rank 1: +2 to Entangle with a garrote. +2 to Hold a foe using a garrote.
Rank 2: +3 to Entangle with a garrote. +3 to Hold a foe using a garrote.
Rank 3: +4 to Entangle with a garrote. +4 to Hold a foe using a garrote.

Gruff Disposition

A glower and a menacing look go a long way.

Rank 1: You gain +10% bonus to intimidate rolls. If you do not currently have a chance to intimidate, you gain it at 30%.

Rank 2: You gain an additional +10% bonus to intimidate rolls.

Rank 3: You gain another additional +10% bonus to intimidate rolls.

Handgun Artist

The handgun is versatile, compact, and able to deal with most adversaries encountered in a standard day.

Rank 1: You gain +1 to Strike with all handguns.

Hunter's Pursuit

Once you find a trail, nothing will stop you from finding your source.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% to Track Humanoids.

Rank 2: You gain an additional +10% to Track Humanoids.

Indefatigable

Day-long marathons, skyscraper climbs, it has all led to the day you simply will not stop.

Rank 1: You tire one half as fast as a normal hero.

Rank 2: You tire one quarter as fast as a normal hero.

Interrogator

When you've got them alone, you can get the answers you need.

Rank 1: When performing an Interrogation, your opponent's Mental Endurance is treated as 1 less.

Rank 2: When performing an Interrogation, your opponent's Mental Endurance is treated as 2 less.

Keen Wits

Trouble lurks around any corner, so it's always best to expect anything.

Rank 1: +2 to Initiative.

Rank 2: +3 to Initiative.

Rank 3: +4 to Initiative.

Master Surveillant

When you're on stakeout, you rarely get made.

Rank 1: You gain a +20% quality bonus on contested Infiltration rolls when using it as Surveillance.

Rank 2: When you make a contested Infiltration/Surveillance roll, you may instantly learn if you've been spotted.

Rank 3: You gain another +10% quality bonus on contested Infiltration rolls when using it as Surveillance.

Moving Targets

Several hours spent on the racetrack and firing range simultaneously, have helped your aim adjustment.

Rank 1: You may fire a modern weapon from a vehicle in motion at half your normal bonuses. Normally, all bonuses are lost when firing from a vehicle in motion.

Rank 2: You may fire a modern weapon from a vehicle in motion at your normal bonuses.

Pain Tolerance

You're so used to the torture that you've started to block it out.

Rank 1: +1 to Saving Throw vs Pain.

Rank 2: +2 to Saving Throw vs Pain.

Poison Immunity

Requires Poison Tolerance. Perhaps not immunity per se, but as close as mortal man may achieve.

Rank 1: You gain an additional +3 bonus to Saving Throws against two specific poisons.

Rank 2: Select three additional poisons for this bonus to work on.

Poison Tolerance

You've built up a tolerance to poison, and that should be scarier to think about.

Rank 1: +2 to Saving Throws vs Poison (lethal or non-lethal).

Rank 2: +3 to Saving Throws vs Poison.

Psionic Resistance

Brainwashing, hypnosis, or telepathy, they all requires a greater will to resist.

Rank 1: +1 vs Psionics.

Safehouse

A network of bunk beds and rental space means that you're always close to home.

Rank 1: You gain a Safehouse cache as listed below in gear selections. You may hold the location of this safehouse in reserve until needed.

Rank 2: You have 4 Safehouse caches that you may hold in reserve until you need them. Each safehouse must be at least 6 hours drive away from each other to insure proper tradecraft.

Situational Awareness

You always see it coming before anyone else. (See *Perception, Skill Quality, and Contested Skills* for further explanation.)

Rank 1: +3 to Perception (or +15% to Perception).

Rank 2: +4 to Perception (or +20% to Perception).

Rank 3: +5 to Perception (or +25% to Perception).

Recognize Disguise

A bit of rubber or makeup isn't enough to keep you from seeing past the disguise.

Rank 1: You gain a +20% Quality bonus when using Disguise to recognize when someone is wearing a disguise.

Rank 2: You gain +20% to Disguise and another +20% Quality bonus when using Disguise to see through other people's disguises.

Sleepless Nights

Whether it's bad dreams, coffee, or the case, you've survived longer on less.

Rank 1: You only require 4 hours of sleep to be considered well-rested.

Rank 2: You may function without sleep for 72 hours without penalty. At the end of this cycle, you are considered heavily fatigued, and must sleep for a full day as soon as possible.

Stealthy

Few can match you in the Art of Stealth.

Rank 1: +10% to Skill Quality of Infiltration when using it as Prowl.

Rank 2: Once per game day, you may re-roll Infiltration if using it as Prowl.

Sucker Punch

Nothing's off limits when you really need to survive this fight.

Rank 1: When initiating combat, or when assaulting a stunned/blinded/incapacitated foe, your first melee strike against that target may be a Called Shot, but only cost one action.

System Infiltrator

Nobody keeps you out as long as they're connected to a network.

Rank 1: You gain +10% to Computer Hacking.

Rank 2: At any time when you hack into a network or system, and the system is actively defended by a contested roll, you gain a +10% Quality bonus to your Computer Hacking skill.

Trustworthy

The kind of face that people trust, though they should know better.

Rank 1: You gain +10% bonus to rolls that invoke trust. If you do not currently have a chance to do so, you gain it at 30%.

Rank 2: You gain an additional +10% bonus to trust rolls.

Whiskey Dreams

Some people only get chatty when they're drinking, so it's more than a hobby for you; it's professional development.

Rank 1: You gain Poison Tolerance: Alcohol as a skill, giving you +3 to Saving Throws against non-lethal poison (alcohol). You also may drink twice as much before needing to make a Saving Throw against alcohol.

Rank 2: You may drink three times as much as normal before needing to make a Saving Throw against alcohol.

Pointman

Coordinator

They may hate you for pushing them, but you see the results.

Rank 1: When the Operative has communication with the entire group, and the party is investigating a situation or doing research, all tasks performed take 25% less time, except in situations where timing cannot be rushed (a timed vault's opening cannot be rushed, a commercial flight to Europe cannot be rushed).

Demolition Expert

They always go off just when you need them to, unless you don't want them to.

Rank 1: When you roll Demolitions and fail the roll, you are aware that the charge will not detonate as expected. The G.M. may allow you to re-roll one time if it is deemed you have ten minutes to attempt it again.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% to both Demolition, and Demolition Disposal.

Rank 3: When rolling Demolition Disposal, you gain an additional +10% to the skill if the bomb is within 30 seconds of detonating.

Efficiency Expert

You can do it faster than anyone else.

Rank 1: Select one skill that you possess that can have a quantitative amount of time spent on it. You use that skill twice as fast as standard. Example: Selecting Demolitions means that you can create and set up explosives twice as fast as normally done. Selecting Weapons Engineer means that you can do maintenance or overhaul a weapon twice as fast as normally done. Surveillance Systems would mean that you can create camera systems and relays twice as fast as the normal person. The G.M. has discretion over what skills may be selected. You may select this ability multiple times, each time selecting a different skill.

Field Instructor

Not only can you do it, you can show others how to do it for a little while.

Rank 1: Over a short period of time, you can coach a single person on a skill they are expected to perform in the near future. You may

roll the skill in question, and if successful, you temporarily grant a +10% bonus to the skill of choice to the recipient for an hour. If they do not have the skill being taught, for this hour, they may have the skill in question at 40%. You must have a higher skill in the area of knowledge than them. You may only teach one skill at a time to a person. The G.M. has final approval on this. E.g.: A player may not teach another how to perform something as specific as brain surgery, or robotics.

Rank 2: You may teach the same skill to two people at the same time.

Rank 3: You may teach the same skill to up to four people at the same time.

In-Depth Tutelage

Requires Field Instructor. You cover more ground in your summaries than most elective courses.

Rank 1: The bonus given by Field Instructor increases to +15% or a base skill of 45%.

Rank 2: The bonus given by Field Instructor increases to +20% or a base skill of 50%.

Man with the Plan

Nobody else can lead the charge like you.

Rank 1: When you have information as to the layout of an area, and time to plan, roll Military Tactics before initiating combat. You may give your team orders as a free action. If they follow your orders, you grant them a +1 bonus to all Strike rolls for the first round.

Rank 2: This bonus is increased to one additional attack, as well as +1 to Strike for the first round.

Psychological Expert

Every man is a book, if you know how to read him.

Rank 1: +10% to Psychology.

Regroup Action

Sometimes it takes a sharp word to get people in motion.

Rank 1: Twice per day, when rolling Initiative, you may swap your initiative with another player, if they are willing.

Rank 2: Twice per day, when rolling Initiative, you may swap the initiative of two players, if they are willing.

Rank 3: Once per day, roll Military Tactics. If successful, you may assign the rolled initiative scores to any player as you see fit, if they are willing.

Saboteur

Requires Demolition Expert. Maximum efficiency. Maximum carnage.

Rank 1: When an explosive you assemble and plant is detonated, it deals an extra die of damage against structures and vehicles. For example: Four ounces (112 g) of plastic explosive typically deals 2D4x10 damage. With your expert training, a successful Demolitions roll makes that same amount deal 3D4x10 damage instead. This ability only affects planted charges, not thrown weapon attacks.

Rank 2: Your planted charges deal one more die of damage. In the above example, the planted plastic explosive would deal 4D4x10 damage to a structure.

Size Up

Also available as a Stage Magician ability. By judging posture, control, and discipline, you can understand a lot about a target.

Rank 1: Twice a day, roll Psychology. If successful, you can estimate a person's level (within 1D3 levels), and their basic type of hand to hand ability. (None, Basic, Trained, Expert, or Master.)

Wheelman

Demolition Derby

Requires two Wheelman abilities. If you're going to crash this vehicle, you're going to do it RIGHT.

Rank 1: Your Critical Hit range with vehicle-to-vehicle attacks is now an 18+.

Rank 2: Your Critical Hit range with vehicle-to-vehicle attacks is now a 17+.

Rank 3: Your Critical Hit range with vehicle-to-vehicle attacks is now a 15+.

P.I.T. Maneuvering

You've spent some time practicing high-speed take downs.

Rank 1: When you attempt a P.I.T. maneuver in a car chase, your foe gets an extra -20% on his Piloting check to avoid a crash of some sort. Most characters force a driving check when attempting to P.I.T. another car.

Lead Foot

Requires one other Wheelman ability. You squeeze out more from your car than anyone else can.

Rank 1: When in a Chase with an opponent with no advantage for either side (such as both sides have similar vehicles), you are considered to have a slight advantage.

Steel Behind the Wheel

Off-road, high-speed chases are nothing new to you. It's moments like this when dedication and a cool disposition prove their worth.

Rank 1: All penalties given to your driving, due to speed, vehicle conditions or terrain, are halved. Penalties may only be halved once, no matter how many abilities or traits you have that might reduce them. Penalties due to Stunts are not halved.

The Getaway

The best spies make their exit before anyone knows they're about, but failing that, a fast car sure helps.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% quality bonus to any piloting skills when being the Getaway in a chase.

Rank 2: You gain another +10% quality bonus to piloting ground vehicles when being the Getaway car in a chase.

The Pursuit

They always run, so always be prepared to chase.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% quality bonus to piloting ground vehicles when being the Pursuit car in a chase.

Rank 2: You gain another +10% quality bonus to piloting ground vehicles when being the Pursuit car in a chase.

Step Four: Determining Special Equipment

The character is automatically equipped with a certain amount of firepower, gimmicks, and equipment. Most notable of these items are the gadgets. Gadgets are pieces of gear specifically built to accomplish a certain task on the Operative's behalf. The spy acquires gadget points at character creation and as she levels, allowing her to add to her arsenal, or refine what she already has as part of her mission package. The Secret Operative starts with several pieces of useful, but mundane gear for her arsenal, as well as a few pieces of gadget gear to be created with the G.M. Of these loadouts, the Operative may select up to eight caches

total, and may select the same item multiple times. In addition to all this, the Secret Operative will also start with two Gadget points to use to create custom gear, as referenced below. The Operative also gains another two Gadget points at 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

Analysis Cache

Portable Laboratory.

Portable Scan Dihilator.

One Gadget with the trait: Assistant, tied to science or analysis. (Scent-tracking software, spectrometer system tied into heads-up display.)

Armory Cache

Full suit of Hard Armor, A.R. 16, S.D.C. 260; 20 lbs (9 kg).

Ballistic Shield, A.R. 14, S.D.C. 120; 16 lbs (7.2 kg).

Two modern short weapons (pistols, SMGs) of your choice, and four clips of ammunition for each.

Gadget Item Cache

One Gadget item with two traits of your choice.

One Gadget item with one trait of your choice.

Gadget Weapon Cache

One Gadget weapon with the traits Non-Standard, and Miniaturized (such as a pocket flame thrower).

One Gadget weapon with the traits Unusual, and one of your choice.

Hard Infiltration Cache

Multi-Optics Helmet.

Superior lock pick kit.

Auto-lock pick gun.

Sixteen sets of full-body clothing or camouflage.

One Gadget with the trait Assistant, tied to avoiding detection or gaining access.

Old Standbys.

Four doses of Metal Dissolver.

Two flashlights.

High-Tech Arsenal Cache

Two energy short weapons, with six energy clips for each.

One energy long weapon, with four energy clips.

Four grenades of your choice.

Modern Arsenal Cache

Two modern long weapons (rifles, shotguns) of your choice, and four clips of ammunition for each.

Six modern short weapons (pistols, SMGs) of your choice, and six clips of ammunition for each.

Four clips of non-standard ammunition (Dum-Dums, Glasers, Teflon) of your choice.

Outdoorsman Cache

Two weeks of food and water for four people.

Four sets of cold weather clothes.

One medical bag.

Climbing gear.

Two camouflage compact tents.

Two disassembled hunting rifles, and three magazines for each.

Fishing gear.

Two hunting knives or machetes.

One satellite phone.

Other various field equipment.

Saboteur Cache

Night-vision goggles.
Two pounds of plastic or gel explosives.
Old Standbys.
Explosives Detector.
Four mines of your choice.
Ear protector headphones.

Safehouse Cache

A fully functional safehouse, listed under an assumed name. The location to be decided by you and the G.M.
Four stocked medical bags.
Four modern short weapons (pistols, SMGs) of your choice, and two clips of ammunition for each.
Food, alcohol, clothes, and water for six people for four weeks.
Four cell phones.
Four thousand dollars in cash.
One nondescript vehicle.

Sensory Cache

Multi-Optics Helmet.
Optical Band.
Pocket Night Viewer.
Eight items from the Sensory Equipment list, barring the mini-radar, or microwave fence (*Heroes Unlimited™ RPG, 2nd Ed.*, page 345).

Soft Infiltration Cache

A full wardrobe of various uniforms, and fashion, to allow access to a wide range of functions.
Four ear mike radios and transmitters.
Eight bugs of your choice.
One Gadget with the traits Miniaturized and Assistant or Independent, tied to theft or computers (remote hacking attachment, code-breaker).
One Gadget with the trait Assistant, tied to social interaction or forgery (facial micro-expression analyzer, ID card cloner).

Surveillance Cache

Multi-Optics Helmet.
Four sets of binoculars and scrambled radios.
Six microphones of your choice.
Sixteen bugs of your choice.
Four ear mike radios and transmitters.
Three high-quality camera/video recorders.
Your choice of a video briefcase or video wall mount.
Two nondescript vehicles.
Four burner cell phones.
Four flashlights.

Vehicle Cache

A souped-up ground vehicle of your choice. The vehicle has eight of the following features to pick from. Some features may be selected multiple times.

- Lightly armored, A.R. 12, +200 S.D.C.
- Bulletproof windshields. A.R. 16, S.D.C. 200 (two, front and back).
- Souped-up engine: 280 mph (448 km) maximum speed.
- Mini-Radar: 5 mile (8 km) range.
- Four oxygen masks and air supply for an hour for each one.
- Retractable, airtight, rear dividing wall. A.R. 16, S.D.C. 150.
- Gadget with the trait Non-Standard, tied to subduing foes inside the car (knockout gas, ejector seat, taser frame).
- Concealed, front or back-mounted 5.56mm machine-gun with 400 rounds of ammunition.

- Concealed, front or back-mounted laser. Damage: 5D6, Range: 3,000 feet (914 m). 30 shots payload, regenerates 5 shots an hour.
- Obvious, front or back-mounted mini-missile launcher. Six mini-missiles, can be fired in volleys of 2, 4, or 6. Damage: 1D4x10 each. Range: One mile (1.6 km).
- Gadget with the traits of Independent (remote operation, functional auto-pilot).
- Gadget with the trait of Miniaturized (mini-cycle in the trunk, vehicle breaks apart into large cycle).
- Gadget with the trait of Unusual, its function tied towards movement (vehicle goes underwater, or flies).
- Gadget with the trait of Unusual, its function tied towards stealth (paint camouflage, ability to adjust shape).

Gadgetry

“Think of it as just extra insurance.” White Witch rolled her eyes, and crossed her arms. “I know how to read people.” Her supplier smiled, a stubble-laden mess of a man. “Crossed arms is a sign of inner tension. I didn’t need the E.I.R. to tell me that.” Elna caught herself and forced herself to put her arms back on the table. “Oh, whatever.” She put on the fancy glasses, and looked around the room as the virtual display scanned for facial signatures to read. “This is something else, though. I just feel I’m going to break it.” The Gizmoteer replied pleasantly, “That’s intentional. It’s better that you have to scuttle some equipment than let on what you’re up to.” She frowned, absently remarking, “Seems like a lot of work to just lose it like that. What do you get out of it?” She looked back to him, and instantly the E.I.R. denoted several facial cues on her contact that denoted a high likelihood of regret or betrayal.

Spies generally have the nicest toys in the field, barring full-blown super science/alien science. While the operative is just a mortal (usually), the items customized for them have some exceedingly useful effects, from hidden weapons, to concealed armor, to high-tech glasses that scan the area about them. For the purpose of this article, a gadget is generally an item-based advantage that is not generally available in most locations of the world, even on the black market. A rocket-propelled grenade launcher can be found in military installations all over the world; a holographic projector cannot. A vehicle could be modified to hover in the air, but a vehicle that already hovers is rather unlikely to come across. And it would give an advantage to the Operative, so therefore could be considered a gadget.

All in all, there could be an entire book listing all the myriad of ideas that could be made with gadgetry, so to do so in a single article is folly. However, with assistance from the G.M., a player can design a gadget to assist the superspy’s agenda by using the Gadget Creation Rules below. After the base item and function are established, the item gets modified by the traits list below, as the spy determines exactly how much effort he or she wants to devote to the gadget, using the pool of points provided as the character levels. A gadget may only have three traits attached to it. This concept also lends itself well to the Stage Magician, and can easily be used there as well.

Gadget Creation Rules

For the most part, gadgets are altered versions of already known equipment. Rifles, zip-lines, goggles, and armor already have stats in the Palladium system. The other gadgets, ones that are defined more by what they do, rather than what they are based off of, can be of various sizes, and should be created with consent with the G.M. As a rule of thumb, all gadgets are of a noticeable size, even if it is not obvious what the gadget does. The more unusual the ability, generally the larger the gadget.

Step One: Select the item to be altered by the gadgetry traits. If the item is not something to be modified, then it is considered a unique gadget, and should be defined by a basic description. E.g.: A gadget that hacks basic software chips within 60 feet (18.3 m) could be defined by saying it is the size of an old closed dictionary, and can connect to a phone via wireless.

Step Two: Define the overall function added to the item after the gadget is modified. A belt with a grapple rope in it, would be defined by the function of “rapid elevation” or something similar. A cell phone with a built-in taser would be defined as “self defense.” While gadgets may have some characteristics similar to Super Inventions, they do not generally have that level of power or ability. Weaponry is a popular option, and items referred to as Gadget weapons are considered to have the function of a weapon, by default.

Step Three: Define how many gadget points you have available as a superspy, and how many you wish to devote to this gadget. Operatives start with two gadget points to assist in modifying or building signature gear. Your amount of points may vary with level, abilities from the Gadgetry category below, or bestowed by the sponsoring agency (if there is one) as deemed mission critical. Most gadgets won’t have more than three Gadget traits.

Step Four: Assign your traits to the gadget, noting the particulars of the adjustment, as well as any other noteworthy information. E.g., the aforementioned hacking book might require a more intricate power source, or have a shorter lifespan.

Gadgetry Traits:

Assistant – The gadget alters the abilities the spy already has. Usually these gadgets provide either a single guaranteed ability, or a +10% to +20% bonus to a skill they already have, or a +1 or +2 to Strike. (A rebreather is a gadget that guarantees underwater breathing for a few hours. A micro-line harness with gas-propelled hooks would add +20% to Climbing.)

Bulwark – The gadget protects the superspy from harm. The item’s statistics may vary, but generally consist of an A.R. of 12, and S.D.C. of 80. (A collapsible, bullet-resistant shield.)

Concealment – The gadget is disguised as something else, concealing its true intention. (A rocket launcher concealed within a golf bag.)

Miniaturized – The gadget has been miniaturized, losing about 20% of its size for a similar reduction in firepower or ability. (A rocket launcher as large as a map tube, but still looks like a rocket launcher.)

Motion – The gadget may function independently of the spy. The gadget may be armed, and piloted directly by the superspy. Non-drone items that are piloted remotely, do so with a -40% penalty. (Drones, remote piloted cars.)

Non-Standard – The gadget allows the spy to attack in a more unorthodox manner. Weaponry damage varies by design. If the gadget requires a Saving Throw, it will be 12 + P.E. bonus or M.E. bonus. (Hypnotic ray, electric grenade.)

Powerful – The gadget provides more of an advantage than normal. (An item that provides an actual combat skill such as Auto-Dodge, or can assist with parrying multiple attacks, a.k.a. Circular Parry.)

Supplanting – The gadget provides a skill the Operative does not have, at 40% when applicable. (Leg harness that automatically bestows the holder the Running skill.)

Unusual – The gadget has a purpose that allows the spy to do something out of their standard ability. While it may be tempting to give the superspy a super invention, such as in *Powers Unlimited*® 2, such inventions are far more powerful and unique than the gadgets listed here. (Flight, stick to walls, gun modification that helps counteract motion, etc.)

The Operative starts with two Gadget points that he may use for one sophisticated gadget, or two less powerful gadgets. The Operative gains another two Gadget points at levels 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15. When the Operative levels or gains certain abilities, the pool of traits increases, allow-

ing him to customize his gadgets more thoroughly. Between missions, or during a game with the G.M.’s permission, the Operative may apply any gadget points to new gear, adding to his arsenal, or improving what he currently has. As mentioned above, the player should work with the G.M. to help design and decide the look and power of these items, assigning damage and use from previously established weaponry or gear.

Gadget Examples

Censure Goggles

Function: Protection, Gadget Trait: Assistant-Guaranteed Ability.

A superspy tends to get into a lot of dangerous situations, some of which can be sanity-rending. In these high-risk to stability settings, advanced gear was created with the sole purpose of protecting the spy from horror. Objects viewed through Censure Goggles are immediately routed through a microcomputer dedicated to recognition, and any images deemed as horrific are either blurred slightly, or covered with a censor icon. The display is accurate enough to help null a creature’s ominous presence, and still allow the spy to react properly in combat. In game terms, Censure Goggles automatically remove the need for a superspy to make Horror Factor checks that rely on sight. This works only for physical sight; and magically induced Horror Factor, psionics, or super powers that specifically invoke a Horror Factor through more than simply a visual basis cannot be ignored.

Traceless Rifle

Function: Weapon, Gadget Trait: Unorthodox Attack, Gadget Trait: Attack Bonus.

This sniper rifle is a masterpiece of cunning and cutting-edge technology used to confound investigations. The Traceless Rifle uses augmented gel rounds as ammunition which evaporate within five minutes after fired, or the clip is breached. The weapon deals similar damage to most sniper rifles, 1D4x10, but with the gel ammunition, there are no spent rounds to locate, the bullets fired disappear, and generally make forensics a nightmare to work with. Any attempt to analyze a crime scene where the Traceless Rifle was used is at a -40% to the skill rolls. The Traceless Rifle also features a holo-emitter targeting display that can only be picked up by certain polarized sunglasses. The added targeting features give the rifle an additional +2 to Strike on Called Shots.

Pocket EVAC

Function: Personal Transportation, Gadget Trait: Miniaturized, Gadget Trait: Unusual (Flight), Gadget Trait: Bulwark.

Agents in the field sometimes find themselves in need of a rapid exit. As such, the Pocket EVAC kit was developed. In essence, the kit is a concealed hang glider, with a micronized JATO (Jet Assisted Take-Off) device, with extra reinforcements along the spy’s back and neck to prevent whiplash. When activated, the spy is shot upward (or forward if positioned improperly) up to 2,000 feet (610 m) in mere seconds, allowing them to glide away at 25-40 mph (40-64 km), depending on the area’s atmosphere and altitude.

Weapons Drone

Function: Weapon, Gadget Trait: Motion (Flight), Gadget Trait: Non-Standard (Drone attack), Gadget Trait: Assistant (Camera system).

Drones in combat have become more and more popular in the field of warfare. This particular drone has been designed with a small series of turbines to allow it flight within a limited range of 1.2 miles (2 km). An automatic pistol can be attached to the drone, allowing the spy to fire it remotely through a secondary system. The simple drone has two attacks in a round, +1 to Strike and a mere 10 S.D.C.

Step Five:

Background Data

This step is unchanged from the core *Heroes Unlimited™ RPG, 2nd Ed.*, page 218.

Other Stuff

Alignment: Secret Operatives, more than most other power categories, have most likely had a role in which they performed morally questionable actions. Whether it be destabilization or assassination, Operatives have most likely been put in a position where they need to be more pragmatic than idealistic, ranging from unprincipled to aberrant. Whether or not the Secret Operative still feels this way or not is a valid question. That said, heroes are generally of a good alignment.

Structural Damage Capacity (S.D.C.): As noted previously, the Secret Operative starts with 1D6x10+40 S.D.C.

Attacks per Melee (Hand to Hand): As with all heroes, the Secret Operative automatically gets two attacks per melee, plus those gained from hand to hand combat skills and boxing (typically five total to start).

Weapons and Equipment: In addition to gadgets and starting equipment caches, the character may purchase conventional weapons, armor, gear, and equipment of his own.

The Game Master may allow the character to have special weapons and ammo listed in the Hardware section (provided by the organization or bought on the black market). Cybernetics is an option for the Secret Operative, and can easily replace the Gadget designs if wanted. Operatives generally would want a focus on disguise, infiltration, and subtle work.

Ninjas & Superspies™ Option: If the G.M. allows it, players can select any of the various Super-Spy or Gizmoteer O.C.C.s from *Ninjas & Superspies™* as a base, adding in the gadgets and abilities. If adding a full Martial Art Form to the Secret Operative, cut the abilities amount in half, and refrain from choosing abilities that alter combat.

Ninja Option: The Secret Operative makes a good template for a ninja as well. Taking the Ninja option, is to forsake all technological skills and abilities (such as Computer Operation, most of the Wheelman abilities, and such). Gadget points are halved, and gadgets must be decidedly low-tech. Ninjas may select the “Expert Training” abilities multiple times to further increase their skills, and they also receive one additional ability every time they gain abilities (including creation) that must be used in the Assassin category of abilities.

Sample Characters

White Witch

Alias: Demeter.

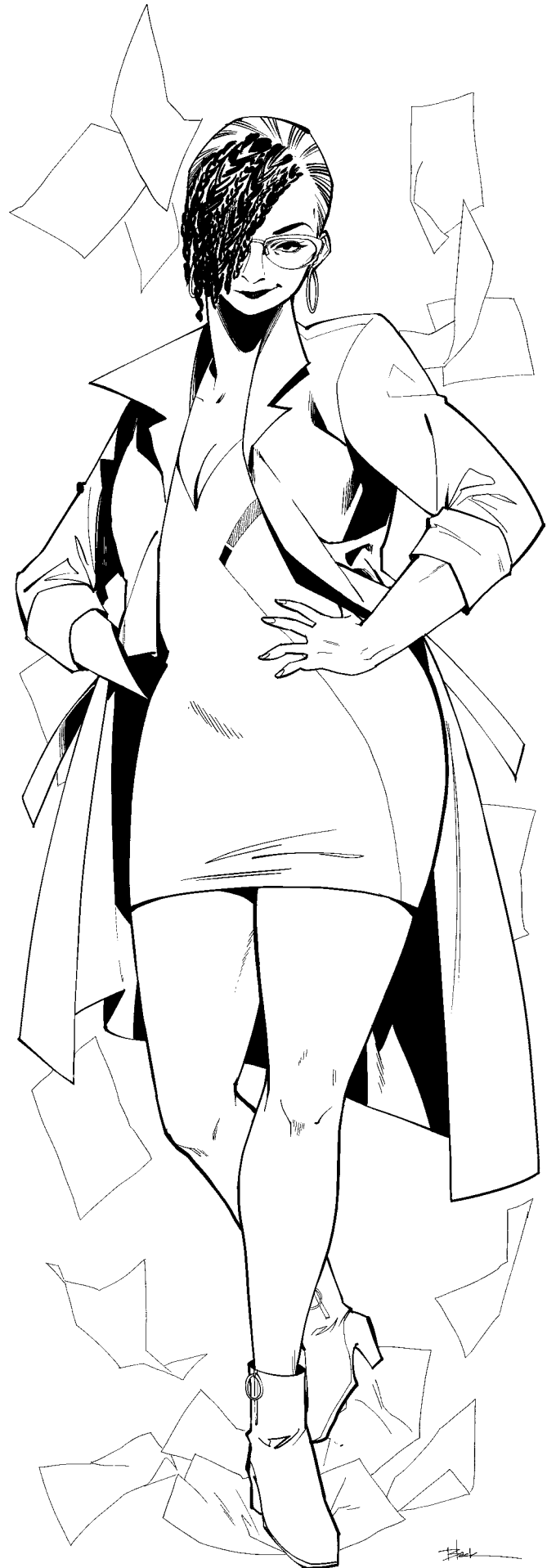
Name: Elna Nakamea.

Land of Origin: South Africa.

Alignment: Scrupulous with Unprincipled leanings.

Description: White Witch is a beautiful black woman in the prime of her life, full of poise and smooth muscle. Athletic and stout, she stands out in a crowd. When left to her own devices, she wears her hair in a series of layered braids over one side of her face, adding a layer of mystique to her look.

Disposition: Clever, snarky, and passionate, Elna is confident in her abilities, and has enough discretion to realize when a situation is over her head. She’s headstrong as well, which has made life for her handlers difficult. She’s already called off two missions while in the field due to her own personal judgment, much to the disapproval of her superiors.



History: Born and raised in South Africa, Elna joined the military at a young age, looking for direction. Her stature and natural attributes breezed her through basic, and she barely served a tour in infantry before she was chosen for greater things. She eventually found her way into Intelligence, where they offered her the role of an operative agent, which she accepted gleefully. White Witch left behind a life of relationships and mundane living for a chance to do something greater. While still early on her journey, she's already looking back with some regret.

Age: 26

Level: 2 Secret Operative.

Stats: I.Q. 17, M.E. 14, M.A. 16, P.S. 23, P.P. 18, P.E. 17, P.B. 25, Spd 21.

S.D.C.: 75. **H.P.:** 23.

Infiltration: 76%

Notable Skills: Pilot Automobile 94%, Pilot Civilian Drone 50%, Seduction 39%, Perception 40%, Intuition 40%, 60% with E.I.R.

Abilities Taken: Expert Infiltrator, Indefatigable, High Society & Dive Bars, Expert Training (Hand to Hand), Situational Awareness, Emotional Reasoning.

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Initiative +2

Attacks per Round: 5

Strike: +4

Parry: +6

Dodge: +6

Critical Strike on a Natural 20

+7 to Damage

With Pistol: +3 to Strike for 4D6 damage.

Gadget Points: 2

Gadgets:

Emotional Intelligence Reader (E.I.R.) – Function: Knowledge.

Traits: Assistant, Concealed. Taking the shape of a pair of trendy eyeglasses, White Witch's E.I.R. reads the faces of people about her, and gives her general information to help inform her of their emotional state. In game terms, it adds +20% to Intuition.

Helsin

Alias: None.

Name: Albuin Friedeberg.

Land of Origin: Germany.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Description: Albuin is a thin, blonde man with sharp cheekbones and stout shoulders. His complexion is pale and wan, with almost a sickly tone to him. He usually wears high collar suits to help cover a very noticeable scar across his throat. When on the job, he wears a full face mask that vaguely denotes an owl, and a full overcoat filled with specialized gear.

Disposition: Helsin puts a lot of faith in his rules. His list of rules are a constant reminder of his position in the world, and what he needs to do to survive. An introvert and loner, Albuin rarely seeks out any sort of contact unless he is on a mission. When he does deign to speak casually, he is blunt, and unapologetic to a fault. Albuin is a burdened soul, and always tries to keep people in the dark about his activities, to keep them from having to make the same choice he did.

History: Albuin Friedeberg is a member of the modern day Black Cat Society, an anti-supernatural quasi-government agency that spans most of Europe. Albuin's family line has worked for the Society since the 1800s, and knowing what he knows about the supernatural world, he didn't feel he had a choice except to continue the family legacy. Albuin started specialized training as an infiltrator and monster assassin at the age of nine, where his father put him in harm's way against a group of animated dead.

Forced to confront the fact that the supernatural exists within the world, even among the governments of many major countries, Albuin deemed that it was important to remove them from power. Six years



later, he assassinated a local chancellor with a specialized rifle and wooden bullet. With the moniker of “Helsin,” an abbreviated use of the classic Van Helsing name, Albuin takes his time accruing data, manipulating events, and planning well ahead for the time that a single bullet will kill yet another monster masquerading as a politician.

Age: 32

Level: 6 Secret Operative.

Stats: I.Q. 16, M.E. 15, M.A. 11, P.S. 20, P.P. 17, P.E. 21, P.B. 7, Spd 24.

S.D.C.: 63. **H.P.:** 36.

Infiltration: 83%

Notable Skills: Demon & Monster Lore 68%, Magic Lore 68%, Cryptography 68%, History 68%, W.P. Crossbow, W.P. Rifle, Law 68%, Gunsmithing 78%.

Abilities Taken: Occultism, Man with the Plan, Demolition Expert, Saboteur, Clutch Shot (Assassin), Increased Crit (Rifle), Increased Crit (Crossbow), Vanish, Gruff Disposition, Silent Scope, Extra Training (Rifle)(Rank 2), Coup-De-Grace.

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Initiative +2

Attacks per Round: 6

Strike: +11

Parry: +6

Dodge: +6

Critical Strike 18+

+4 to Damage

With Rifle: +7 to Strike for 5D6 damage.

Gadgetry Points: 6

Gadgetry:

Censure Goggles – Seen above in the Gadgetry section, with the additional trait of Concealed. It lies within a face mask he wears to avoid hypnotic suggestions.

Predictive Motion Array – Function: Alertness. Traits: Unusual, Powerful. A targeting assist for his rifle that compensates for slight responses. Foes attacked by this gadget cannot Auto-Dodge.

Smart Ammunition – Function: Weapon. Trait: Non-Standard. Helsin brings these rifle rounds when he’s investigating a scene, and is unsure of the nature of the supernatural element he’s involved with. This smart ammunition is contained in a wide, breadbox-style magazine. Depending on his specifications, the bullets within are adjusted to be tipped with a number of elements, to test for elemental weakness. Lead, silver, iron, wood, even bone, and depleted uranium, are options. When using this smart ammo, the rifle must be braced against something, else it suffers a -4 to Strike.

Advanced Heads-Up Display – Function: Assistant.

Equipment: Helsin is backed by the Black Cat Society, a secret organization founded in England. As a company man, he believes in the cause, and has little in regard to personal wealth. All is provided to him by the Society.

Intrigue

Alias: Agent Belladonna, the Nuclear Option, the Unknown.

Name: Avigal Sayar.

Land of Origin: Israel, raised in Turkey.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Description: An achingly gorgeous Israeli woman of dark eyes, high eyebrows, and a slight frame. Intrigue is limber, svelte, and triple-jointed. A woman of haunting eyes, and a fearsome dedication to the art of spycraft and manipulation.

Disposition: An expert at playing a multitude of roles, Intrigue can shift from one personality to the next in a heartbeat and make you believe it. The woman’s frighteningly quick at her work, as well as finding the right way to manipulate assets. While nobody is ever certain if they have ever talked to more than a shell of her true disposition, it is likely that she is a stoic, calculating woman that is prepared for any situation.



History: One of the single most dedicated and skilled agents in the history of Mossad, Avigal Sayar was born in Israel, but almost immediately moved north to Turkey after birth. She was caught up in several disputes between rogue forces in the Turkish countryside that went on for nearly three years, all unreported to the rest of the world. Living through the shelling and gunfire, Avigal was diagnosed with PTSD at a young age and eventually sought mastery over her mental health. Eventually, she found herself living the life of a mercenary, not unlike the people that terrorized her in her youth.

Mossad caught her early enough in her life to give her a purpose, and trained her as an operative. She did more than excel at her work, she lived it. Within three years, she was always in the field, with a bevy of missions she worked on simultaneously, poaching targets of opportunity, providing recon, and intelligence gathering constantly. She could shift flawlessly from one cover to the next, immediately digesting new intelligence and acting upon it. Agent Belladonna, at her peak, had three different handlers, each one only cleared to know part of her operations. She single-handedly brokered peace between several rival factions due to the sheer intensity of her legend. She became the “nuclear option” for most of the continent of Asia, a deterrent to all acts of subterfuge.

Work became harder for her to come by due to this. She was forcefully sidelined in order to promote peace with neighboring countries and other intelligence agencies. On one of her few missions afterward, she made a life-threatening flaw. Frustrated and battling her own fears, Sayar stepped on a crudely constructed IED, which very nearly ended her life. Over three weeks, she crawled, stole vehicles, and hunted for food, all without the use of her legs, as she attempted to contact her evac team. She was rescued after 24 days out of touch, her legs however had turned gangrenous, and were amputated to save her life.

Agent Belladonna was given a very private removal from service, in the presence of several heads of state. She was lauded with honors and funds, none of which she could talk about. Of course, even as she was retired, there was concern of her being a security leak, a worry that she'd flip on the agency.

Belladonna's own deep-rooted paranoia brought her to the exact same conclusion. Avigal started to suspect that her last mission was one that was set up to take her out. How else could she have succumbed to such an obvious ploy of anti-personnel mines? She predicted the strike team's attack on her hotel, and slaughtered them to a man, using traps and ambushes, all without the use of her legs. She even evacuated the building before a rocket strike blew up the entire building.

Avigal used the confusion to fake her death, and slip away from her world, but found that she needed to continue the mission, such as it was. Agent Belladonna returned to her mercenary roots, selling information, manipulating factions and agencies, from behind the moniker of Intrigue. While no longer aligning her interest directly with Mossad, she's been accruing enough money and resources for cybernetics. After that, there's no telling where she'll go.

Age: 43

Level: 13 Secret Operative.

Stats: I.Q. 18, M.E. 16, M.A. 20, P.S. 16, P.P. 23, P.E. 5, P.B. 28, Spd 5/12 with basic prosthetics.

S.D.C.: 45. **H.P.:** 41 (physical capability has been greatly reduced due to her injury).

Infiltration: 98%

Notable Skills: Acting (+10% Quality), Disguise, Cryptography, Computer Operation, Radio: Scramblers, Psychology, Basic Electronics, Pilot Aircraft, Detect Ambush, Concealment, Detect Concealment, Ground Vehicle, Jet, Submersible, multiple languages, Streetwise, all at 98%, Seduction 74%, Perception 80%, Intuition 60%.

Abilities Taken: Covers (Rank 2), Committed to Cover, Clutch Skills (Wheelman), Slip Up, Increased Crit (Melee – Knives), Silent Scope, Grace Under Pressure, Neck Snap, Vanish, Natural Born Actor (Rank 2), Unreadable (Rank 2), The Getaway, Steel Behind the Wheel, Situational Awareness, Cold Read.

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Martial Arts.

Initiative +3

Attacks per Round: 7

Strike: +11

Parry: +12

Dodge: +12

Critical Strike 18+, Knockout 18+, +1 to Damage.

With Gadget SMGs: +8 to Strike for 5D6 damage, x2 for short burst, x5 for long burst.

Gadgetry Points: 10

Gadgetry:

Predictive Motion Array – Function: Alertness. Traits: Unusual, Powerful. A targeting assist for her SMGs that compensates for slight responses. Foes attacked by this gadget cannot Auto-Dodge.

Combat Stimulants – Function: Combat. Traits: Unusual. A non-addictive, temporary nano-machine boost that gives Intrigue an Auto-Dodge at +3 when used, as well as two additional attacks per round. She grows fatigued after 5 minutes of use.

Threat Assessor – Function: Alertness. Trait: Supplanting. A low-grade combat computer that scans environments for threats. Gives Detect Ambush at 40%, rolled separately from her own skill.

Hushed Kiss – Function: Affliction. Trait: Non-Standard. A specialized knife coated with neurotoxins that numb the vocal cords of the target immediately.

Turmeric Gas – Function: Combat. Traits: Non-Standard, Powerful. A deadly gas that Belladonna uses in a last resort, when collateral damage is acceptable. Victims asphyxiate rapidly. Deadly by inhalation or contact, and a single drop can cover a 120 foot (37 m) area in a gaseous cloud. Damage: 3D6 direct to Hit Points per round of exposure.

Turmeric Gas Cure – Function: Protection. Trait: Assistant – Guaranteed Ability. An injection that provides total immunity to Turmeric Gas for six hours.

The last two gadget points are left to the G.M.'s devices.

Equipment: Intrigue has a multitude of safe-houses in Asia, Europe, and Africa, with a wide network of computer systems and dead-drops known only to her. Each safehouse has a weapons locker, a fail-safe system for destruction, and vehicles for her disposal. While Intrigue currently could funnel her money together to gain her goal of cybernetic legs, she feels it would leave her in a compromising position.

In Conclusion

The Secret Operative has joined the ranks of the Super Sleuth, Physical Training hero, and Stage Magician, and brings its own specific style to the fight. While most of these power categories do have some elements in common, their ability to stunt, catch people off guard, work the right angles, and show off their readiness, ends up defining them more than your standard mutants who are defined mostly by what they can do, not who they are.

As always, I'd like to thank my crew, the Guides to the Megaverse® podcast, for their thoughts, concerns, and occasional playtesting involving these rewrites. The GTTM podcast has now hit one thousand downloads, and has one hundred uploads, all available at guidesmegaverse.podbean.com. Until next time, Game on!

On the Trail... with the Hunter/Vigilante

Optional Material for Heroes Unlimited™

By Matt Reed

All her planning came down to getting the answers she wanted today. It was all finally starting to show some progress. Elise placed her knee against the large metal jaws of her bear trap, and pushed it open with her hands. It latched open with a satisfying click. She wiped her brow. Simmons usually had two men for backup.

Her gaze went back into the hallway, where her other work was waiting to be sprung. Nearby she stashed a heavy club in case the falling trap didn't incapacitate fast enough, and up ahead, she hid the one pistol she had managed to steal. The young heroine removed her gloves and ran a single finger over the trap's teeth. Blood trickled from her thumb. Her focus was elsewhere. Simmons was fast on the draw, but he led his shots too little. She could use that. It was going to be a risk to get them to chase her this far, but if they did, she was confident that the tables would turn... and she knew just how to get them to chase her.

The Hunter/Vigilante is a niche archetype in Heroes Unlimited. A normal man with some rifle skills, and a tame set of special skills that starts off with "Disguise Scent." The initial image of a Hunter character may bring up monocles, pith helmets, and "the most dangerous game." The Hunter is meant to be so much more than a big-game hunter gone rogue. In fact, there are very few viable archetypes to properly represent a Hunter/Vigilante. The most notable one comes in the form of Kraven the Hunter, of Spider-Man fame. But even Kraven was more than human, and yet we saw signs of his tactical sense, his ability to pursue, adaptability, and cunning as he fought Spider-Man. Another proper choice is the Punisher character. While he could easily be defined as a Weapons Expert, the Punisher shows a great deal of foresight, manipulation, and legwork. All traits used by a good Manhunter.

Shedding the preconceived notions of what a Manhunter can be, opens up a great deal more to the concept. Here you have a character who is comfortable in most any part of the world, formidable in both ranged and melee combat, knows cultures and languages, and has a sharp eye for detail. A man who aggressively studies opponents, and hones in on weaknesses to exploit.

The Hunter could be a pulp hero, using his fists and wits to go up against heavily armed foes, or he could be an archaeologist, using his knowledge of traps and history to recover lost artifacts, an ex-military assassin luring targets to favorable locations, a cunning trapper who eliminates foes without face-to-face encounters. The Hunter doesn't need to be limited to pursuing humanity itself either, Hunters have the potential to chase down cryptozoological creatures that threaten humanity from the shadows, aliens, mages, robots, mutants. In short, the Hunter should be capable of tracking down anything in their field of interest, and finding weaknesses associated with it. Hunters are meant to be patient and play the long game, using their hours of surveillance and research to analyze their foe for one lightning fast assault. The worst news for the prey of a Hunter is that even if you survive the initial assault, the Hunter still knows all of your moves and reactions for the next fight. Worst of all, whatever reaction you have, however impromptu or clever, it may very well be exactly what he wants.

The Hunter Compared

The Hunter/Vigilante has been the toughest Power Category to expand. What the Hunter initially lacked was anything that actually *defined* it, It had some sharpshooting abilities, some tracking ability, but overall was

less than the sum of its parts. As such, the Hunter has been fully redeveloped, and emphasis has been put onto his main combat tactics, more than his survival abilities. While Survivor, the first Hunter superskill accounts for the ability to survive almost anywhere on the planet, and a good deal of Wilderness skills, but this doesn't generally have a giant impact on a game unless the campaign is a world-traveling epic (in which case, kudos).

The Hunter plays differently than the Sleuth, the Operative, and the Stage Mage, though there are some similarities. Consider the Hunter to foes what the Sleuth is to crimes. A constant evaluation and analysis, using research and instinct to achieve a specific objective. Both power categories need to put in some legwork to really make the situation work in their favor. Both the Hunter and the Operative are surveillance experts, use stealth, and can favor ranged weaponry with deadly intent. The difference between these two power categories is that the Hunter focuses more on the manhunter side of things, learning a foe's patterns easily, while the Operative focuses more on a vast array of abilities, and gadgets. Of course, the four categories could make quite a quartet in a low-powered game. The Stage Magician distracting and confusing foes, the Sleuth and the Manhunter tracking down foes and preparing for conflict, while the Operative uses advanced tech to support the team.

Beyond that, the Hunter now has a wide array of skills at his disposal...

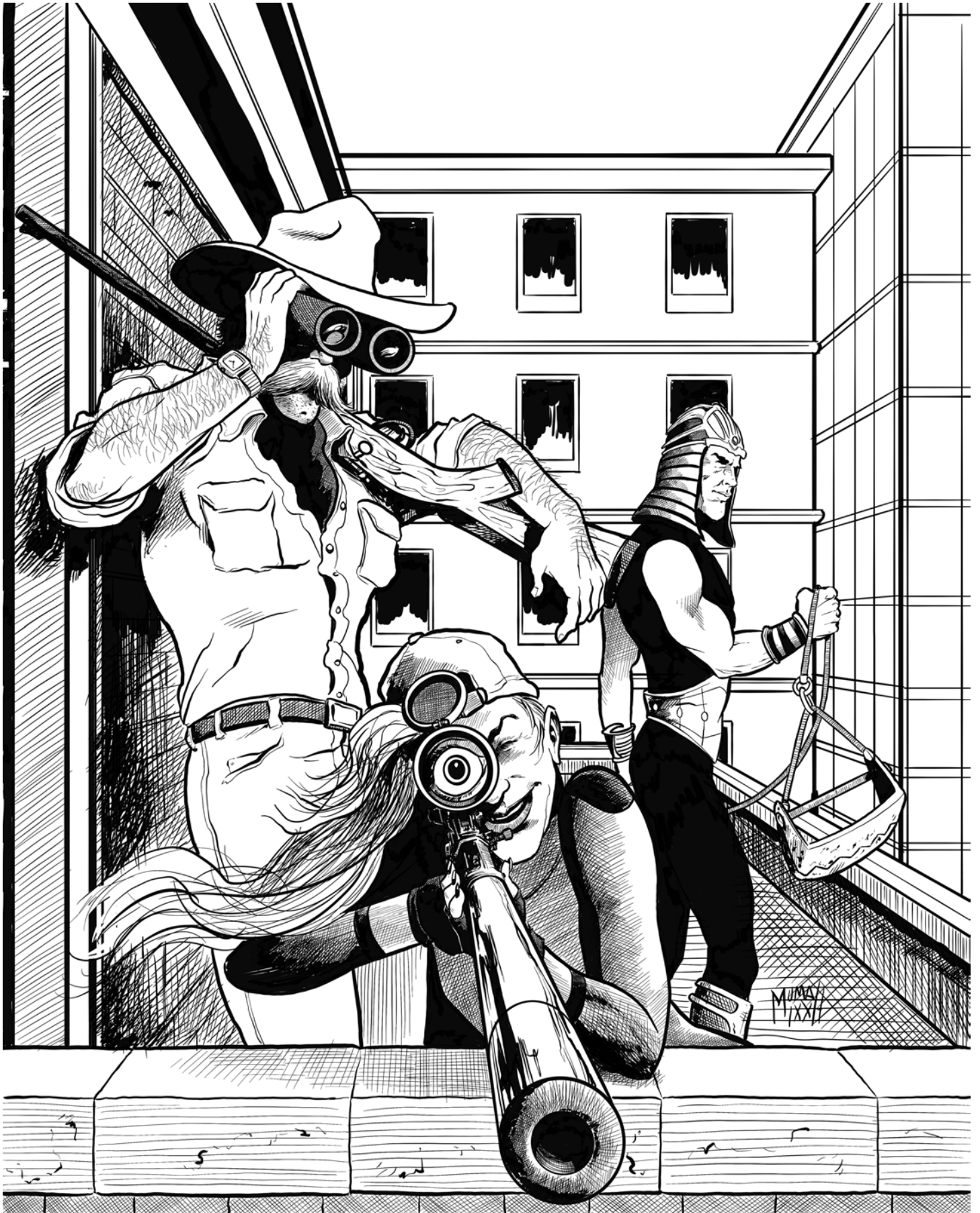
Survivor is meant to showcase the things that the Hunter needs to be capable of anywhere in the wilderness. Survival, hunting, animal skills, they all show the Hunter's utter dominance in rural environments, without devoting a lot of mechanics to it.

Ambusher is a basic superskill as well, one meant to denote the specific focus of a Hunter to seek out ambushes and stealth tactics over anything else. The higher starting percentage gives him a hefty bonus versus a character using Prowl in order to stalk through the shadows. Again, this superskill is merely meant to emphasize the Hunter's classic tactics. Only the higher level foes should be much of a threat to tear down the Hunter's ambush before it starts.

Hunter's Instinct is where things become interesting. This superskill shows off the Hunter's mindset, how they generally view danger, and weakness. The psychology involved in dealing with foes, and how to draw them out into the open. Think of any film where the hero plays a long con-game with the villain, manipulating the villain until he has no choice but to go a certain route, or bring something into play. That is what Hunter's Instinct is about. Now, while the concept is powerful, even enemies have their own agency to work with, and Hunter's Instinct is not considered mind control of any sort. In fact, the Hunter's player should speak with the G.M. about what he or she is hoping to accomplish, or perhaps a tip or hint on how to accomplish the desired result.

Hunter's Instinct also is the lynchpin for one of the Manhunter's greatest abilities, the **Predator System**. A Hunter who knows everything about how his prey fights is a dangerous foe indeed. He knows where the attacks come from, can predict what is likely to occur next, and when the prey will move to flee. With this information, the Manhunter can start to react even before the attack comes, giving him an extra bit of prescience to survive. With enough time of surveillance or research under his belt, the Manhunter can become a startlingly deadly force against his quarry.

Trapsmith is another angle of the Manhunter that now sees the light of day. In this article, there is a new trap system to represent hastily built traps used by heroes for a number of results. While creating a trap, the hero decides what traits to choose, within an initial limit of three traits. With these traits, most every simple trap can be put together for an ambush of a different sort.



Lastly, as always are the **Abilities** of the Hunter. Each one is meant to promote a bit of individuality between different Hunters, allowing players to focus on weapon skills, Predator skills, or trapper skills, as well as round out the hero even further for greater versatility.

All in all, the Hunter/Vigilante has become a force to be reckoned with in the world of *Heroes Unlimited*TM.

Step One: The Usual

Attributes: Determine the eight attributes as usual. Physical attributes will likely change during character creation, so writing in pencil is recommended. In addition, some physical attributes have been increased by the Hunter's active lifestyle.

- +1 to I.Q. (Minimum of 11).
- +1D6 to P.S. (Minimum of 14).
- +1D4 to P.E. (Minimum of 14).
- +1 to P.P.
- +1D6+2 to Speed (Minimum of 12).

Hit Points: P.E. Attribute number +1D6 per level of experience. The character also gets a one-time bonus of +2D6 to H.P.

S.D.C.: Determine the character's S.D.C. last, because it will be altered by skill bonuses. The character's starting S.D.C. is 1D4X10+35.

As always, the addition of physical or mental skills will also adjust the character's attributes.

Step Two: Education and Skills

Education is fairly diverse, and with a specific focus. The main emphasis involves hunting, tracking, wilderness survival, psychology, and surveillance. DO NOT roll to determine education level and skill programs. The Hunter's new special skill set, (seen below), encompasses most of the prime wilderness skills once listed here. The following skill programs are all part of the Hunter's education.

Common & General Skills

- Pilot: Automobile (+10%)
- Pilot: Boat of choice (+10%).
- Pilot: One of choice (+10%, any).
- Mathematics: Basic (+10%)
- Language: Native Language (+25%)
- Literacy: Native Language (+20%)
- Language and Literacy: Two other languages of choice (+15%).
- And 2D4+3 Secondary Skills.

Weapon Proficiency Program

- Two W.P.s of choice (both with an additional +1 to Strike bonus).
- Two additional W.P.s of choice.

Diligence Program

- Computer Operation (+10%)
- Research (+15%)
- Intelligence (+20%)
- Two Rogue or Espionage skills of choice (+10%).

Legwork Program

- Hand to Hand: Expert*
- Swim (+20%)
- Climb (+15%)
- Find Contraband (+20%)
- Athletics
- Streetwise (+20%)

- Use/Recognize Poison (+15%) or Disguise (+10%)
- Two Communication skills of choice (+10%, +20% for Sign Language).
- One additional Skill Program of your choice (+10% to Medical, Communication, Wilderness).

* For one additional skill, the Hunter may upgrade his Hand to Hand to Martial Arts or Assassin (if evil).

Special Skills

1. Survivor: 80% +2%/level

The Hunter lives up to his name with a reputation for being able to easily navigate anywhere on the planet. The Hunter can also survive just about anywhere on the planet. All native plants, animals, and locations are known to him, if only through research. *The Survivor superskill combines all ground Survival skills (wilderness, urban, jungle, desert, arctic, etc.), Land Navigation, Hunting, I.D. Plants, Animal Husbandry, and Track Animals.* The Hunter is well versed in building shelter, field skinning, cooking (at the very least for sustenance, if not flavor), and other advanced wilderness skills. In addition, using this superskill, the Hunter is considered able to forage for food, disguise his scent, and hunt small or large game for up to a group of six people every day. The Hunter may also automatically lessen the travel time in the wilderness by 25% when applicable, due to his ability to blaze a path through the wild.

2. Ambusher: 70% +3%/level

Ideally, the Hunter's primary choice of attack is going to be from ambush. Given the levels of foes that the Hunter deals with, they tend to exploit every advantage they can, for a swift, brutal, victory. As such, the Hunter has spent years working on his craft, learning to blend in with his surroundings. Stealth, whether long term or short term, is almost about as vital to the Hunter as it is to the Secret Operative. *As such, the Hunter's superskill Ambusher combines Prowl, Camouflage, and Track Humanoids.* Any time one of these three skills are needed, the Hunter rolls Ambusher instead, giving it a higher chance of success.

3. Hunter's Instinct: 60% +3%/level

Part psychology, part instinct, Hunter's Instinct is all about observing how people and animals operate at their most base nature. The Hunter can speculate on what a character under pressure might choose to do, the directions that people would move towards during a disturbance, or how they might respond to threats. He understands their habits, their instincts, with a deep level of psychology that differs from the psychology taught in colleges. This is a speculative skill that doesn't necessarily guarantee that the Hunter knows his foe's course of action, but that the Hunter can see the most likely outcomes. Once he gets into a prey's head, and knows what they're capable of, he can predict basic reactions, and instinctive responses. A successful Hunter's Instinct skill roll might give a basic course of action for a player, without exactly predicting his prey's actions. He might ascertain that a prey would most likely choose to fight, or would be more likely to flee the city than hole up. The Hunter can use this skill to manipulate his opponent into going in certain directions, allowing him to lure the quarry into a trap, or anticipate a person's movements enough that he can lie in wait with an ambush. *The Hunter's Instinct superskill contains the skills of Surveillance and Detect Ambush, as well as some basic levels of Psychology.*

Example: Maduin the City Hunter is keeping surveillance on his current target. He decides that he needs his quarry to flee the area in order to be cornered and questioned. Maduin successfully rolls Hunter's Instinct. The G.M. tells Maduin's player that most likely his prey would choose to fight, but if enough unknown vehicles were in the area, he would likely flee instead, due to not knowing who else may be a part of this ambush. Maduin then seeks out allies to help rig up this ambush properly.

Example: Alise the Trapper is preparing for a confrontation, and has heavily trapped the side door of the warehouse she's aiming to use. On a successful Hunter's Instinct roll, she can lay out a course of action with the G.M. that would encourage her target to use that side door, such as herding the foe with weapons fire, or parking vehicles on the street closer to the main entrance, to give the impression of being blocked without tipping off the target. While any character can sketch out a plan to do these very same things, a Hunter's plan has much more psychology to it, and a subtlety to it that can make a Prey feel it was his own decision to make, not realizing that the Hunter has manipulated him.

Hunter's Instinct is also used in the Hunter's "Predator" mechanic to use their superior knowledge to inflict maximum damage to their foe, exploit weaknesses and predict telegraphed motions. Hunters have an innate understanding of the human body, and can recognize weakness as easy as the Natural Genius. They review tapes, study their target, and learn those subtle mannerisms of how they fight. The Hunter is the one who notes if someone favors a certain leg, or if an old injury bothers the target, and they are the ones to exploit that. While the Hunter can snipe targets like the Secret Operative, his skill set includes more than just head shots. The Hunter uses his Hunter's Instinct skill as part of the Predator System below, to gain additional bonuses against specific Prey.

Upon creation, the Hunter is trained solely in hunting native animals and other humans. A Hunter *can* learn how to apply those same bonuses against mutants and experiments, robots, aliens, and such, by gaining the right skills and abilities in the list below. The G.M. may decide that if an alien is human enough that you may not need an extra ability, or that two sorts of aliens are different enough that you'll need to study them (as mentioned above) before you may start applying the Predator bonuses to them.

4. Trapsmith: 70% +3%/level

Hunter Vigilantes are also crafty, clever heroes, with an intimate familiarity with traps, both natural and manufactured. This specialty may require some setup time, planning, and maneuvering, but these are all traits that the Hunter has in spades. Given enough time, a Hunter can set up a large amount of trap combinations to bewilder, slaughter, or capture his target, all triggered remotely or by the prey. This superskill combines Detect Concealment, Trap/Mine Detection, and Craft Traps. All traps are considered to be concealed with this skill as part of creation, and must be spotted using Detect Concealment or Perception to be avoided (see below in "Perception, Intuition, Skill Quality, and Contested Skills").

Perception, Intuition, Skill Quality, and Contested Skills

Playing Palladium for a number of years, my group had realized a few things that were hard to resolve properly. One of which was that a player with a 98% in Prowl was almost constantly invisible if they wished. No matter how many guards were at the gates, no matter who had a keen eye, the 98% Prowl character would be able to do as he wished. There was a terribly low chance of ever noticing him. The worst that a G.M. could do was to assign a negative to Prowl. Yet those poor guards, they had no chance to notice him on their own.

The second problem was when skills were used against each other, but there was no way to determine resolution. If you roll Camouflage and succeed, and I roll Detect Ambush and succeed, what is the resolution? It leads to a gray area in the rules, and as such, has been defined a bit further. The skill that succeeds the highest is the victor in this example.

When a character has 98% in Prowl, they are exceedingly confident in their ability to move quietly, and remain unseen. At this point, what matters is how good the character's opposition is. The second character would pit a skill against the Prowl roll. If the character has Advanced Hearing, they might opt to use the percentile skill listed there to keep their senses sharp.

This also works for contested Computer Hacking rolls, Piloting, Gambling, and more. Of course, the G.M. can rule that something is a

"simple check," therefore only requiring a basic roll on your part to succeed, and ignore any opposition rolls.

Calculating Perception

The average person does not have Heightened Sense of Hearing or Surveillance Systems. They have a natural skill of Perception, a skill first drafted in the Nightbane book. Everybody has Perception, though average civilians may only have it at 5%. As a D20 roll, it is hard to use in its current state to compare against percentile rolls. I recommend taking the Perception bonus, and multiplying it by 10%, making it into a percentile roll. A +3 to Perception becomes 30%. Be sure to add the I.Q. bonus (using the M.E. chart next to it). A smart Hunter who has focused on his awareness skills, can easily see their Perception start at 50% or above. However, even with a 98% in Perception, the character doesn't automatically see everything, because the skill is still contested.

In the previous example, an incompetent gate guard might have a Perception of 15%, unless they're geared up with optical sensors. This does still give the infiltrator a chance to fail. If the Hunter rolls 01-14%, the guard still has a chance to spot them if they succeed on Perception. It's a small chance, but it will never be an automatic success.

This is where one of the hallmarks of the revised Special Training power categories come into play. Skill Quality bonuses add to your die roll when successful, to help give your character an extra boost to what they're good at, without making it impossible to fail. Power Categories that may be considered very perceptive: Stage Magicians, Super Sleuths, Operatives, etc. warrant a +20% to Perception upon creation. *Perception increases by 10% at levels 3, 9, and 15.*

A *superior* form of Perception would be if the situation could call for Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Surveillance Systems, or possibly even Read Sensory Equipment. In some situations, you could use these skills which may very well have a higher chance of success than a natural skill like Perception. This represents the extra training that a character may acquire. However, Perception works in a multitude of situations, such as against Prowl, Camouflage, Pick Pockets (if using this rule, negate the 67% chance of discovery on a failure), etc.

Calculating Intuition

Intuition is the social equivalent of Perception. While sometimes a "gut skill," it can also be the subconscious collection of subtle cues from the person you're dealing with.

A *superior* form of Intuition is Psychology, or Criminal Insight (a Super Sleuth skill in *The Rifter*® #81), both of which can more thoroughly analyze a person's lies. As with Perception, Intuition uses your I.Q. to determine your initial Intuition. Using the attribute chart, note any particular bonus for I.Q. using the M.E. chart beneath it (between +1 for an I.Q. of 16, and +8 for an I.Q. of 30). Multiply the bonus by 10%. This is your starting Intuition. Power Categories that have a focus on social skills, such as Stage Magicians, Super Sleuths, Operatives, etc. warrant a +20% to Intuition upon creation.

Intuition helps counter such skills like Acting, Seduction, Disguise, Fast-Talking, Trust, Impress, Charm, and other social skills that are deceptive in their nature. An intuitive character may not know for sure if someone's lying, but they can get a hunch that that is the case. Only telepaths can fully understand the thoughts of another person. Intuition increases by 10% at levels 3, 9, and 15.

Traps

Traps aren't covered outright in Palladium too often, and can vary wildly from one setting to the next. Some traps require strike rolls, others can't be avoided if not seen before being triggered, and others require a Saving Throw. Certain traps can simply only be overcome by puzzle-solving, with the punishment for failure being death. Naturally, the most



Trap Traits

Area – The trap’s area is larger than a simple 5 foot by 5 foot (1.5 x 1.5 m) area, increasing to 10 feet by 10 feet (3 x 3 m), and it may also attack multiple foes in that area if triggered at the right time. This trait may be selected a second time, extending the area to 20 feet by 20 feet (6 x 6 m).

Armor-Piercing – The trap has been rigged to help penetrate armor, giving the victim a -2 to A.R. against the attack.

Booby-Trapped – Clever Hunters will expect someone to disarm their work, and take precautions to punish them. Any attempt to disarm this trap must be done with a contested roll, using the Hunter’s Instinct skill (complete with any bonuses or penalties made at trap creation), versus the other person’s trap removal skill.

Calibrated – The trap is exceptionally well crafted, providing an additional +2 to Strike. This trait may be taken multiple times, increasing the Strike bonus by +2 each time.

Constant Effect – One non-lethal feature of the trap is meant to continue constantly until the trap is destroyed, or all foes leave its effect radius. As an example, a constant *Disorienting* trap might be set up as a series of strobe lights and mirrors in an area.

Chain Trap – The trap is rigged to trigger another trap nearby as well. Chaining traps together provides additional benefits, but takes one trait from each trap to accomplish. All further traps in the chain gain an additional +1 to Strike. The Trapsmith roll needed to succeed at this sort of trap has a -10% penalty for each additional trap added in (e.g. a seven trap chain would incur a -70% to the Trapsmith skill).

Chemical-Based – The trap’s primary attack is to trigger a type of gas or liquid on an area. Laughing gas, airborne hallucinogens, and poison are all viable choices for a gas trap. A G.M. may rule that certain gases or liquids have additional benefits, like spraying someone with gasoline in a chain with a fire trap, or spraying grease or oil onto someone may promote slipping. Most gases or liquids that cause effects force a Saving Throw as normal (12+ for lethal poison, 14+ for non-lethal poison).

Damage – The trap is meant to deal damage through trap-based means. If the trap is primarily focused on firearms, explosives, or weaponry, then use those traits instead. It deals a base damage of 2D6, with a +4 Strike roll. This trait may be taken multiple times, increasing the damage done by +2D6 each time.

Demolitions – The trap’s basic damage is replaced by an explosive added to the trap. A successful Demolitions skill is required, and standard explosion rules apply.

Disorienting – Generally rigged by a flash-bang or other bright light source, a *Disorienting* trap is meant to make a foe easier to apprehend or defeat. Temporary deafness or blindness are both possible outcomes of this attack. Instead of a Strike roll, a *Disorienting* trap forces a Saving Throw of a 14+ with P.E. bonuses, to avoid the expected condition.

Firearm-Based – The trap’s basic damage is replaced by a firearm added to the trap. Standard bullet rules apply, as well as point-blank range bonuses.

Hobbling – The trap is designed to actually damage the victim’s feet. On a successful strike that deals damage, the trap deals 1D6 damage to the Speed attribute in addition to its other functions. This trait may be taken a second time to increase the damage to 1D6+2 damage to Speed.

Knockdown – Upon a successful hit by the trap, the victim is knocked down.

Miscellaneous-Based – Damage for this trap is tied to something else that cannot be fully accounted for, such as moving gears, subway trains, Tesla generators or such, the G.M. decides the damage dealt by this trap, and may require a skill roll if dealing with anything tricky like electricity.

Multiple Strikes – The trap may attack twice in the round it is activated. This trait may be selected multiple times (within reason), each time adding a single extra attack to the trap’s usage.

Poisoned – The trap is poisoned in addition to its other abilities. The Hunter must roll Use/Recognize Poisons to properly ensure the trap is

deadly traps are usually ones that have taken a long time to put together, with teams of people used, or magical resources to set up a trap, and generally with the intent of building it into architecture, with the punishment being long falls, collapsing areas, and spiked pits.

Detecting and disarming traps is a set of rules that hasn’t seen much play either, so first and foremost, it is suggested that the previous section on Perception and Contested Skills be examined. Perception is one of the skills that can be used to spot a trap, however Detect Ambush and Detect Concealment can both fill this role as well (and most likely have higher skill percentages to work with). For a standard trap, a simple roll is made to notice it, i.e. if you succeed at Detect Concealment, you spot the trap. However, Hunter/Vigilantes and other characters skilled at traps (such as the Stage Magician, and others deemed talented by the G.M.), use contested rolls to spot their traps. As always, if both sides succeed, the one that rolls the highest without going over, is the winner in the contested roll.

Most traps can be disabled, usually through a Basic Mechanics, Craft Traps, or as mentioned in Fantasy, by the Field Armorer skill. This is simply a straight roll to disarm it, unless the trap has been rigged to trigger if manipulated such as with the *Booby-Trap* ability below. If the trap is a *Booby-Trap*, it is a contested roll, with the potential for failure being that the trap triggers immediately. Such rules can also work with Demolitions Disposal, if the G.M. agrees that it would be usable.

The traps that will be focused on here will be quick, improvisational traps that the Hunter can use to hinder or damage his targets. Usually trap-making takes the proper equipment, and 10 minutes of time per trap, though certain skills, equipment, or abilities may alter this.

Traps can vary wildly depending on the resources given, the environment, and the intent of the trap. To help allow players flexibility, but with enough structure that it fits neatly into an adventure, the trap creation process below has been created. On a successful Trapsmith roll, the trap will function within a basic design, and start with three traits from the list below. Most traps have a basic S.D.C. of 10 to destroy the setup, but not necessarily destroy the components therein. Of course, destroying a nearby armed trap will almost guarantee that it will be set off.

set with the deadly toxin. The trap must deal damage to the foe, but then may force a Saving Throw vs Poison or suffer the consequences.

Reloading – The trap resets itself after use, allowing it to be activated again a minute after its first activation. This trait may be selected one additional time, lowering the reset time to two melee rounds. This may not be used with the *Weighted* trait.

Remotely-Triggered – The trap can be activated at a distance by the Hunter, either via a relay system like a rope, or electronically. This allows the Hunter to choose what triggers it, instead of targeting the first person to pass through the area.

Restraining – The trap has a focus on restraining a target, such as with a net or rope. Upon a successful strike, the victim suffers standard negatives for being snared or captured (loss of initiative, half melee actions and -5 to all combat actions) until cut free (20 S.D.C.).

Staggering – On a successful hit, the victim loses half their attacks for this round. This trait may be selected a second time, extending the penalty for another round.

Tethering – Upon a successful hit, the foe cannot leave the trap's spot, unless the trap is either destroyed or disabled. If the trap is also *Hobbling* or *Damaging*, attempting to leave the trap's area without destroying it will cause more damage equal to half of the damage dealt to Speed, or S.D.C./H.P.

Weapon-Based – If the trap's main intent is using a specific melee weapon, perhaps one that is more damaging than the improvisational nature of the more basic traps, they may be added here. Naturally, this requires either there being particular weapons on site or within the group. Also useful if a specific type of weapon is needed to damage a foe, e.g. silver, magic, iron weapons. This trait may be selected two times, adding the damage of both weapons together.

Weighted – The trap consists of some heavy part of the environment being moved into place to fall on a specific location. This is more of a full drop from above as opposed to pulling a bookshelf over on someone, therefore the damage is more significant. Base damage dealt depends on the weight of the object lifted, using the standard weight rules as under Telekinesis, or 1D4x10 damage per 100 lbs (45 kg). The time to create the trap is increased significantly, to 30 minutes per 100 lbs (45 kg) lifted. An advanced trapper's kit may be required to possess the pulleys and cables needed for this trap. This trap also gains the *Knockdown* trait due to the trap's size and time investment.

Sample Traps

Bear Trap – A classic trap for a reason. The bear trap is a hard-to-remove bonecrusher, and best of all, it can be hammered to a spot to force the victim to stay in its agony, unless they take extreme measures. Considering a bear trap is a real item and doesn't need to be improvised, we can use the *Weapon-Based* trait for the trap itself, which generally deals a powerful 3D6+4 damage. As the trap is specifically meant to break bone, we can add the *Hobbling* trait to it. If the Hunter spikes it into the ground or otherwise uses the chain to anchor it, the trap can be considered *Tethering*, forcing the victim to stay there. For three traits, the bear trap is a powerhouse for the trap-based Hunter. They could even tighten up the springs on it, or sharpen the teeth to add the *Damage* trait for an extra 2D6 if they had the ability to do so.

Buffeter – A simple setup trap that is meant to push someone into the path of something else, with the intent of keeping the target off balance. A simple spring hidden up against a wall, or a series of boxes meant to fall over onto someone, to push them in a certain direction, are examples of Buffeter traps. These traps have the trait of *Chain Trap* as it is meant to push someone in a direction more than anything else. All other traits are left open, perhaps to deal *Damage* or *Disorient*, or even use *Chemical-Based* to spray oil onto the victim, where the next trap will take advantage of that. A clever Hunter could even use *Chain Trap* twice, having the Buffeter set off two other traps simultaneously.

Pistol Surprise – A semi-automatic pistol is the main focus of this trap, hidden in a cardboard box placed at about chest level. When the

trap is sprung, the pistol fires three shots straight ahead in rapid succession, preferably down a hallway or through a doorway. This trap has *Firearm-Based*, and *Multiple Attacks* taken twice. While the loss of the pistol may be costly, three rapid pistol shots at point-blank range is a very good way to eliminate prey.

The Petrie Special – A snare set up to trip the victim, sending them face first into nails or spikes. Pratfalls are a comedy classic, but a tripping hazard, combined with a painful landing, is hardly a laughing matter. This simple trap uses a taut line that is ankle high as its delivery mechanism, with any number of items for the foe to land on. This trap has *Knockdown* and *Damage* attached to it.

Shotgun Surprise – Similar to the Pistol Surprise, a shotgun is the focus of this trap, hidden in a similar way. What makes this so different is that shotguns can have a multitude of shells loaded into it. Two barrels of buckshot down a hallway practically guarantees hitting and crippling people. Even more dangerous, use of phosphorous or dragonfire rounds increases lethality exponentially. This trap has *Firearm-Based* like the pistol trap, however, as the shotgun for this trap is a double-barrel model, it is expected to fire both barrels at once, with no need for *Multiple Attacks*. If the shotgun is loaded with buckshot or another spread shot, it could be an *Area* attack easily, and the G.M. could see fit to expand the area affected even further, to fit with the shotgun's spread.

Snare Trap – A loop of cable moves to catch a victim's feet, and suspend them upside down, leaving them helpless. For this trap, we combine *Tethering* and *Restraining* to build a simple, effective trap. Until the foe destroys the trap, he cannot leave the spot (*Tethering*) and is constantly disoriented (*Restraining*).

Skewer Trap – A thin spear is launched downward at the victim, intent to impale part of him to the ground. Usually involves having a high-tension spring, or crossbow-style launcher. This cruel trap possesses the *Hobbling* and *Tethering* traits. Adding *Poisoned* would mean that you could add a Saving Throw vs Poison for added suffering. By itself, the Skewer Trap seeks to cripple and damage, much like the bear trap.

The Predator System

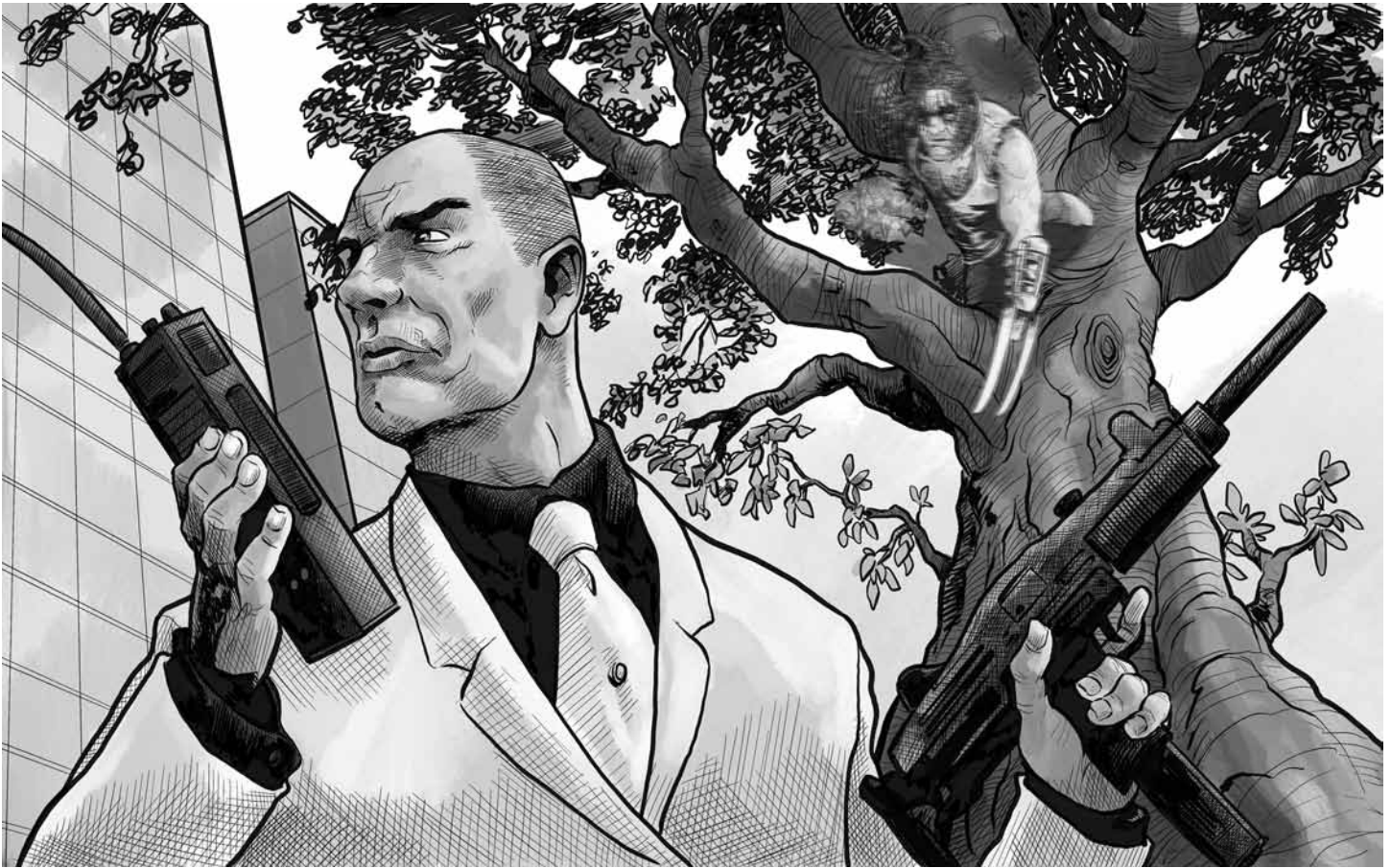
He had to be close by. The once noteworthy actress Elena Ash stalked the corporate celebration, weaving between the tents and tables, dodging the unaware as she stalked. There were spirits out there, spirits that were controlling some bad enough people. The latter was humanity at work, and nothing she had a stake in, but when things went supernatural, that's when she stepped in.

The spirit, she figured, was at least six hundred years old, and all this must be disorienting to him. All this technology, all these bright colors surrounding him. He may as well be agoraphobic. He had to be here, but would find blending in to be a challenge. Someone rich, powerful, an executive or an assistant.

Her eyes scanned the tent, looking for anyone out of place. Most of the people alone were on their phones, but a six hundred year old ghost probably wasn't going to use that form of social camouflage, was he? No, the one with the booklet was more likely... And now she waited for those instincts to kick in, telling the so-called "Final Girl" exactly what she needed to do to drop this creature...

Hunters work so much better in combat after they observe and stalk their prey. The Hunter learns movement, subtleties, standard habits, go-to moves, and reactions to danger. When left to his own devices, the Hunter will spend days, even weeks, to learn how his foe works, and how best to neutralize him. To do so is to use the Predator System, a mechanic for the Hunter that represents how well they research their Prey before they strike.

To begin, understand that a Prey is generally a single person that the Hunter has selected as a target. The bonuses delivered by this system apply solely to this single Prey. A G.M. may rule, however, that enough similarly disposed foes, that fall into the same category, may be applicable to be Prey as well. If a Hunter selects a Mafia crime syndi-



cate enforcer, and all the other enforcers are similarly equipped and of a similar skill and mindset, then the G.M. may allow the Predator bonuses to work against all enforcers in a scene. The same goes for if a Hunter is stalking a Goodfella bionic gunman, i.e. the “typical” Goodfella enforcer encountered, then the bonuses for one *may* be applied to all Goodfella enforcers encountered. Those bonuses would *not* apply to non-bionic enemies, or ones that have been modified from the “typical” motif listed, such as heavier armor or mounted weaponry. Overall, there should be an 80-100% similarity between foes for the Predator bonuses to be enabled.

In a similar vein, almost all mutants, mages, psychics, experiments and such, are going to be considered unique targets, unless for some reason the Hunter encounters mages from the same school of magic, or six mutants all possessing the same abilities (in which case, watch out!). Aliens are more likely to follow the same guidelines, unless the Alien itself is a mutant, and follow the easier guidelines above.

Upon initial creation, a Hunter can stalk and hunt other humans only. However a Hunter may spend abilities (seen below) to add other sorts of foes to his repertoire, allowing him to use these bonuses against robots, mages, aliens, and others, as he pours over psychology, mechanical manuals, theories on alien intelligence processes, and esoteric books about spellcraft. This allows him to extrapolate on how these foreign minds operate, and garners him a much greater understanding on how to combat these threats.

It is also worth noting that the Hunter is more likely to learn of a foe’s weakness, or at least realize that the foe showed vulnerability to something, than most any other power category. If the Hunter selects Monster Hunter as an option to become his Prey, he will most likely learn how to damage the creature through the lore skill he possesses, but does not innately possess the ability to do damage. This also does not mean that a Hunter, armed solely with a knife he just found, can damage a foe that has the Invulnerability super ability. No amount of study will outright deny super powers, nor innate defenses, it simply means that the Hunter will realize the significance of using magic, silver or iron weapons against these foes, and will most likely seek these elements out.

Using the Predator System

The Hunter needs to spend time stalking his foe to learn his habits. Ideally, this involves using the Hunter’s Instinct skill as Surveillance, or otherwise poring over hours of footage, or other analysis about the target, (psychological reports, fight footage, medical reports). The Hunter then rolls Hunter’s Insight or another skill that relates to the stalking of the Prey (possibly medical skills if looking at charts, etc). Upon a success, the Hunter gains one Predator Point that he can put into special bonuses against the foe. After a Predator Point is gained, the Hunter must move to new footage, records, or film. A Hunter can’t keep gaining Predator Points from watching the same dust-up over an hour. Up to eight Points may be accrued from scouting a target at rest, or while the target is in combat. The former costs fifteen minutes worth of time to pick up on the proper signs, the latter takes only five minutes of analysis. Given that most fights don’t last five minutes, recording the fight and watching it repeatedly will suffice.

To use the system, select one foe as your current Prey. From there, information must be gathered, active surveillance, video footage, taped fights, interviews, on-site footage, psychological evaluations, and medical records; it all gives the Hunter more to work with. Every fifteen minutes of active surveillance, footage studied, or profiles read (or five minutes of combat footage) gives the Hunter another chance to gain a Predator Point as he learns more about his foe. It might help to keep a list of all the Prey you’ve made over your career, and any additional research or footage you may use to gain more Predator Points involving them. You may change whom your Prey is at any point you’d like, but only two Predator Points are kept from the previous Prey, no matter how many you had. There are some abilities that may alter this rule.

Example: Elise the Trapper has decided to take the psychotic Manik out of the picture for once and for all. She successfully uses Hunter’s Instinct as Surveillance to study him for fifteen minutes. She gains one Predator Point against him. Later online, she digs up security footage

of Manik's assault on a police station. She spends a quarter hour going over the footage, studying him, and rolls Hunter's Instinct again, succeeding again. She now has two Predator Points, (one from surveillance, one from combat). Knowing how dangerous this maniac is, she puts both points into a bonus to dodge his attacks. Her training coming into play as she notes telegraphed motions and reflexive moves on his part.

Predator Point Abilities

Most abilities below may be purchased several times, increasing the bonus against the Prey. These bonuses last until the Hunter changes his Prey target. These points may not be moved about as needed, unless Predatory Adjustment is taken as an ability. Otherwise, if a Hunter wishes to change his bonuses, he must devote more time to gaining information, and use those new Predator Points to overwrite the old abilities.

One Point Bonuses

- +1 to Dodge.
- +1 to Parry.
- +1 to Entangle.
- +2 to Initiative.
- +2 to melee damage vs the Prey.

Two Point Bonuses

- +1 to Disarm.
- +1 to Strike.
- 1 to the Prey's A.R.
- +5% to all skills used against the Prey (which may come in handy to gain more Predator Points).
- +10% Quality Bonus to all skills used against the Prey (see above for Contested Rolls for an explanation).
- +1 to Called Shots against the Prey.
- +1 to Saving Throw vs Magic vs the Prey's magic.
- +1 to Saving Throw vs Psionics vs the Prey's psionics.
- +1 to Saving Throw vs mutant abilities (that require a Saving Throw).

Three Point Bonuses

- +1 to the Hunter's Critical Strike range versus the Prey.
- Halve the penalties to dodge bullets or lasers from the Prey. This ability may be taken twice, eliminating any dodge penalties.
- +1 to the Hunter's Critical Strike range versus the Prey.

Four Point Bonuses

- +1 Attack per melee round against the Prey.
- +1 Auto-Dodge against the Prey.

Eight Point Bonus

+3 to Initiative, the Prey loses two melee attacks versus the Hunter as they compensate for the Hunter's erratic movements. The Prey is also -3 to dodge the Hunter's attacks. The Hunter also has a +4 Auto-Dodge against the Prey.

Example: The Final Girl has six Predator Points ready to use against a possessed businessman that she's been stalking. She spends four Points on an extra attack per melee round against him, and spends another two Points to gain a +1 to Saving Throw vs Psionics. The Final Girl spends some time mentally focusing, readying herself for her opponent's tricks and tactics, gaining confidence in her own mental defenses.

Step Three: Abilities

As with previous expanded power categories, the Hunter may select a series of abilities to help emphasize his or her focus and background. The Hunter gains eight abilities at level one from any category except Advanced. The Manhunter gains an additional two more abilities at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, and 15.

Advanced

You've gotten to the point where you trust your instincts enough to let them guide you... finally.

Dodge Bullets

You've spent enough time running from automatic weapons fire to know how to throw off their lead.

Rank 1: Your penalty to dodge bullets is reduced by two points.

Eternal Prey

Requires one Predator ability. You never forget a target.

Rank 1: When you change your Prey target, you may keep an additional Predator Point from the last quarry you were hunting. Normally, you may only keep two Predator Points. This ability stacks with Lasting Prey for a total of four Predator Points held.

Extra Predator Point

You keep finding more and more things to exploit.

Rank 1: You can gain one extra Predator Point, upping your maximum. This ability may be taken multiple times.

Extra Prey

They're all just victims, even if they've got different vulnerabilities.

Rank 1: You may have two Prey, but must split your Predator Points between them as you see fit.

Explosive Critical (Melee)

Also available as a Secret Operative Advanced ability. Your best strikes sink even deeper.

Rank 1: When you deal a Critical Strike with a firearm, you deal an additional 1D10+2 damage factored in after the critical multiplier.

Rank 2: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 2D10+4.

Rank 3: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 3D10+6.

Explosive Critical (Ranged)

Also available as a Secret Operative Advanced ability. When you seize an opportunity, you find ways of inflicting the most damage.

Rank 1: When you deal a Critical Strike with a firearm, you deal an additional 1D10 damage factored in after the critical multiplier.

Rank 2: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 2D10.

Rank 3: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 3D10.

Explosive Critical (Trap)

Your traps bite even harder when they get a good hit in.

Rank 1: When you deal a Critical Strike with a trap, you deal an additional 1D10 damage factored in after the critical multiplier.

Rank 2: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 2D10.

Rank 3: The bonus damage to a Critical Strike increases to 3D10.

Instant Trap

It's not enough to be good, you've got to be fast too.

Rank 1: Three times per day, you may set up a simple trap with no more than three traits, in one full melee round. This trap may not have the *Weighted* or *Demolitions* traits on it.

Rank 2: You may use this ability three more times a day.

Rank 3: You may use this ability three more times a day, for a total of nine times.

Increased Crit (Melee)

You seize advantages easier than most.

Rank 1: Select one melee weapon you are proficient with. Your Critical Strike range is increased by one while wielding that type of weapon. This ability may be taken again for another type of melee weapon.

Increased Crit (Ranged)

Aiming for that sweet spot.

Rank 1: Select one specific type of long arm, such as a rifle or shotgun. Your Critical Strike range is increased by one while wielding that type of weapon. This ability may be taken again for another type of ranged weapon.

Potent Trap

Your traps *sing* as they bring the pain.

Rank 1: Traps you've made have a Critical Strike on 19-20.

Rank 2: Your traps Critical Strike range is now 18-20.

Rank 3: Your traps Critical Strike range is now 17-20.

Potent Poison

Requires Master Poisoner.

Rank 1: When attempting to poison a foe via a trap, the victim is -1 to the Saving Throw vs Poison.

Predatory Adjustment

Requires two Predator abilities. You've learned to adapt your instincts to focus on a particular goal.

Rank 1: You may adjust your Predator bonuses for your current Prey after an hour's worth of surveillance or research devoted to reevaluating what you know of your Prey.

Predator Instincts

Requires one Predator ability. You may not select Prey Instincts. You aggressively sprint forward, knowing all of his flaws.

Rank 1: In addition to all other Predator bonuses, you always have an additional +1 to Strike against your Prey.

Prey Instincts

Requires one Predator ability. You may not select Predator Instincts. You warily gauge your Prey, knowing how dangerous he is.

Rank 1: In addition to all other Predator bonuses, you always have an additional +1 to Parry against your Prey.

Preying Trap

You've customized your traps to your specific Prey.

Rank 1: You may get your Predator bonuses to traps when used against your Prey.

Rapid Reload

You keep the bullets flying.

Rank 1: Once per combat, you may reload a magazine-fed firearm without using an attack.

Shearing Trap

Your traps make mincemeat out of your foes.

Rank 1: When selecting the *Damage* trait for a trap, you may also add your Hunter level to the damage it causes, once. Selecting *Damage* multiple times does not increase the damage dealt.

Superior Customization

Requires two Trapper abilities. You squeeze even more out of your traps.

Rank 1: Your traps may have an extra trait.

Takedown

Leaving a trail of bodies nets fear, leaving a trail of the dazed nets confusion.

Rank 1: When initiating melee combat behind an unaware foe, your range for Knockout increases by two points. e.g., if your standard chance for Knockout is on a 20 for this attack, it becomes an 18+. If you have no Knockout ability, you gain it on a Natural 20.

Three Steps Ahead

You know how your prey works so well, you know where they're going before they do.

Rank 1: When using Ambusher to track someone, if you beat their roll (if any) by 50% or more, with G.M.'s discretion, you may end up arriving to their destination before them. Example: Against a standard person who isn't aware of you, if you succeed at Ambusher, and your skill quality is 50% or greater, this tactic is applicable. Against a foe that is aware, and uses a skill such as Surveillance to lose you, if you and they both succeed, but your successful skill quality is 50% greater, then this tactic is applicable.

General

The Manhunter's basic set of moves, able to round out the Hunter.

Beast Tamer

When you stare into the eyes of a predator, you are the one that comes out on top.

Rank 1: On a successful Survivor roll, you may calm an aggressive creature to a less aggressive state. Enraged creatures may still be aggressive and territorial, but will opt to at least delay combat for a few scant moments as the Hunter holds them at bay. Any hostile action to the creature or otherwise provoking, such as stealing its eggs, will instantly snap it out of its lulled state, and make it immune to any further soothing. The stages go as such, Enraged, Aggressive, Indifferent, Curious, Docile, Protective.

Rank 2: A successful Survivor roll will force the animal to move two stages towards Protective.

Contacts

You've put in a lot of time getting to know people. Maybe they've come to you, maybe you've approached them, but your job is a lot simpler when you've got friends watching your back.

Rank 1: You gain three contacts. These contacts may be determined as you gain them, but they may also be brought into play during play, with the G.M.'s permission. These contacts are generally low-level rank and file in the grand scheme of things. Allies in other countries, war veterans, black market dealers, and informants are the usual lot of contacts. These contacts are usually willing (if begrudging) to assist the manhunter in his mission. These contacts may be killed off or otherwise removed from play. The Hunter may find a new contact after a month has passed.

Rank 2: You now have six standard contacts.

Disarm Expertise

Remove the weapon, then strike.

Rank 1: +1 to Disarm.

Rank 2: +2 to Disarm.

Dungeon Delver

You spend more time in crypts than in cities.

Rank 1: You gain Archaeology as a skill (or +20% to Archaeology), and Pick Locks, (or +10% to Pick Locks).

Rank 2: You gain an extra +10% to both of those skills.

Entangle Bonus

Restrain the target, deny his weaponry.

Rank 1: +2 to Entangle.

Rank 2: +3 to Entangle.

Environmental Tolerance

Years of freezing cold and torturous heat have little effect on you after you've trained for it.

Rank 1: You only start to suffer environmental hazards after the temperature reaches extreme situations, i.e. 190 degrees Fahrenheit (88 C), or -20 degrees Fahrenheit (-29 C).

Expert Training (Ranged)

Diligent training in modern weaponry proves itself as you advance in skill.

Rank 1: Select one Modern W.P., you gain two levels of proficiency with it, meaning that a third level Hunter with W.P. Pistol will use the bonuses for W.P. Pistol at level five.

Rank 2: The W.P. previously selected gains an additional two levels of proficiency. The earlier example would mean the Hunter has W.P. Pistol at level seven.

Freeform Climber

Gear is nice, but not required.

Rank 1: You never need gear to perform a climb, unless the situation would be considered impossible. (E.g. climbing a pure energy wall without sophisticated gear designed for it.)

Grace Under Pressure

Some people break under pressure, but you work your best under the clock.

Rank 1: You no longer can take penalties to skill rolls for stressful situations.

Hunter's Ambush

You can fake out even the best.

Rank 1: When using Ambusher as Camouflage, you gain a +10% bonus to the roll.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% Quality bonus when using Ambusher as Camouflage.

Rank 3: You gain an additional +10% to using Ambusher as Camouflage.

Hunter's Watch

You're always aware of what your quarry is up to.

Rank 1: When using Hunter's Instinct as Surveillance, you gain a +10% bonus to the roll.

Rank 2: You gain a +10% Quality bonus when using Hunter's Instinct as Surveillance.

Rank 3: You gain an additional +10% to using Hunter's Instinct as Surveillance.

Keen Wits

Trouble lurks around any corner, so it's always best to expect anything.

Rank 1: +2 to Initiative.

Rank 2: +3 to Initiative.

Rank 3: +4 to Initiative.

Master Poisoner

You've studied toxicology further than most Hunters, and can reap the rewards for doing so.

Rank 1: +10% to Use/Recognize Poisons.

Rank 2: +20% to Use/Recognize Poisons.

Rank 3: +30% to Use/Recognize Poisons.

Pain Tolerance

You're so used to the aches and bruises that you've started to block it out.

Rank 1: +2 vs Saving Throw vs Pain.

Rank 2: +3 vs Saving Throw vs Pain.

Piloting Hobbyist

You've dabbled in flying, diving, hot air balloons, anything that can show you a new part of the world.

Rank 1: Select three Pilot or Pilot Related skills; you gain them with a +10% bonus.

Poison Tolerance

You've learned to respect the poisons you work with through micro-dose usage.

Rank 1: +2 to Saving Throws vs Poison.

Rank 2: +3 to Saving Throws vs Poison.

Rank 3: +4 to Saving Throws vs Poison.

Polyglot

Perhaps you don't know every language, but you're always learning more.

Rank 1: You gain four languages you may speak and write, all at +20%, and an extra language at levels 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15.

Provider

The bounty of the land or sea is ever-present for you, and your allies will be glad to have you aboard.

Rank 1: When using Survivor to provide food and shelter, on a successful roll, you provide sustenance for twelve people, instead of six.

Rank 2: You now provide food and shelter for up to twenty four people.

Quick Feet

You can always slip away at top speed, when the situation requires it.

Rank 1: Your speed is no longer halved when Prowling.

Reaction Time

You've learned to spot the signs of gas attacks, knives in the dark, and shifting floors. It was one busy week.

Rank 1: When triggering a trap, you gain a +2 to the roll required to avoid harm (Saving Throws vs poison, Strike rolls to grab a wall, Dodge rolls to avoid spiked walls).

Rank 2: Your bonus in this instance increases to a +4.

Rifleman

Familiarity with the iron brings speed.

Rank 1: +2 to Initiative when using a rifle.

Rank 2: +3 to Initiative when using a rifle.

Rank 3: +4 to Initiative when using a rifle.

Scent

Your nose is far more trained due to your time in the wild.

Rank 1: The Hunter gains the ability to track by scent. Track by Blood: 30% +5%/level. Track Familiar Scent: 20% +3%/level.

Rank 2: The Hunter gains +20% to both of these abilities.

Scum and Villainy

You make it a point to always know where the hideouts are at.

Rank 1: +10% to Find Contraband.

Rank 2: +20% to Find Contraband.

Rank 3: +30% to Find Contraband.

Situational Awareness

You always see it coming before anyone else.

Rank 1: +3 to Perception (or +15% to Perception).

Rank 2: +4 to Perception (or +20% to Perception).

Rank 3: +5 to Perception (or +25% to Perception).

Sleepless Nights

Whether it's bad dreams, coffee, or the hunt, you've survived longer on less.

Rank 1: You only require 4 hours of sleep to be considered well-rested.

Rank 2: You may function without sleep for 72 hours without penalty. At the end of this cycle, you are considered heavily fatigued, and must sleep for a full day as soon as possible.

Snap Aim (Rifle)

With reflexes and training, it becomes second nature.

Rank 1: When using a rifle or shotgun, once per round you may make an Aimed Shot that only costs one attack.

Wealth

It has often been said that the best super power is money. Petty cash is assumed to be just that, what you have on hand to work with, and not to be considered a workaround to budget your own power armor usage. Subject to G.M. allowance, you may occasionally have access up to ten times the amount of petty cash for larger, ongoing projects.

Rank 1: In your home city, you are considered to live very well, with a nicely furnished home, workshop, and three cars. You always have petty cash of 2D4x1000 dollars available for the month.

Rank 2: You have homes scattered throughout a country of your choice, each one complete with all the vehicles, and standard gear necessary for your adventures (the exact amount to be left up to the G.M.). You always have petty cash of 1D4x10,000 dollars available for the month.

Rank 3: You have homes all over the world, each one with all the standard gear for your adventures (the exact amount to be left up to the G.M.). Your monthly petty cash increases to 2D4x30,000 dollars.

Weaponsmith

Trusting in your firearms, you know the right job requires the right bullet.

Rank 1: You gain Gunsmithing at +30%. You also may modify weapon ammunition, such as creating dum-dums, hollow points, and other special cartridges (as seen in the Weapon Expert power category). Demolitions is required to make most exploding rounds.

Scrapper

You tend to lead a pulp action hero's life...

All-Terrain Hero

You've climbed mountains, and swam oceans.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% bonus to Climb and Swim.

Rank 2: You gain a +20% bonus to Climb and Swim, and any penalties applied to these skills are halved.

Assessment

By judging posture, control, and discipline, you can understand a lot about a target.

Rank 1: Twice a day, roll Hunter's Instinct. If successful, you can estimate a person's level (within 1D3 levels), and their basic type of hand to hand ability (either None, Basic, Trained, Expert, or Master).

Blind Fighter

Given the nature of the hunt, you've trained to fight with obscured sight.

Rank 1: You only suffer half the penalties for being blinded in combat, both ranged and melee, usually a -8 to all combat rolls.

Rank 2: All penalties due to blindness in melee, are reduced to -1 only. Ranged combat is unchanged.

Critter Wrangler

You've actually wrestled bears, and they have the scars to prove it.

Rank 1: +1 to Grapple, +3 to Grapple vs animals. When you successfully grapple an animal, it cannot use its natural weapons against you.

Rank 2: +2 to Grapple, +4 to Grapple vs animals.

Rank 3: +3 to Grapple, +5 to Grapple vs animals.

Fisticuffs

You lead a life that is bound to require a few dust-ups, and you've learned a few tricks to deal with it.

Rank 1: Once per turn, before rolling, you may add +1D6 damage to your next melee attack.

Rank 2: Twice per turn, before rolling, you may add +1D6 damage to your next melee attack.

Rank 3: You now add +1D8 damage instead, when using this ability.

Hardy

You're a tough nut to crack.

Rank 1: You gain an extra +4 S.D.C.

Rank 2: You gain +4 to Saving Throws vs Stun and Knockout.

Rank 3: You gain another extra +4 S.D.C.

Indefatigable

Day-long marathons, skyscraper climbs, it has all led to the day you simply will not stop.

Rank 1: You tire one half as fast as a normal hero.

Rank 2: You tire one quarter as fast as a normal hero.

Moving Targets

Several hours spent on the racetrack and firing range simultaneously, have helped your aim adjustment.

Rank 1: You may fire a modern weapon from a vehicle in motion at half your normal bonuses. Normally, all bonuses are lost when firing from a vehicle in motion.

Pack Tactics

Requires two other Scrapper abilities. You've learned from the wolves you've ran with.

Rank 1: When an ally lands a melee attack on a foe within your reach, you may immediately get a free melee attack against the same foe. You may use this ability once per round.

Rank 2: You gain a +2 to Strike, and +4 to damage with this attack.

Sizing Up

When it's just you and him, you start to learn his patterns, and can anticipate accordingly.

Rank 1: Every round you're in single combat against a foe, you have an additional +2 Initiative against him.

Solid Footing

You know where you stand.

Rank 1: Any combat penalties due to environmental terrain (such as obscuring brush, or sandy ground), are halved.

Steel Behind the Wheel

You've driven down the side of a mountain, and managed a reasonable landing.

Rank 1: While driving a ground vehicle, any penalties acquired due to poor terrain or visibility are halved.

Sucker Punch

Nothing's off limits when you really need to survive this fight.

Rank 1: When initiating combat, or when assaulting a stunned/blinded/incapacitated foe, your first melee strike against that target may be a Called Shot, but only costs one action.

Predator

You've chosen to expand what you can hunt, and nothing is safe.

Alien Hunter

When they come to Earth, you are ready for them.

Rank 1: You may now use your Predator abilities on alien foes, but the time to gain Predator Points against them is doubled.

Cape Hunter

Villains with super abilities are in your crosshairs now.

Rank 1: You may now use your Predator abilities on foes with Super Abilities, except Aliens and Super-Invention heroes. Mystically Bestowed characters may fall under this category, unless they also cast spells. The time to gain Predator Points against them is doubled.

Good Instincts

Requires one other Predator ability. It is as if their weakness is simply broadcast to you.

Rank 1: The time it takes for you to gain a Predator Point via surveillance or research is lessened to 10 minutes per act of research or surveillance. Against unusual foes, like the other power categories mentioned here, the time to gain a Predator Point is reduced to standard, i.e. fifteen minutes per act of surveillance or research, and five minutes per combat scene researched.

Instant Prey

Requires two other Predator abilities. Blood in the water...

Rank 1: When you gain your first Predator Point against a foe, you gain two instead.

Lasting Prey

Requires one other Predator ability. While you might've moved on to a new target, you tend to remember the marks you've hunted before.

Rank 1: When you change your Prey target, you may keep an additional Predator Point from the last quarry you were hunting. Normally, you may only keep two Predator Points.

Mage Killer

Your training encompasses how to fight men of magic.

Rank 1: Requires the Lore: Magic skill. You may now use your Predator abilities on spellcasting foes.

Mind Breaker

Requires the Lore: Psychic skill. You've learned what to expect when dealing with violent psychics.

Rank 1: You may now use your Predator abilities on foes with psionic powers.

Monster Hunter

Requires the Lore: Demons and Monsters skill. You stalk the night as well as any boogeyman.

Rank 1: You may now use your Predator abilities on foes of supernatural origin, such as vampires, dragons, and werewolves. The time to gain Predator Points against them is doubled.

Robot Slayer

Requires the Mechanical Engineer skill. Time-traveling robots are no longer safe from your skills.

Rank 1: You may now use your Predator abilities on robotic and cybernetic foes, but the time to gain Predator Points against them is doubled.

Trapper

Safe to set up, deadly to your foes. All that you need now is to have the two meet.

Extra Trap Trait

Requires two other Trapper abilities. You're always fine-tuning things to squeak out a little bit more to work with

Rank 1: Traps you create may have up to four traits.

Fine-Tuned Traps

More often than not, your targets taste the bite of your traps.

Rank 1: When selecting the *Calibrated* trait for your traps, your trap gains an additional +2 to Strike.

Rank 2: The additional Strike bonus increases to +3.

Rank 3: The additional Strike bonus increases to +4.

Lethal Traps

You do your best to ensure nobody survives your best.

Rank 1: When selecting the *Damage* trait for your traps, you may deal an extra 1D6 bonus damage. This bonus damage does not repeat if you select *Damage* multiple times.

Rank 2: Your bonus damage increases to 2D6.

Rank 3: Your bonus damage increases to 3D6. So the initial selection of *Damage* deals 5D6 damage, and each additional selection of *Damage* (under Trap Traits, above) adds the standard +2D6 more damage.

Master Trapsmith (Concealing)

You know all the ins and outs of trapsmithing, probably because you've been in and out of most every trap out there.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% Quality bonus to Ambusher when using Camouflage.

Rank 2: Your Quality bonus increases to +20%.

Master Trapsmith (Revealing)

You know all the ins and outs of trapsmithing, because you know where to look.

Rank 1: You gain a +10% Quality bonus on Trapsmith when using it for Detect Concealment.

Rank 2: Your Quality bonus increases to +20%.

Step Four: Equipment

The type and amount of equipment is limited by the character's budget. While a good amount of the Hunter's budget can go to weaponry and armor, actual field equipment is just as important. Surveillance gear, paid informants, proper weaponry, transport, all these things should be considered as part of the budget.

Budget

01-15%	\$10,000
16-29%	\$15,000
30-45%	\$20,000
46-60%	\$30,000
61-75%	\$40,000
76-89%	\$50,000
90-00%	\$60,000

New Equipment

As new hero archetypes enter the fray, they bring new equipment kits with them to provide additional advantages in the field. Some of these items garner bonuses to skill rolls, others provide extra options to work with, or extra tools that may be necessary. *The Rifter* #81 article "Hitting the Streets" also contains more equipment suitable for a Hunter/Vigilante.

Camouflage Kit

Even a tarp is better than just laying atop a rooftop, and much like with a surveillance kit, there must be the consideration that you'll be staying put for a long, long time.

Rank 1: The basic kit itself contains cans of spray paint, anchorable non-reflective tarps, wire frames, large styrofoam blocks to help sculpt a particular outline, two winter blankets, facial camo paint, and basic food supplies. A pair of shovels, and a hatchet (all used to add texture to an outdoor usage) add to the mix. Weight: 16 lbs (7 kg). Cost: \$120.

Rank 2: The advanced kit contains all the above, and contains a thicker tarp with heavy netting that items can be attached to, a small portable heater, several cover patterns to suit different terrains, and silhouettes to help fool airborne observers. Weight: 65 lbs (29 kg). Cost: \$600.

Rank 3: The master's kit for camouflage has a thickly layered tarp that prevents attempts at thermal imaging of anyone concealed within it, in addition to everything listed above. Weight: 80 lbs (36 kg). Cost: \$12,500.

First Aid Kit

Combat means injury. Injury means infection. To continue the hunt, self-care is a priority.

Rank 1: Your standard first aid kit is easily bought at most drug stores or department stores. It contains bandages, tape, antiseptic cream, scissors and a variety of other basic tools for cuts and scrapes. For the most part, the goal of a standard kit is meant to lower the chance of infection, not treating blood loss. Weight: 8 lbs (3.6 kg). Cost: \$25.

Rank 2: The advanced first aid kit has tourniquets, drug overdose kits, splints, a portable stretcher capable of supporting 500 lbs (225 kg), medical grade scissors, flashlights, a lantern, and other items meant to stabilize and treat simple injuries. On a successful roll with an advanced first aid kit, the character may heal one H.P. or one S.D.C., but he may not heal any further from this kit until 24 hours pass. Weight: 65 lbs (29 kg). Cost: \$165.

Rank 3: The master's kit has all the above, plus a portable defibrillator system. Anything further would be non-portable, and may as well be a surgery suite. The kit also contains two advanced gunshot treatment syringes, and several sponges that can be used to temporarily prevent most blood loss without a roll needed. On a successful roll with the master's first aid kit, the character may heal one H.P. or one S.D.C., but he may not heal

any further from this kit until 24 hours pass. The master's kit provides a +10% to save vs coma/death as well. Weight: 70 lbs (31 kg). Cost: \$2,100.

Stakeout Kit

Not all prey make it easy to study them, or the Hunter needs more information than just whom to assault. Both of these reasons account for the need for a good observation kit. This sort of kit is meant for the long stakeout, where the Hunter quietly watches the actions in a location.

Rank 1: The basic surveillance kit includes all you'd need for a rudimentary stakeout without much in the way of high-tech gear. Binoculars, a scoped camera, hand mirrors, thermal blankets, energy bars and waste disposal elements are all required when managing a week-long hunt. Weight: 20 lbs (9 kg). Cost \$900.

Rank 2: With the upgraded kit, twelve audio bugs are included, already tuned to a specific channel. A laptop computer records each individual bug's feed to help pinpoint specific voices. Infrared capability is included, with an extra battery. Basic lock picks are also included, as well as a crowbar. Two small battery-powered cameras of standard make and model can also transmit directly to a computer, and can be activated remotely. Weight: 35 lbs (16 kg). Cost: \$1,800.

Rank 3: Four pinhole cameras with low-light capability are added to the mix, as well as two GPS trackers. Three high-powered parabolic mics are included, enough to surround a moderate building with. Sophisticated audio programming helps detect where targets are inside the building, using a basic 3-D mock-up, and can link up with other active devices to track targets. Secured locations like prisons, safe houses, bases, and such may still be outside the reach of this system. However, for the average tenement building or bank, this can do the trick. Weight: 55 lbs (25 kg). Cost: \$6,000.

Surveillance Kit

Tracking mobile targets requires more than rooftop-to-rooftop leaping. It requires urban camouflage, and a bevy of cars. Drones have started to take over modern-day surveillance, but are noticeable, and can be noisy. While anyone can use a drone's basic controls, an active chase may require computer assistance or the Pilot: Commercial Drone skill (see "Saving the World" elsewhere in this issue). Mobile surveillance can be done easily without any kits or equipment.

Rank 1: An older model vehicle is the main attraction of this kit. The vehicle is 2D4+10 years old, and runs well, despite looking older. The vehicle is meant to be nondescript, and able to fit in most locations in a modern city. A one-way windshield sun shade (used to keep sunlight from heating up the vehicle in summer), is included. In addition, three sets of current clothing are included, with sunglasses and other face obscuring items, as well as a bicycle. While the basic surveillance kit doesn't provide any specific bonuses, it provides a number of options to the snoop on how to go about their activity. Weight: 15 lbs/6.8 kg (for the mobile gear). Cost: \$850.

Rank 2: The upgraded version of this kit involves buying account access to a car rental service, giving the Hunter a great deal more vehicles to work with, and the ability to have three vehicles out at once for team activities. Magnetic decals help disguise any number of vehicles, from commercial vans to ride-share cars. The clothes available have been greatly spread out as well, and ranges from off-the-shelf suits to rags and bandages, giving the Hunter a wide range of looks from the homeless (who generally go unnoticed), to more professional jobs. The upgraded kit also contains a commercial surveillance drone that can be wired into a laptop (also supplied). The advanced surveillance kit provides a +10% Quality bonus on contested surveillance rolls. Weight: Stationary. Cost: \$3,500, plus a monthly fee of \$250 for the vehicle access.

Rank 3: The master's kit for mobile surveillance contains everything above, but also requires a van as a control center, and also contains surveillance technology that is considered shady or illegal depending on the local laws. Three camera drones are linked into the control center's monitors, and can follow rudimentary programming to follow targets at a respectable distance (a Read Sensory Equipment roll), or piloted manually (a Pilot: Commercial Drone roll). Advanced programming in the

base computer's system can help predict movement by a targeted person or car, as well as alert to changing road conditions and other nearby issues. In addition to a radio scrambler for encrypted channels, a cell site simulator is built into the vehicle, allowing illegal access to cell phones within 100 feet (30 m) to listen in on call usage in the area. The master's kit provides a +10% to Surveillance (or Hunter's Instinct when used as Surveillance), and a +10% Quality bonus on contested surveillance rolls. Cost: \$85,000, plus a monthly fee of \$250 for the vehicle access.

Trapper's Kit

In most situations, the Hunter can improvise traps from the surrounding area. Warehouses, tool sheds, and metal shops are perfect killing grounds for the Hunter. However, the prepared Hunter will bring along a trap kit, leaving nothing to chance. Using a basic trap kit is enough to lower the time needed to put together a trap from ten minutes, to five minutes.

Rank 1: A basic trap kit contains all the workings and pieces for a variety of traps, giving the Hunter enough resources to build six traps. String, wire, pulleys, knives and sharp objects, as well as a variety of tools like trowels and a crowbar are all at the hero's disposal. Most of the pieces here can be scavenged, and can be assembled for a negligible cost. More professional, watertight kits that include specific gear like bear traps, can run higher. Weight: 8 lbs (3 kg). Cost: \$300.

Rank 2: Includes enough to work with for a long night of snaring bad guys, and the advanced trap kit has enough gear in it to manufacture twelve traps before needing to be replenished. The advanced kit also contains four knives, small mirrors, fire-starting tools, a compact net, pulleys, cables, and a disassembled firearm of the hero's choice. The advanced trap kit gives the Hunter a +5% on Trapsmith or other Create Traps rolls. Weight: 30 lbs (13.5 kg). Cost: \$1,200.

Rank 3: Eighteen traps may be put together with the gear in this backpack alone. Items are held in a waterproof pack and designed to be quickly accessible for any impromptu attacks. The pack also holds two disassembled, short-range firearms for use in trapping; generally pistols or shotguns. If the Hunter possesses Use/Recognize Poison or Demolitions, the pack may contain these items, transported as safely as possible (usually one block of C-4 dealing 1D4x10, but up to G.M.'s discretion). In addition to possessing a great deal of nasty gear for impromptu traps, the master's kit for trapping adds +10% to Trapsmith or any other Craft Traps rolls. Weight: 50 lbs (22.5 kg). Cost: \$3,150.

Sample Characters

Elise the Trapper

Alias: None.

Name: Elise Williams.

Land of Origin: Cascade.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Description: A young, serious teen with a piercing gaze, dark hair, and sharp features.

Disposition: Elise carries herself as a severe, humorless young woman. Ruthlessly pragmatic, Elise cares not for costumes, panache, or melodrama, relying solely on a driving need to punish the wicked.

History: Elise's fractured family history was never a happy one. Early in her life, Elise had been rescued by Child Protective Services against a neglectful mother. It took her father three years of legal action for her to be put into his custody. The time after that was one of distance and half-hearted attempts to connect to her family. Her father had initially wanted little to do with her as a child, and the scars of those feelings ran deep. Still, the two had attempted to share their lives, though never making much headway. Elise paid lip service to school, focusing more on her own burgeoning independence, even choosing to live homeless instead of with her father.

Four years later, her father racked up a gambling debt that he couldn't deal with, and was disposed of. Elise, though having no new love for the man sparked within her, decided to put her city survival skills to the test, and do something where the police wouldn't. Driven by a desire to punish whomever murdered her father, Elise took up the role of a Hunter to exact vengeance on those that have done wrong.

Age: 17

Level: 2nd level Hunter.

Stats: I.Q. 11, M.E. 14, M.A. 7, P.S. 14, P.P. 12, P.E. 15, P.B. 7, Spd 17. **S.D.C.:** 45. **H.P.:** 18.

Armor: None.

Survivor: 84%

Ambusher: 76%

Hunter's Instinct: 66%

Trapsmith: 76%

Notable Skills: W.P. Blunt, Streetwise, Use/Recognize Poison.

Abilities Taken: Environmental Tolerance, Keen Wits, Extra Trap Trait, Lethal Traps Rank 3, Sucker Punch, Indefatigable.

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Initiative +2

Attacks per Round: 4

Strike: +0

Parry: +4

Dodge: +4

Critical Strike on a 20.

With Spear: 2D6 damage, Strike +1, Parry +4.

Elise focuses greatly on her trapping gear. With four traits and a preference for outright damage, Elise can muster an 11D6 trap if needed.

Equipment: Trapper's Kit Rank 1, not much else.

Wealth: Given the fact that Elise is homeless, she's generally without much money, unless her most recent prey carried some.

Arbiter Torch

Alias: None.

Name: Unknown.

Land of Origin: Brazil.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Description: Never having been identified out of costume, Arbiter Torch wears a multi-optics helmet that provides thermal, telescopic, and night vision to enhance his impressive abilities. He wears full body armor, of a dull, sheenless quality, and a wide belt that contains twelve throwing knives.

Disposition: Torch is just a man on the job. He takes no specific satisfaction in putting down problems in the city of Cascade, except for the fact that it pays well and that he has a good reputation to work with. His life is all about the mission and the hunt. Torch finds that the chase is the only thing that brings him any excitement, and has been noted to be a glum, almost maudlin sort when on any other sort of job.

History: Arbiter Torch is one of the twelve Arbiters of Crime in the city of Cascade. Along with the others, he helps keep the constant negotiations and disputes between rival crime syndicates at a safe level. While other Arbiters enjoy the diplomacy, the rampant bribery, and the graft, Torch is one of the few "fixer" sorts currently in the Arbiters. He's a problem solver that looks to clean up messy ends, recover missing goods, and track down problem people. This puts him in out in the city often, presenting him with a new challenge, time after time.

Age: 34

Level: 11th level Hunter/Vigilante.

Stats: I.Q. 14, M.E. 19, M.A. 12, P.S. 22, P.P. 18, P.E. 20, P.B. 10, Spd 26.

S.D.C.: 82. **H.P.:** 62.

Armor: Hard Armor, A.R. 16, S.D.C. 260.

Survivor: 98%

Ambusher: 98%

Hunter's Instinct: 90%

Trapsmith: 98%

Notable Skills: Criminal Science 98%, W.P. Throwing, W.P. Knife, Chemistry 98%, Archery, W.P. Rifle, Find Contraband 86%.

Abilities Taken: Extra Trap Trait, Lethal Traps, Master Trapsmith (Concealing), Quick Feet, Reaction Time, Scent, Three Steps Ahead, Cape Hunter, Alien Hunter, Instant Prey, Lasting Prey, Weaponsmith, Preying Trap, Dodge Bullets, Situational Awareness, Snap Aim (Rifle).

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Initiative +2

Attacks per Round: 6

Strike: +4

Parry: +8

Dodge: +8

Critical Strike 18+ and Triple damage from behind, KO on an 18+ or from behind, +4 to Disarm, +4 Body Flip, Paired Weapons, Damage +10.

With Knife: 2D6+10, Strike +8, Parry +13, Throw +4.

With Rifle: Strike +7.

Equipment: As a big name in the Cascade underworld, Torch can have access to a great deal of personal gear up to and including a rocket launcher, and mid-level illegal contraband from Century Station. He's pocketed a nice nest egg of funds for his inevitable retirement from the role, that he generally chooses not to dip into unless absolutely necessary. There are also several groups of mercenaries willing to do favors for him, in hopes of favorable treatment later. Fortunately, Torch prefers to hunt alone when possible. When on the hunt, he prefers a spike and towline to move him across the rooftops, and a simple high-powered rifle to get the job done.

The Final Girl

Alias: Scream Queen.

Name: Elena Ash.

Land of Origin: Derry, Maine, U.S.A.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Description: A raven-haired woman in her twenties, Elena has the looks and talent of a professional actress.

Disposition: Elena's managed to retain a sense of warmth and empathy to the world despite all the trials she's been put through. Clever, and with a biting caustic edge when necessary, Elena has a great deal of passion in hunting those that hunt humans. An unfortunate side effect of her life has been the self-imposed restriction on friendships, choosing to keep others far away from her, to avoid the same fate of those before.

History: A survivor of not one, not two, but four horrific supernatural events in her life, Elena Ash has been through the wringer. An assault by the Second Sage, two spiritual massacres, and a group sacrifice by the Bones of Utu have left Elena completely hardened to the troubles of the city of Cascade. Covered in blood on multiple occasions, and finding herself a sole survivor several times has given rise to other people denoting her as "the Final Girl," a classic archetype of a heroine who survives the slasher film, usually by dispatching the main villain.

Forced to overcome any sense of helplessness, Elena has forged herself a new path in the shadows, the hunting of supernatural monsters of all sorts. Spirits, vampires, undead, she's chosen a life to take the fight to them, and never put anyone in her position ever again.

Age: 28

Level: 9th level Manhunter.

Stats: I.Q. 17, M.E. 19, M.A. 13, P.S. 11, P.P. 18, P.E. 17, P.B. 16, Spd 14.

S.D.C.: 55. **H.P.:** 53.

Armor: Point-Blank Vest, A.R. 10, S.D.C. 70.

Survivor: 98%

Ambusher: 98%

Hunter's Instinct: 90%

Trapsmith: 98%

Notable Skills: Demon & Monster Lore 89%, Psychic Lore 89%, W.P. Knife, W.P. Rifle, Magic Lore 89%, Gymnastics, Climbing.

Abilities Taken: Mage Killer, Mind Breaker, Monster Hunter, Instant Prey, Lethal Traps, Assessment, Blind Fighter, Eternal Prey, Preying Trap, Potent Trap Rank 2, Hunter's Watch, Prey Instincts, Pain Tolerance.

In Combat: Hand to Hand: Expert.

Initiative +2

Attacks per Round: 6

Strike: +4

Parry: +8

Dodge: +8

Critical Strike 18+, triple damage from behind, KO from behind, +4 to Disarm, +4 Body Flip.

With Magic Knife: 3D6 cold damage, Strike +6, Parry +10, Throw +4.

With SMG: Strike +6.

Equipment: Rank 2 Stakeout kit, Rank 3 Trapper's kit, specializing in silver, iron, and wood. Magical knife with the Frostblade enchantment on it that can affect spirits and supernatural creatures, two modified shotguns filled with silver shot. Several other mundane weapons, and gear with a focus on supernatural threats.

Other Stuff

Alignment: Any alignment can be chosen, but heroes should generally be of good alignment.

Other Skills: The Hunter/Vigilante has a specialized education level, any extra skills must be gained after creation.

Hand to Hand Combat: Physical combat training is included with the character's skill selection, and may be upgraded to Martial Arts or Assassin (if evil) at the cost of one secondary skill.

Attacks per Melee (Hand to Hand): As with all superbeings and heroes, the Hunter automatically gets two attacks per melee. Additional attacks must be developed through hand to hand combat training, abilities, and other skills.

Weapons and Armor: The Hunter relies heavily on his gear and weaponry, usually favoring a mix of long range and melee weaponry. Conventional body armor and weaponry are reliable tools in his crusade.

Structural Damage Capacity (S.D.C.): 1D4x10+35 upon creation. Additional S.D.C. may be gained due to ability selection and physical skills.

Reputation: As a vigilante, the police look at the character as potentially dangerous, especially if the hero uses lethal means to eliminate his targets. If the hero tends to focus on apprehension and capture of notable criminals, he is likely to have 1D4x10% of the police force sympathize with his cause. Half that if the Hunter is known to apply lethal force.

Finances: The Hunter generally starts play with a life's savings of 1D6x10,000 dollars.

Other Options: At the cost of four starting Abilities, and half of any future Abilities gained, a G.M. may allow the Hunter to start with a Martial Art Form from *Ninjas & Superspies*™.

In Conclusion

The Manhunter, while still something of a lesser known archetype, now has its chance to take center stage in the hunt for criminals and super villains. The strength of a normal human comes to bear again, joining the ranks of the Super Sleuth, Physical Training hero, Secret Operative, and Stage Magician, sharing some abilities with them but retaining a great deal of flair and prowess.

I'd especially like to thank Robert Slaughter Jr. for playtesting this new archetype, and spurring me onward to finally tackling this power category, to Robert Slaughter Sr. for the thoughts that led to the Predator System, and to the rest of my group, the Guides to the Megaverse® podcast for their support and concerns. The GttM podcast has hit nearly two thousand downloads, and over one hundred episodes of actual play and Palladium fun, all available for free on iTunes, and at guidesmegaverse.podbean.com. Until next time, Game on!

Treasures of the Megaverse®

Optional Source Material for Rifts® and the Megaverse®

By Carl Gleba

As a Game Master, one of my go to sources for unique magic items is the **Rifts® Adventure Sourcebook: Chi-Town 'Burbs™** and **The Black Vault™**. This small book has huge ideas that have inspired me to create new magic items for my games and even inspired adventures. Many of those ideas are below. Just like in the book, these items can be in the Black Vault, they could be on a Coalition transport destined for the Black Vault, items that could be looted from the ruins of *Tolkeen*, found for sale in the *Splynn Dimensional Market* on Atlantis or simply found as treasure from a deadly foe that has been defeated.

As in the style of **The Black Vault™**, there is a percentile format to roll a random selection as well as quantity. Game Masters should feel free to roll randomly or select what works best for their game.

01-02% Techno-Wizard (TW) Quills of Writing

03-04% TW Feather Duster

05-06% TW Boots of the Juicer

07-08% TW All Environment Tent

09-10% TW Shovel

11-12% TW Healer

13-14% TW Manacles

15-16% Mimic Paper

17-18% Defender's Ring

19-20% Nexus Ring

21-22% Ring of Spells

23-24% House of Glass Ring

25-26% Ley Line Ring

27-28% Anti-Magic Ring

29-30% Traveler's Staff

31-32% Staff of Dimensions

33-34% Staff of Fulmination

35-36% Power Staffs

37-38% Rune Bracers of Defense

39-40% Gauntlets of Combat

41-42% The Mercurial Duke

43-44% Elixir of Health

45-46% Elixir of Endurance

47-48% Elixir of Prowess

49-50% Elixir of Intelligence

51-52% Elixir of Magic

53-54% Elixir of the Mind

55-56% Cloak of the Woods

57-58% Cloak of the Tundra

59-60% Ley Liner Cloak

61-62% Temporal Cape

63-64% Shifter Leather Armor

65-66% Ley Line Walker's Headdress

67-68% Shifter's Crown

69-70% Amulet of Armor

71-72% Spectacles of Learning

73-74% Magic Saddle – Sure Grip

75-76% Magic Saddle – Military Saddle

77-78% Magic Horseshoes

79-80% Logrim, Slayer of Serpents

81-82% The Ever Scroll

83-84% Elemental Stones

85-86% Bow of Strength

87-88% Marksman's Bow

89-90% Magic Arrows

91-92% Splugorth Corsair

93-94% Splugorth Frigate

95-96% Royal Battle Skimmer

97-98% Rune Spell Book – Boundless

99-100% The Infinity Tome

01-02% TW Quills of Writing

These writing quills are combined with the components of Techno-Wizardry to create magically animated pens that write what the owner dictates. All of the quills are large, like those found on an ostrich. Most quills come from a variety of creatures and can vary in color and style.

Range: Touch to activate, 10 feet (3 m) when dictating.

Duration/Payload: Good for about 1,000 written pages of writing. Once activated, the quill be used continuously for up to four hours.

P.P.E. Cost: Two P.P.E. points per activation.

Market Price: 4,000 to 6,000 credits per pen. Excellent availability wherever TW and magic items are manufactured or sold.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% two, 34-66% 2D4, or 67-00% a small box of 2D6+2

03-04% TW Feather Duster

A feather duster with a simple looking device that resembles a small battery pack and some wires, combined with Techno-Wizardry that is enchanted to dust and clean on its own. Simple spells like Manipulate Objects or Telekinesis can keep the TW Feather Duster going for hours. For hard jobs like spilt drinks, stains and just overall grimy conditions it can use the cleanse spell. Those with the Housekeeping skill can add +10% to skill rolls.

Range: Touch to activate.

Duration: Four hours per activation. Can clean a good size room, 10 feet by 10 feet (0.3 m by 0.3 m), in an hour.

P.P.E. Cost: 8 for four hours of dusting on its own or 6 to cleanse a specific location.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6.

Market Price: 5,000 to 6,500 credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% One, 34-66% two, or 67-00% a small box of 1D4+2

05-06% TW Juicer Boots

These boots looking like they belong to power armor. They are high-tech looking with metal and wires, and have an exoskeleton-like armature or brace that attach at the knee, hips and waste. They were a commission, by a warrior who requested to be as fast as a Juicer. After some experimentation with different spells and machinery, the two spells that finally ended up being used were Superhuman Speed and Levitation. Activating the Juicer Boots gives the user a speed attribute of 44 (or 30 mph/48 km; +10 if the wearer already has a Spd greater than 44), +2 to dodge, +1 to roll with impact, and can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) across or 20 feet (6 m) high.

Range: Self.

Duration: 5 minutes per activation.

P.P.E. Cost: 4 P.P.E. (8 I.S.P.) per minute.

Market Price: 15,000 credits per pair.

M.D.C. of the Object: 2D6+20, and requires a Called Shot to hit.

T.W. Notes: The primary spell is Superhuman Speed with a secondary spell of Levitation. The Levitation is dialed down to reduce the wearer

from injuring himself in the jump. The Juicer Boots are created as a level three Techno-Wizard using two half carat black pearls.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one pair, 51-75% two pairs, or 76-00% 1D4+1 pairs.

07-08% TW All Environment Tent

Adventurers who want some sense of civilization in the wilderness may opt for a Techno-Wizard All Environment Tent, sometimes referred to as a *TW Enviro-Tent*. The tent can survive all weather conditions from snowy tundras to hot deserts. Those inside the tent are kept at a comfortable temperature, the tent is completely waterproof and can even survive a limited amount of M.D.C. damage. Circuitry can be seen in the fabric of the tent and circuit boards and bits of machinery along the edges and the tent posts. The main spell used for the tent is Sheltering Force. There is also a built in secondary spell, Lantern Light that can be turned on and off as needed, but has a maximum duration of four hours before needing a fresh infusion of P.P.E. (same as the spell).

The tent comes in three sizes, two-man, four-man and a six-man tent. Regardless of the size the tent looks more or less like a modern domed tent, except along the frame where copper wiring can be seen wound around the length of it. There is a small digital control panel where the light and TW functions can be activated.

Range: Just within the proximity of the tent.

Duration: 8 hours per activation for the tent. 4 hours per activation for the lantern light.

P.P.E. Cost: 21 (+8 P.P.E. for six-man tent and 16 for an eight-man tent).

Market Price: 6,000 credits for a two man tent, 10,000 credits for a four man tent and 15,000 for a six man tent.

M.D.C. of the Object: Two-man tent: 2D6+20 M.D.C., Four-man tent: 2D6+32 M.D.C., Six-man tent: 2D6+50 M.D.C.

TW Notes: The Primary spell is Sheltering force with a secondary spell of Lantern Light. The tents are typically created at 8th level and use a total of 4 carats' worth of ruby quarts and 4 carats of clear quartz.

Type Found: 1-50% Two-man tent, 51-80% Four-man tent, 81-100% Six-man tent.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% three.

09-10% TW Shovel

Enchanted with the Dig spell, magic shovels look like a vacuum cleaner or simple robot (think R2 D2) with a robotic that has a shovel for its hand and forearm. The shovel arm extends from the main body of the little robot or vacuum cleaner-like device to dig a hole, grave, or trench, or latrine, and similar tasks. The shovel begin to dig with the same speed as a strong person, but does not fatigue and can make a hole or trench that is as deep as six feet (1.8 m). An alarm sounds if the TW device hits water or a large rock or surface it cannot penetrate, such as a concrete floor or debris from a collapsed building or buried vehicle, etc. It can be directed if needed, but it only responds to simple commands such as, "Dig a round hole," or Dig a trench from here to that tree, so many feet deep and so many wide," and so on. The amount of earth moved is equal to a 5th level Warlock Dig spell.

Range: Immediate area.

Duration: 25 minutes per activation.

P.P.E. Cost: 11

Market Price: 3,000-6,000 credits each.

M.D.C. of the Object: 2D6+20, mainly the small, mobile robot body.

TW Notes: The Primary spell is Dig and requires assistance from an Earth Warlock. May be an ordinary or M.D.C. shovel with a robot armature, copper wire coiled around the top of the shovel running to just above the head of the shovel attached to multiple turquoise stones.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% 1D4+1.

11-12% TW Healer Device

This Techno-Wizard device is built into a handheld device used by surgeons. Various wires and gems are on the handle and when activated, it is waved over a patient and the device heals them. It has two settings; the light healing restores 3D6 S.D.C. and 1D6 Hit Points and the greater healing restores 2D4x10 S.D.C. and 6D6 Hit Points or 1D4 M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage being. The T.W. device does not aid in diagnosing, but does provide a +10% to treatment.

Range: Touch to activate, 3 feet (0.9 m).

Duration/Payload: Heals instantly.

P.P.E. Cost: 10 for the light healing and 30 for the greater healing.

Market Price: 15,000 credits. Common in cities like Tolkeen, Lazlo, New Lazlo, the Magic Zone and Splynn.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10, and requires a Called Shot to hit.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% two, 34-66% 2D4, or 67-00% a small box of 2D6+2

13-14% TW Manacles

Lawmen and bounty hunters working for many of the magic kingdoms needed a safe way to safely transport rogue magic users. A traditional gag or sock in the mouth is still an effective way to keep a magic user from casting spells, but those options were not often the most reliable. Techno-Wizards from Storm Spire had the bright idea to reinvent manacles for magic users.

Current TW Manacles look like regular handcuffs, but have a second chain that connects to a collar. When activated, the mage's head is encircled by a Globe of Silence spell. The spell has no saving throw and sound cannot be emitted so the spell caster can't cast spells. Now there is one drawback, the mage cannot hear either. So they are not effective when integration is needed or following directions.

Range: Must be placed on an individual.

Duration: The enchantment last 6 hours per activation.

P.P.E. Cost: 25

Limitations: They are currently limited to humanoid anatomy and may not be useful on different D-Bees.

Market Price: 30,000 credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10, and requires a Called Shot to hit.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one set, 34-66% 1D4 sets, or 67-00% 2D4 sets.

15-16% Mimic Paper

This special paper was a product of the espionage division of Tolkeen. The paper looks like any ordinary piece of paper with a faint mystic watermark. The paper is essentially a mystic copy paper. The user places the blank mimic paper on top of a photo, map, piece of art, important document, or any flat surface image that a piece of paper could be placed on. By invoking a magical power word, in three seconds (1 melee action) the exact image is copied onto the mimic paper. The mystic watermark fades as does any magical energy that the paper contained. The end result is an instant copy. It was originally thought to be used to forge certain Coalition documents, but most of the Coalition is digital so the espionage item turned into a commercial product sold to many of the banking industries in Tolkeen.

The paper can be used in forgery and the copy is as good as any copy from a copy machine. Once the image is copied, the paper can be cut and folded just like normal paper. It should be noted that only the image is copied and not the material the image is on. For example, if mimic paper is used on a portrait on a piece of canvas, the image looks exactly the same on a piece of normal paper.

Custom mimic paper can be purchased, but the majority of it is created on ordinary 8 1/2 by 11 white paper.

Range: Touch, must be placed on top or contacting the source image.

Duration: Blank mimic paper will last for years. Once copied, the image is permanent.

Market Price: 100-500 credits per sheet of paper. Sometimes cheaper in a bulk deal.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D4 S.D.C. per sheet of paper, and requires a Called Shot to hit with a ranged weapon.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% 3D6 loose sheets, 34-66% 1D4 boxes with 50 sheets per box or 67-00% a whole case that has 10 boxes of 50 sheets for a total of 500 sheets.

17-18% Defender's Ring

The Defender's Ring can be traced back to a dimension where the people still live in medieval times, ruled by kings, warlords and emperors. It is a world with a long history and a place where magic is known. If object read were used on the ring it would reveal a long history. It has been wielded by many powerful warriors, knights, magic users and kings. The ring is comprised of an unknown reddish metal. Those that can see magic energy can see a powerful magic aura emanating from the ring. Only a dozen or so are even in existence and they are scattered around the Megaverse. One is said to be in the hands of a rising demon lord called Karnack in Hades, and another is rumored to be found in the grand bazaar in the elemental plane of air and another is rumored to be for sale in the Splynn Dimensional Market. Defender rings can be used up to three times per 24 hours. The powers can last for a duration of one hour per activation and the power automatically ends if the ring is removed. Only one power can be in effect at a time. Changing to a different power while the ring is activated counts as one of the daily activations.

- +4 to save vs magic, psionics, Horror Factor, and possession.
- Or impervious to one of the following forms of attack: M.D. Plasma (includes normal heat and fire), M.D. cold (spell attacks like those from a Warlock), Lightning, or M.D./S.D.C. Acid.

Market Price: 2-3 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+20 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): The ring is very rare and the chances are likely that only one would be found.

19-20% Nexus Ring

The one, Nexus Ring known to exist on Rifts Earth is held by one of Tolkeen's Artifact Hunters named *Kurston Kurst*. She was kind enough to let the mystic scholars at Tolkeen study the ring for a short period of time, however she was rather tight-lipped about discussing its origins. The ring is most likely the creation of a powerful deity or Alien Intelligence. It is a solid, greenish colored crystal, and has a smooth inner surface, while the rest of the ring has a multi-faceted exterior, like a beautifully cut diamond. At best, there may be half a dozen of these rings in the Megaverse, and finding one would be a miracle! The ring is unique for a magic rings, and they can only be accessed when P.P.E. is channeled into them. The powers can be activated an unlimited amount of times so long as the P.P.E. is channeled into the ring. The power automatically ends if the ring is removed. Only one power can be in effect at a time.

- +50% to the sensing range of a Shifter's sensing abilities, or Sense Rifts at a range of 150 miles (240 km). The power lasts for 1 hour per level of experience. **P.P.E. Cost:** 30
- Dimension Sense (see Shifter O.C.C.) at base skill or +20% to a Shifter's. The power lasts for 1 hour per level of the Shifter. **P.P.E. Cost:** 25
- +5 to M.A. when it comes to a battle of the wills. Duration is long enough to make it through the summoning ritual. **P.P.E. Cost:** 70
- Dimensional Leap, the ability to instantly jump from one spot to another for combat. Up to 120 feet (37 m) per jump. Can be used with a thought and is +6 to dodge. Each Dimensional Leap/dodge counts as one melee attack. Limited to the Shifter's experience level. Duration is 10 minutes. **P.P.E. Cost:** 30

- +1 to Spell Strength. Duration is 5 minutes. **P.P.E. Cost:** 30

Market Price: 10-15 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+15 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): The ring is very rare and the chances are likely that only one would be found.

21-22% Ring of Spells

The Ring of Spells hails from an alien dimension. The rings were created en masse during a long and tragic war between two races. Hundreds of these rings were made and many would be lost during the war while others were collected and purged after the war. Perhaps a hundred of these rings exist in the Megaverse and a handful have ended up on Rifts Earth. The ring has the ability to store up to 50 P.P.E. worth of spells. For example, you could have two Call Lightings and an Invisibility Superior (15+15+20=50) or 50 Blinding Flashes, or any combination of spells can be used so long as they do not exceed the 50 P.P.E. limit.

Attempting to go over the limit will result in all spells being wiped clean from the magic artifact. The advantage is readily seen in combat as it only takes a single command word (one melee action) to unleash the spell! The only drawback is to place spells in the ring requires a ritual for each spell. Each ritual takes 1D6x10+15 minutes and the user must spend the P.P.E. at the time of the ritual.

Market Price: 3-5 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-75% one, 75-100% two.

23-24% House of Glass Ring

This ring is rumored to have its origins in the Magic Zone. Each ring has three multi-colored gemstones that glow of magic. Upon command of the ring bearer any spell cast on the owner of the ring reflects the spell back at the caster. Like the House of Glass spell, the ring bearer suffers the effects of the spell unless they save.

Three times per day the ring can be activated with the House of Glass spell effect. The effect happens immediately upon the command of the owner. Equal to an 8th level spell caster.

Range: Self Only.

Market Price: 1-2 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+8 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-75% one, 76-95% two, or 96-00% three.

25-26% Ley Line Ring

This type of magic ring is thought to have been designed by a master of magic from Lazlo, but it could have been Tolkeen or even someone off world. Ley Line Rings are always silver, sometimes in the shape of a dragon's tail, with a high quality sapphire gemstone. The sapphire looks imperfect with a white or silver line in the stone. This line always points to the nearest ley line up to 500 miles (800 km) away.

When on a ley line the ring's bearer has additional knowledge: the ring will point to the closest nexus on the ley line (should one exist), it tingles and glows when a Ley Line Storm is heading the wearer's direction, and the person with the ring can *Read Ley Lines*, same as the Ley Line Walker ability. These are all automatic abilities the ring bestows upon he who wears it. And whenever on a ley line or nexus the ring automatically recharges.

All Ley Line Ring will have ONE additional spell ability. Pick ONE of the following: *Send Ley Line Transmissions*, *Ley Line Phasing*, *Ley Line Walking* or *Line Drifting*. This power can be used once per 24 hours at no cost to the wearer, but it can be performed as often as as three

more times per 24 hours at a cost of 15 P.P.E. (or 30 I.S.P.) expended by the ring's wear. These powers are the same as described under the **Ley Line Walker O.C.C.**, and is equal to a 5th level Ley Line Walker. (See **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** page 113-115).

When worn by a Ley Line Walker, the ring increases the range of his O.C.C. abilities by 50% and doubles *Ley Line Rejuvenation!*

Market Price: 1-3 million credits; rare.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-75% one. 76-00% two rings.

27-28% Anti-Magic Ring

The name is a bit of a misnomer as the ring only has the ability to negate a single spell's effect at a time that has been directed at the person wearing the ring, only, and as he chooses, and not the ability to negate all magic. The ring has no influence on circles, Enchanted Rune weapons, area-effect spells, or powerful spell that are greater than 8th level. When the wearer is under the effects of a spell he can activate the ring to get a second saving throw at +2 to save, in addition to any of his own bonuses. The ring can be used to negate a spell as many as four times in a 24 hour period. Only spells with saving throws can be negated. The spell that has been negated instantly has no effect on the ring wearer (recovers instantly), with no lingering penalties, and any damage inflicted by the spell is reduced by half. Spells like Carpet of Adhesion or Magic Net require the ring wearer to roll a 12 of higher to negate their effect upon him, and only him, not anyone else caught in them. If a successful save is rolled, the Magic Net or Carpet is negated and fades away.

The origin of the ring is a mystery and has only come to light in the last ten years. They have been seen on mages in the Federation of Magic. It's possible they are being created in Dweomer by the High Magus or even from mages in the city of Brass.

Market Price: 1-4 million credits, rare.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+20 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -5 to strike when worn by another person.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-90% one. 91-00% two.

29-30% Traveler's Staff

For dimensional travelers, owning a Traveler's Staff is a must have, especially without a Shifter in the group. It has several built-in spells for use when traveling to different dimensions. Many who come across this staff have coined it the Swiss Army knife of magic staffs. It is really meant as a tool, and not an offensive or defensive weapon. To keep the staff from being threatening, most are rather plain looking with magic inscriptions up and down the length of the staff and the ends are capped in a dull unpolished metal.

The owner of the staff is granted the constant ability of *Tongues*, but only while the staff is held. The following spells can be each used two times per day: *Globe of Daylight*, *Eyes of Thoth*, *Sustain*, *Sheltering Force*, and *Heal Wounds*. All spells are equal to an 8th level spell caster.

Finally, the most impressive ability of the staff – used in a “Break glass in case of emergency” capacity – is the powerful spell of *Dimensional Teleport*. The owner has to draw a circle using the tip of the staff. Once the circle is drawn, the owner strikes the staff on the ground in the circle and everyone in the circle is dimensionally teleported to the destination determined by the wielder of the staff. This drains the staff of all magic and cases it to shatter and fall to pieces. It is destroyed.

The staff can be used as a Mega-Damage magic weapon when necessary and does 2D6 M.D. As an M.D.C. object, it can parry other Mega-Damage weapons.

Market Price: 700,000-2 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: The staff has 300 M.D.C. and only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. It does NOT regenerate and needs to be repaired by a Mend the Broken spell at double the usual cost.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-75% one, 76-95% two, or 96-00% three.

31-32% Staff of Dimensions

This Rune staff is a creation of the god, Enki from the pantheon of the Babylonian gods. It was given as a boon to one of his followers who had completed numerous herculean tasks for the god. The Shifter traveled the Megaverse doing the bidding of the god, unfortunately her travels in Hades were not so successful, and she lost the staff in the realm of the demon lord, Karnack. The staff is black in color and covered with silver runes. Atop the staff is a crystal the size of a baseball. When you look in the crystal there appear to be mini-Rifts that open and close.

It grants the constant ability of +10% to dimension sense or for non-Shifters a base of 35%. Additionally, this powerful staff has the following built in spells and P.P.E. reserve, below. Spells are cast at 10th level using the internal P.P.E. reserve. The owner can tape the P.P.E. reserve if needed.

While covered in Runes, the staff does not have an apparent independent personality, though he may feel emotions that are not necessarily his own. It is not indestructible, per se, but has tremendous M.D.C. and regenerates. Scholars that could study the staff would label it as alien magic.

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. as a melee weapon and can parry M.D. weapons.

P.P.E. Reserve: The Staff of Dimensions contains 1,000 P.P.E. that its wielder can use to cast the following spells. P.P.E. regenerates at a rate of 50 P.P.E. per hour, double on ley lines.

Built-in Spells:

Bottomless Pit (100)

Close Rift (200+)

Dimensional Portal (1000)

Dimensional Teleport (800)

Re-open Gateway (180)

Rift to Limbo (160)

Rift Teleportation (200)

Market Price: 25-50 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 700 and it recovers M.D.C. at a rate of 10 M.D.C. per melee round, double on ley lines.

Quantity Found (Optional): A one of a kind item!

33-34% Staff of Fulmination

This is a magic staff that is the creation of alien magic. Tolkien Artifact Hunters recovered a few dozen of these staffs in a far-off dimension. The staffs harness the power of lightning. They range in size from bo staffs to quarter staffs. They are silver in color with blue tips the color of sapphire. Strange alien writing is etched on the sides. Eyes of Thoth reveals the words, “Staff of Fulmination for the Lightning Confederacy.” Some have the proper names of previous owners or family names inscribed in them as well.

The Staff of Fulmination has the following spell abilities: Each is equal to a 5th level spell caster. The owner must have the P.P.E. to cast the spells contained in the Staff.

Spells (Description found in the Rifts® Book of Magic):

Ball Lightning (15)

Blinding Flash (1)

Call Lightning (15)

Electric Arc (8)

Electro-Magnetism (40)

Electrical Field (35)

Lighting Arc (30)

Protection from Lightning (20)

Note: I created this for one of my games using spells found in the **Palladium Fantasy, Library of Bletherad sourcebook**. Game Masters with this book should feel free to use these Fulmination spells, below.

These spells would replace all spells listed above. Just change the S.D.C. damage to M.D.C.

- Spark (1)
- Electric Arc (8)
- Lightning Bolt (10)
- Ride the Lightning (25)
- Call Lightning (15)
- Chain Lighting (40)
- Wall of Electricity (50)

Market Price: 4-6 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: The staff has 200 M.D.C. and only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. It does NOT regenerate lost M.D.C. and needs to be repaired by a Mend the Broken spell at double the usual cost.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-85% one, 86-00% two.

35-36% Power Staffs

These staffs appear to have been created by the same alien magic that creates magical weapon wands. All appear to be quarter staffs made of different metallic colored materials. Damage from these magic staffs in melee combat is 2D6 M.D. or as stated in the description (S.D.C. damage on S.D.C. worlds). The advantage these staffs have over the weapon wands is that most are meant to be used in combat and possess both close combat and long-range combat capabilities, though limited. No two staffs seem to be the exactly alike.

Roll once on each table below to create a Power Staff.

A) Roll once for Close Combat and Melee Damage or Effect:

01-10% M.D. Weapon with Excellent Balance: 2D6 M.D. and +1 to parry and disarm.

11-20% 3D6 M.D. and the constant ability of Tongues to the Power Staff's wielder.

21-30% The staff's wielder is impervious to one of the following: 1-20% M.D. Fire and heat. 21-40% Light (e.g. lasers and cannot be blinded by glare or sunlight). 41-60% Lightning. 61-80% M.D. Cold and Ice Weapons. 81-90% Radiation. 91-95% Horror Factor. 96-00% Possession/Mind Control. The staff does 2D6 M.D. in combat.

31-40% The staff arcs with electricity and when it hits a target it does 4D6 M.D. upon contact. Double damage if the opponent is vulnerable to electricity.

41-50% When combat ensues, the tips of the staff at both ends are set ablaze. Fire Damage is 3D6 M.D. upon contact. Additionally, there is a 1-60% chance of setting any combustibles on fire.

51-60% Paralysis: Lesser, as per the spell, upon contact plus 2D6 M.D.. On a failed saving throw the victim only suffers physical damage of 2D6 M.D., no paralysis.

61-70% Turn Dead. 2D6 M.D. to living opponents, 4D6 M.D. to the dead, including zombies, animated dead and the undead/vampires! In addition to damage any dead within a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius need to make a saving throw of 15 or higher, or they flee the area (as per the *Turn Dead spell*) whenever the staff is raised over the wielder's head.

71-80% Ice damage. In combat, the staff becomes encased in ice (though the wielder does not feel cold). The weapon does 3D6+2 M.D. and it coats whatever it hits in a light frost. Masks, goggles, glasses, helmet visors, windshields frost over, impairing vision: -3 to strike, parry, dodge and roll with impact; two melee actions are needed to clear enough frost to see without penalties. Melts in 1D6 minutes in warm temperatures.

81-90% Life Blast can be used once per melee and must strike the target. Can be useful for allies and enemies alike. The effects are as per the spell. Level equal to a 5th level caster. Use a restrained strike on allies, no damage, but can benefit from the effects of Life Blast.

91-100% Power of Destruction. Does 4D6+10 M.D. damage. Double damage to the demonic and all supernatural evil.

B) Roll for One Long-Range Attack. Roll for Percentile Dice for random determination or match to ability above.

Limitation: Each Power Staff's long-range weapon can be fired 10 times per 24 hour period. More at the cost of 15 P.P.E. per each blast (if the wielder even has P.P.E. to channel into the weapon).

01-10% Water Blast: A powerful water blast is fired delivering 2D6 S.D.C. damage from its surprising impact to most beings, but damage to vampires is 1D6x10 points with a range of 600 feet (182 m).

11-20% Laser-like Light Beam: 3D6 M.D., 3,000 foot (914 m) range.

21-30% Lightning Bolt: 5D6 M.D., 2,000 foot (610 m) range.

31-40% Cold Blast or Ice Shard: 3D6 M.D., 2,400 foot (731 m) range.

41-50% Fires a Projectile out of Thin Air: Wood 1D6 M.D. (3D6 damage to vampires another creatures vulnerable to wood), stone, crystal, or metal: 2D6 M.D. per blast. 2,000 foot (610 m) range.

51-60% Fire Bolt. A burst of flame that does 4D6 M.D. and has a range of 2,000 feet (610 m).

61-70% Dessicate the Supernatural: Same as the spell of the same name. See **Rifts® Book of Magic**, page 127, for complete details. 3D6x10 M.D. unless the supernatural makes a successful saving throw, but has a penalty of -1 to do so. 800 foot (244 m) range.

71-80% Wind Rush: Same as the spell. 1,000 foot (305 m) range.

81-90% Ballistic Fire: 1D6x10 M.D. and is the same as the spell of the same name. 1,080 feet (329 m) range.

91-95% Energy blast on par with an Ion or Particle Beam. 4D6+10 M.D. per blast. 2,000 foot (610 m) range.

96-00% Paralysis Blast: 1,200 foot (366 m) range. Same as Paralysis Lesser spell, except targets are -3 to save and the effects last for five minutes.

Market Price: 500,000-One million credits. Rare. Seldom available even at places where magic is commonplace, unheard of most anywhere else. A few have surfaced at Dweomer and Atlantis, and have found their way into the hands of some Battle Magus and Lord Magus.

M.D.C. of the Object: The staff has 1D6x100+60 M.D.C. and only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. It regenerate lost M.D.C. at a rate of 1D6x10 per 24 hours, double on a ley line.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-75% one, 76-90% two, or 91-00% three!

37-38% Rune Bracers of Defense

Created by the Dwarven weaponsmiths in the pocket dimension of Zarkonia, these black leather bracers are covered in gold colored runes. Once activated, they imbue the owner with uncanny speed and reflexes.

Bonuses: The user of the bracers gains +2 to parry, +2 to disarm and entangle, +2 to pull punch, and +3 to automatic dodge (the act of dodging does NOT use an attack), +2 to save vs illusions and possession, and is impervious to disease.

The wearers can also use the gauntlets to parry attacks from Mega-Damage weapons and even energy blasts and projectiles without benefit of his usual bonuses; unmodified roll only. The gauntlets can be activated for a total of 80 melee round (20 minutes) in whatever increments (one melee round here, four melee rounds there, 12 another time, etc.) AS NEEDED per 24 hour period.

Market Price: 1-2 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6x10+50 M.D.C., requires a Called Shot to hit at -4 to strike when worn by a person, and only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. It does NOT regenerate lost M.D.C. and needs to be repaired by a Mend the Broken spell at double the usual cost.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-90% One, 91-00% Two.

39-40% Gauntlets of Combat

Another creation from the Dwarves of Zarkonia are the Gauntlets of Combat. These metal gauntlets are covered in red Runes and magic symbols and they can be combined with any type of non-powered armor. Once activated the owner becomes a ruthless combat machine!

Bonuses: +10 to P.S. attribute and becomes Supernatural P.S., +1 attack per melee, +1 on initiative, +1 to strike. The wearers can also use the

gauntlets to parry attacks from Mega-Damage weapons and even energy blasts and projectiles (-2 to parry energy and projectiles). The Gauntlets can be activated for a total of 80 melee rounds (20 minutes) in whatever increments (one melee round here, four melee rounds there, 12 another time, etc.) AS NEEDED per 24 hour period.

Market Price: 6-8 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+20 M.D.C., and requires a Called Shot to hit at -4 to strike when worn by a person.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-90% One, 91-00% Two.

41-42% The Mercurial Duke

The Mercurial Duke is thought to be one of the original prototypes for the *Mercurial Blades* (see *Rifts® Adventure Sourcebook, Chitown 'Burbs: The Black Vault* for details about these blades). Mercurial weapons have two forms. One is a solid mass, typically in the shape of a blade and the other shape is a metallic liquid, like mercury. For the Mercurial Duke there is enough mass to create a large axe or a large two-handed sword. Unlike other Mercurial Blades, Duke can be split into paired long swords or even daggers. Duke can also take on the form of any non-living object. Objects cannot be too complicated, the simpler the better.

Type: Rune Metallic Mass of Liquid Metal.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Powers: The metallic mass is made of a dense, pooling liquid, reminiscent of mercury. The insubstantial quality enables the weapon to liquefy upon command to hide the weapon in a canteen, gas tank, or other container, as well as a backpack or knapsack. It can also be turned into a liquid in order to pour through an opening or to slip under the crack of a door. The magical blade can also be made to form around its owner's forearms, appearing like an armband, bracer or even a shield. Duke will reshape upon verbal or mental command.

To form weapons it takes a single melee action. To form other objects it takes two melee attacks and possibly longer for other objects. The maximum length that Duke can be stretched out to is 100 feet (30.5 m) and it can hold 1,000 pounds (450 kg) P.S. for Duke is 30.

Range: Handheld melee weapon, but can be thrown if desired. Duke will flow back to its owner the following melee. It takes a full melee for Duke to return. Telepathic range is limited to 1,000 feet (305 m).

Damage: When used as a large, single weapon, maximum damage is 6D6 M.D. Damage for its smaller weapons can be taken from the 6D6 pool. Such as two swords that do 3D6, three daggers that do 2D6, and so on. Duke does double damage to creatures of Darkness and of the Shadow Realm, Vampires, Werebeasts and other supernatural beings of night.

M.D.C. of Object: 750. Duke is not indestructible due to his nature, but can take a substantial amount of damage and recovers M.D.C. at a rate of 50 M.D.C. per hour, but only if it has a source of metal to consume.

Duke cannot become armor, at best a shield and he will complain that he is not being used to his full potential as a weapon.

Curse: None per se, other than once people see The Duke in action they may covet the Rune weapon for themselves or fear the user regardless of his good deeds, acts of kindness or words. Moreover, it is rumored that this weapon corrupts its user who slowly becomes Diabolic evil and a murderous fiend. This is NOT true, but it is difficult to convince people otherwise, and they may fear, shun and think the worst of the wielder no matter what.

Personality: Duke has the personality of an assassin. While Duke does have a twisted sense of honor he is not above backstabbing. His thoughts on backstabbing are "If the foe were worthy of one on one combat then he would have seen you coming. By killing them you saved them the disgrace of having to face you in combat."

History: Duke was around during the height of the Elf-Dwarf war. He was created by Dwarves and used to assassinate many Elves. During the war Duke traded hands many times and Duke claims to be the weapon that ended the Elf-Dwarf War when he was used to kill the last of the

Elves and Dwarves in charge of their respective war councils. This ultimately worked against Duke as he was collected with a variety of other rune weapons and was destined to be thrown into a volcano. Duke simply turned into a pool of metal and hid until there was an opportune time for him to get away. He stayed in an Elven dungeon for eons until found by some adventurers and he finally ended up in a dragon's treasure horde on Rifts Earth.

Bonuses: +1 on all saving throws and +1 to Strike and Parry while using Duke.

Market Price: 10-20 million credits possibly three to five times that amount. A rare, one-of-a-kind Rune Weapon.

Magic Elixirs

Magic elixirs are super-charged magic potions created by the wizards of Tolkeen. Unlike magic potions which often have a short duration, elixirs last for several days and have more powerful effects. To differentiate elixirs from potions, they are packaged in flasks and also have a thicker, viscous consistency than your typical potion, think thick maple syrup. They take longer to drink and for each flask, they take a full melee to benefit from the full effects.

The Coalition confiscated thousands of flasks, but it is likely a few thousand more are out in North America and it is only a matter of time before someone else is able to replicate them.

43-44% Elixir of Health

This elixir was found in many of Tolkeen's hospital and emergency services. After 15 seconds it heals 6D6 Hit Points or S.D.C., +20% to save vs coma and death, and doubles natural healing for the next 1D4+1 days.

Market Price: 60,000-100,000 credits.

45-46% Elixir of Endurance

This potion is the energy drink of Rifts Earth and was mass produced at the height of the Siege on Tolkeen. Those who drink this elixir gain 60 S.D.C. (30 M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage creature), are +1D4+1 to P.E., fatigue at half the normal duration, and only needs to sleep for four hours a day. The potion lasts 1D4+1 days. The down side is the crash after the duration ends. For each day the potion was active the drinker will end up sleeping for 8 hours. So after the elixir wears off, he will sleep from 16-40 hours straight.

Market Price: 60,000-80,000 credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% 1D4.

47-48% Elixir of Prowess

This potion temporarily increases the P.P. (Physical Prowess) by 1D4+1, grants a +2 to Initiative and +1 attack per melee. The elixir lasts for 1D4 days. Side effects include being fidgety and getting bored quick unless in the heat of action or performing some kind of athletics. It also takes twice as long to fall asleep and few on this potion are able to get a full night's rest.

Market Price: 60,000-120,000 credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% 1D4.

49-50% Elixir of Intelligence

Desperate times, desperate measures. Tolkeen scientists desperate to create a super weapon or the next miracle, created the Elixir of Intelligence to help them. Hundreds of these elixirs were distributed to the different research and development centers in the tri-city area. Taking this elixir grants the user a temporary boost in their I.Q. of +1D4. Ad-

ditionally, the individual can Speed Read and has total recall as per the psionic powers. The elixir lasts for 1D6 days. Of all the Elixirs, this tonic has the potential to become addicting. After it wears off there is a 1-30% chance that if the character has another Elixir of Intelligence that they will drink it or try and seek one out for the next 1D4 days.

Market Price: 100,000-150,000 credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% 1D4.

51-52% Elixir of Magic

The Elixir of Magic started out as a failed experiment. Tolkeen Alchemists had heard rumors of a magic water that could replenish P.P.E., so with that inspiration they set out to create a potion that once it was drunken, would provide an instant P.P.E. boost. After years of failure the potion was shelved until later discovered that in its current form, it still had benefits. This magic liquid allows the body to channel and store P.P.E. more efficiently. For the next 3D6+18 hours, the mage finds he can store generate and store 30% more P.P.E. in his body, than usual. At the end of the duration the mage is fatigued for the next 24 hours and needs normal sleep during which he will only recover half the usual P.P.E. Afterward, he recovers P.P.E. as normal.

Market Price: 100,000-200,000 credits. Rare. Originally only produced in Tolkeen, any the samples that have been found are being bought to Federation Lords for study in the hopes they can replicate the formula.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% four.

53-54% Elixir of the Mind

The Elixir of the Mind was a failed experiment to recreate a non-addicting version of Psi-Cola. In fact it had the opposite effect of closing the mind off and creating a protective psionic barrier. The creators abandoned it until it was rediscovered during the Siege on Tolkeen. Coalition Mind Melters, Psychics and Psi-Stalkers were proving to be a Coalition secret weapon. To help protect many of the non-psychic magic users, the Elixir of the Mind was refined and mass produced. Hundreds of thousands of bottles are thought to exist because in the last months of the war, supply lines were cut, especially as Tolkeen was forced into a defensive war.

Consuming the potion provides the following benefits. Non-psychics for the duration save as if they were Minor psychics (12 to save). Minor and Major psychic save as if they are Masters (10 or better to save). There is no benefit to Master Psychics.

The side-effect or benefit is a permanent Mind Block up for the duration of the elixir's benefits. Psychics are unable to lower this Mind Block so there could be times where the elixir is a hindrance. While Master Psychics gain no benefit, they would have the Mind Block in place for the duration, if forced to consume the elixir. The Elixir of the Mind lasts for 1D4+1 days. During this time, the permanent Mind Block is up, and I.S.P. is recovered at half the normal rate for sleep and meditation. At the end of the duration, all users have a massive headache that lasts 1D4+1 hours. During this time they are at half their combat bonuses and melee attacks.

Market Price: 200,000 credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% 1D4.

55-56% Cloak of the Woods

A brown and green hooded cloak that is perfect for a woodland environment. The cloak grants a +10% to Prowl, negates any scent given off by the person wearing it. That makes tracking, even by hounds following a scent difficult to impossible. -20% if being tracked visually, and those tracking by scent lose the trail completely. Also, three times per day, the wearer can activate a Chameleon spell that last for 60 minutes per each activation.

Size: Magically adjusts to fit humanoids of any sizes.

Range: Limited to the user wearing the cloak.

P.P.E. Cost: None, powers are constant except the chameleon which is limited to three times per day for 60 minutes.

Limitations: It is not ideal of trying to move fast like running, because it negates the Chameleon effect and Prowl is useless.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+13. It is not armor.

Market Price: 750,000-1.2 million credits. Rare in the Americas where the cost can be double. The Splynn Dimensional Market has several outlets that see the cloaks.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% three.

57-58% Cloak of the Tundra

Crafted for a winter environment, the hooded cloak is white. It grants a +20% to Prowl in snow, ice and on the tundra during any season. It also keeps the wearer comfortably warm in cold temperatures. While it does not negate scent, the wearer's tracks become obscured, making anyone following -15% to track the wearer of the cloak even in snow. The cloak can also be an emergency shelter. Once per day for up to 12 hours, a Shelter Force as per the spell can be used. The cloak is added as part of a shelter and acts as the source of the spell.

Size: Magically adjusts to fit humanoids of any sizes.

Range: Limited to the user wearing the cloak.

P.P.E. Cost: None, powers are constant except the sheltering force which is limited to one time per day for 12 hours.

Limitations: None, per se.

Market Price: 750,000-1.2 million credits. Rare in the Americas where the cost can be double. The Splynn Dimensional Market has several outlets that sell this cloak.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+12, the cloak is not meant as armor.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% three.

59-60% Ley Liner Cloak

Most Ley Line Walkers have an affinity for cloaks. This comes from the early days of the apocalypse where it was colder because of nuclear winter and no one was making jackets. Some of the early cloaks looked like tattered blankets draped over the shoulders. Newer cloaks are made out of fine materials like silk or cotton. These cloaks when worn on a ley line cause the wearer to be invisible on a ley line. They just blend in with the magic energy and disappear. See invisible only shows a vague outline of a humanoid form. Combat bonuses for fighting an invisible foe are half. The cloak provides 20 M.D.C. of protection, but while on a ley line it provides 40 M.D.C. and on a ley line nexus or within a mile (1.6 km) of a nexus, the protection is 60 M.D.C. Aside from providing protection and invisibility on a ley line, the cloak has the ability to conceal Energy Spheres. While most Ley Line Walkers have no problem displaying this power as the sphere hovers over their shoulder, there are times when discretion is better and concealing such power is desired. While the Energy Sphere is hidden or cloaked, the energy is not accessible by the Ley Line Walker and the Energy Sphere must be revealed in order to use it. It takes one action to hide or reveal the energy sphere which can be hidden when on or off a Ley Line.

Finally, while Ley Liners are not natural combatants, if they engage in any hostile activity they are revealed, but are +2 on Initiative or can perform a surprise attack, usually casting an offensive spell.

Size: Magically adjusts to fit humanoids of any sizes; 40% have hoods.

Range: Limited to the user wearing the cloak.

P.P.E. Cost: None, but not really effective unless on a ley line. The energy sphere can be hidden on or off the ley line.

Market Price: 500,000 to 750,000 credits. Commonly found in the Magic Zone, Lazlo, New Lazlo and previously, Tolkeen. May also be found in the Splynn Dimensional Market.

M.D.C. of the Object: Limited. 20 M.D. in most environments, 40 on a Ley Line, and 60 on or near a Ley Line Nexus or within a ley line triangle like the Demon Sea.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one. 51-00% two.

61-62% Temporal Cape

This magic cape is coveted by Temporal Wizards, Warriors and Raiders. They are typically grey, blue or black and usually possess some kind of temporal ability. All capes have 1D6 D-pockets. Most are different sizes with the largest able to hold something as large as a heavy M.D. energy rifle. Most Temporal Wizards use the D-Pockets to hold potions, scrolls, gems and other items, while warriors load them with weapons. It takes two actions to go into a pocket and pull out the desired item. Rare cloaks have one additional power for a total of two powers. Roll or select below for the additional power. D-Pockets are long term and guaranteed to last at least five years. The duration of the other powers varies.

01-20% No additional Temporal Powers.

21-30% D-Phase four times per day for one minute per activation.

31-40% D-Shift Phantom four times per day for one minute per activation.

41-50% D-Shift Two Dimensions four times per day for one minute per activation.

51-60% Sense Time is a constant power.

61-70% See Dimensional Anomaly three times per day for ten minutes at a time.

71-80% See Temporal Anomaly. This is a constant power.

81-85% Sense Dimensional Anomaly three times per day for ten minutes at a time.

86-90% Sense Temporal Anomaly three times per day for ten minutes at a time.

91-95% Wink-Out three times per day for five minutes at a time.

96-00% Time Barrier, twice per day at thirty minutes at a time.

Size: Can fit a variety of humanoid sizes from as large as a Temporal Raider to as small as a Dwarf.

Range: Limited to the user wearing the cape.

Market Price: 2-5 million credits. Rare on Rifts Earth. They are most likely found in the Splynn Dimensional Market, Phase World, or Worldgate.

M.D.C. of the Object: Limited. 1D6+26 M.D.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-90% one. 91-00% two.

63-64% Shifter Leather Armor

Shifters, like Ley Line Walkers, have a distinct look that sets them apart, making them identifiable as a Shifter. Since metal armors interfere with the flow of magic energy an alternative had to be found that was a natural material. S.D.C. leather was first used for years and the Shifter had to use an armor spell for protection. That is until Simvan traders that used M.D.C. leather from beasts like Rhino-Buffalo and similar supernatural creatures started to trade with the Federation of Magic. With the introduction of M.D.C. leather, magic users could afford a measure of protection and soon the armor was customized with various magical enchantments. The only downside is that the armor is not environmental. A few shops in the Federation of Magic may have a few suits for sale, but its Wrapped in Leather in the Splynn Dimensional Market that has any kind of leather armor and can even sell custom-made suits.

First roll or select the Type of Suit and its M.D.C.

01-70% Light Suit: 1D4x10+20 M.D.C.

71-90% Medium Suit: 1D6x10+70 M.D.C.

91-100% Heavy Suit: 1D6x10+120 M.D.C.

Second roll or select One Additional Feature/Power.

01-10% Increased M.D.C., add 2D4x10 M.D.C. Adds 5,000 credits per additional 10 M.D.C. to the market price.

11-20% P.P.E. conduit, allows the Shifter to draw in twice as much P.P.E. per melee whether on a ley line or nexus. The suit can also store up to 100 P.P.E. for four hours. Adds 250,000 credits to the cost.

21-30% Shadow Meld as per the spell, at will four times per day for 20 minutes at a time. Adds 70,000 to the final cost.

31-40% Regenerating armor, 2D6+12 per hour, double on a ley line and triple on a nexus. Regenerating armors can be damaged as much as low as -40 M.D.C. and will still regenerate. At -41 the armor is totally destroyed. Add 250,000 credits to the cost.

41-50% Noiseless, any kind of noise the armor would make is muffled magically, adding +10% to Prowl. Add 120,000 credits to the cost.

51-60% Sustain can be activated on the armor and will last for 5 days before needing 24 hours to recharge. Recharge time can be reduced to 12 hours on a ley line or only 4 hours on a nexus. Adds 150,000 credits to the cost.

61-70% Breathe without air, can be activated six times per 24 hours for 30 minutes at a time. Adds 60,000 credits to the cost.

71-80% Chameleon as per the spell can be activated 6 times per 24 hours for 30 minutes at a time. Adds 90,000 credits to the cost.

81-90% Cloak of Darkness as per the spell can be activated 6 times per 24 hours for 30 minutes at a time. Adds 200,000 credits to the cost.

91-00% Invisibility: Simple as per the spell can be activated 6 times per 24 hours for 30 minutes at a time. Adds 250,000 credits to the cost.

Market Price: Light Suit: 20,000 to 40,000 credits. Medium Suit: 60,000 to 100,000 credits. Heavy Suit: 150,000 to 400,000 credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: As noted above, under the first table.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% one, 34-66% two, or 67-00% three (same or each different).

65-66% Ley Line Walker's Headdress

Ley Line Walkers have a traditional headdress that evolved from the days of the Apocalypse. Today, while not needed, it is traditional and it remains a symbol worn by the majority of Line Walkers. Taking advantage of this entrepreneurs in Lazlo thought to develop a Techno-Wizardry headdress that is still the style of a gasmask, but with additional gizmos and feature (some Steampunk-like, others more high-tech, some a bit more primitive). As with most projects, it morphed into something beyond their expectations and it is now built using alien enchantment magic and machine components.

Note: In addition to magic properties, the headdress provides a *body force field with 60 M.D.C.*

First Roll the Number of Powers.

01-70% One power.

71-95% Two powers.

96-00% Three powers.

Second Roll or Select the Power(s).

01-10% Breathe without Air, three times per day, for two hours.

11-20% See the Invisible, three times per day, for 30 minutes.

21-30% See Aura, three times per day, for 30 minutes.

31-40% Eyes of the Wolf, three times per day, for one hour.

41-50% Aura of Power, three times per day, for 10 minutes.

51-60% Sense Evil, three times per day, for 20 minutes.

61-70% Sense Magic, three times per day, for 20 minute.

71-80% Eyes of Thoth, three times per day, for 30 minutes.

81-90% See in Magic Darkness, three times per day, for 30 minutes per activation.

91-00% Triple the range of Ley Line Observation Ball.

Market Price: One power 135,000 credits, two powers 275,000 credits, three powers 500,000 credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 2D6+30 M.D., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit with a long-range weapon; -2 penalty to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-70% one. 71-00% two.

67-68% Shifter's Crown

Some Shifters have elaborate tastes and a few have been known to wear makeshift crowns for men and tiaras for women. Their origins are unknown, but more Shifters from the City of Brass seem to wear them so many suspect they are created there. If studied, they are the creation of alien magic. The Shifter's Crown has the following powers:

- Summon 1 additional lesser minion.
- Add +3 to M.A. towards the battle of the wills only. This is a constant power always in effect.
- Mind Block can be activated at will three times per day for one hour duration at a time.

Market Price: 500,000 to 1 million credits. Rare and limited to a few select shops in the Magic Zone and possibly the Splynn Dimensional Market.

M.D.C. of the Object: 2D6+50 M.D., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit with a long-range weapon; -1 penalty to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-65% one. 66-00% two.

69-70% Amulet of Armor

These magic amulets tend to be shaped like shields and have a metallic or stone finish to them. The amulet provides the wearer with 120 M.D.C. that regenerates 5 points per hour. Once all the M.D.C. is depleted, the amulet needs a full 24 hours to recharge back to a full 120 M.D.C. These amulets work best when paired with other armor, whether magic of conventional. When paired with *magic armor*, after 24 hours, the armor and amulet become "paired" and the magic armor's M.D.C. is increased by 20% or a minimum of 40 M.D.C. plus the 120 provided by the amulet. The regenerative abilities of the amulet will now also regenerate the magic armor it is paired with. Armor and Amulet regenerates at a rate of 5 M.D.C. per hour. Armor will regenerate up to -120 M.D.C. below zero. Damage beyond that renders the magic armor it is paired with beyond repair and the Amulet of Armor goes dormant and offers no protection for 1D6+4 days. Then it begins to regenerate and provide protection as normal.

Range: Worn, but once paired with magic armor, the amulet bonds with the magic armor until the armor is destroyed.

Duration: As a stand-alone magic amulet, it provides up to 120 M.D.C. protection to the wearer, regenerating lost M.D.C. at a rate of 5 M.D.C. per hour. May have less than 120 at any given time depending on the amount of combat the wearer has experienced between regenerations. Otherwise, protection is constant.

Limitations: Once paired with a suit of armor, the amulet can't be removed and is permanent unless the armor is destroyed.

Market Price: 700,000-2 million credits. Rare item to find. They are from an alien world.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6x10+40 M.D.C. for the Amulet itself, but and only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit. It does NOT regenerate lost M.D.C.; deplete the M.D.C. as it is destroyed.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-95% one. 96-00% two.

71-72% Spectacles of Learning

These magic glasses have their origins in New Lazlo. The magic of the glasses helps to open the mind to new ideas and possibilities. Objects being studied are brought into sharper focus, allowing for new insights and ideas. Skills that require thought or study, typically taking hours, have a +10% to that skill. For example, Cryptography, Forgery, Appraise Goods, Lore and computer skills would benefit from these glasses. However, in a magic users hands they are even more useful. In addition to the insight provided to the skills mentioned above, when converting a scroll the glasses provide a +5% bonus.

The glasses are not Techno-Wizardry, but rather a new form of enchantment magic that the mages of New Lazlo are experimenting with. As the magic is still new and being refined, each Spectacles of Learning has a limited duration of 1 to 4 years before they become ordinary glasses.

Market Price: 100,000 credits each.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit with a long-range weapon; no penalty to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one. 51-00% two.

73-74% Magic Saddle of Sure Grip

Magic saddles have the advantage of that they can be put on most riding beasts. The saddle will conform to a variety of sizes from as large as a Nether Beast to a pony. They are also exceptionally comfortable to the rider as well as the creature. Finally, this particular saddle has the ability of Sure Grip built into it. No matter the attack type, the rider cannot be thrown or otherwise removed from whatever beast they are mounted on. The magic also grants the rider +5% to their horsemanship skill or for unskilled riders, they have the skill at base proficiency, but it does not increase with level.

Market Price: 30,000-50,000 credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+30 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to hit with a long-range weapon; -1 to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one. 51-00% 1D4.

75-76% Magic Saddle – Military Saddle

Like the Sure Grip Magic Saddle, this saddle also conforms to the size of the beast and provides comfort for the rider and the beast. This saddle is built for combat and provides the rider with the following bonuses. +10% skill bonus to tricks and combat maneuvers, otherwise +5% for normal riding. +1 to strike and parry while mounted and +1D6 M.D. to the damage from melee weapons used while mounted.

Market Price: 100,000-200,000 credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+30 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -3 to hit with a long-range weapon; -1 to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one. 51-00% two.

77-78% Magic Horseshoes

There are four types of horseshoes, each has a different enchantment type. They are more popular in the Colorado Baronies and tend to be found more out west.

1. Bronze Horseshoes. Cavalry and knights love these for their mounts. It augments the horses' combat ability. **Bonuses:** +1 attack per melee, +1D6 to horse kick damage, and +10% to the horse's speed. The power can be activated three times per day lasting for one hour per activation.

Market Price: 50,000-80,000 a set of shoes.

2. Silver Horseshoes are preferred by couriers for the burst of magic speed they provide. Three times per day, for two hours per activation the silver horseshoes double the horse's speed without increased fatigue. In fact, the horse fatigues at half its normal rate, and when the magic ends, it can still continue to run as normal.

Market Price: 100,000-200,000 a set of shoes.

3. Gold Horseshoes combine the magic properties of bronze and silver horseshoes. The powers can be activated a total of four times per day. Each power needs to be activated separately.

Market Price: 300,000-500,000 a set of shoes.

4. Platinum Horseshoes are coveted by cowboys, Native Americans, horsemen, and knights, and many mounted warriors as they provide something the other horseshoes don't, flight. The animal can run above the ground and through the air, up into the sky, at double its running speed, three times per day, for three hours per activation, and without increased fatigue. Maximum altitude is 10,000 feet (3,048 m). In fact, the horse fatigues at half its normal rate, and when the magic ends, it can still continue to run as normal. **Bonus:** +1 to dodge while in flight.

Market Price: 250,000-500,000 for a set.

Type Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-30% Bronze, 31-60% Silver, 61-80% Gold, 81-100% Platinum.

Note: The magic Horseshoes wear out and the magic ends in 2D6+8 month.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-40% One set. 41-80% Two sets. 81-00% four sets, all the same or one set of each.

79-80% Logrim, Slayer of Serpents

– A Greater Rune Axe

Alignment: Scrupulous.

I.Q.: 14

Damage: 4D6 M.D.C. Double Damage to Dragons and serpentine creatures.

Bonuses when bonded: +1 to save vs Dragon Horror Factor. Resistant to all dragon magic, unique dragon powers and breath weapons. The wielder takes half damage and duration from spells, breath or dragon unique attacks.

Powers of Logrim:

Sense Vulnerable Points. Logrim can sense the weak point of Dragons. After fighting for a full two melees with Logrim, the critical strike drops by 2. For example if the character has no Critical Strike then he has a Critical Strike on a roll of a Natural 18, 19, 20. If the character already has a Critical Strike of 19-20, then their Critical Strikes drops to a Natural 17-20, and for those with an 18-20 Critical it becomes a Natural Twenty on a roll of 18-20 doing triple damage.

Dragon Blast. Logrim can launch a bolt of fire that inflicts 4D6 M.D., 1,000 feet (305 m), or ice shards 3D6 M.D., 800 feet (244 m), or a lightning blast that does 6D6 M.D., 1,400 feet (427 m). All do double damage to dragons and serpents and can be used in any combination up to 10 times total, per 24 hour period.

Dragon Breath. Logrim can unleash a gout of fire, ice or electricity as a breath attack. Regardless of the attack type, damage is 6D6 M.D.; double Damage to dragons and serpents. Can be done up to 3 times per 24 hours. Count as two attack and has a range of 100 feet (30 m) long in a 30 degree arc. Can damage all targets in its path.

Personality: All Logrim remembers is that he was once a Knight from a distant land. His people were in a war that consumed their world. When their enemies made allies with dragons, Logrim and his people were on the losing side. He gave his life so that his people would have a weapon to wield against the dragon horde.

His first wielder was a berserker who slayed many dragons. With Logrim and others like him, the dragons soon lost interest, but the war continued. Logrim was passed down from generation to generation as the war lasted eons. Over time, Logrim has lost a sense of self and is more a weapon and less the man he was. He knows he crossed the dimensional veil several times and has lost track of his home. He knows that his last wielder, a Knight by the name of Sir Ulric Ramsey, was from Scotland. They were headed to a place in Africa known as the gathering. Sir Ramsey was ambushed by troops from the Phoenix Empire. He was overwhelmed and met his death at their hands. Logrim was hung up as a trophy since none could wield him.

Logrim strives for purpose and meaning since his war ended a long time ago. Being in the hands of a brave warrior and fighting a just cause suits him just fine. While Logrim knows there are some noble and good

dragons, he will not allow himself to be wielded by one, but other good warriors or friends of the wielder may be allowed if the situation deems it necessary. Logrim can speak and understand his wielder, but the weapon tends to revert to the Dwarven language on occasion, especially in battle.

Market Price: Considered a Greater Rune Weapon. Sells for 20 to 80 million for this one of a kind weapon.

M.D.C. of the Object: Indestructible.

Quantity Found: One-of-a-kind Greater Rune Weapon.

81-82% The Ever Scroll

The Ever Scroll is the creation of an ancient god of the North, perhaps Odin himself. The legend goes that Odin made the powerful magic item for his high priest to be used during Ragnarök. However, since Odin has been preparing for Ragnarök for over a millennia and has created numerous items, all of which he's either hidden away or forgotten about. The intention of the Ever Scroll is not very clear, but scholars suspect he was trying to create reusable parchment for creating magic scrolls on. The theory being the magic parchment would retain the knowledge longer than a conventional scroll, allowing it to be used multiple times. Whatever the intention of the god was has been forgotten and the artifact remains a one of a kind item. Few even know of its existence. Rumors say that the Ever Scroll was stolen from Odin long ago by Loki. If the god does have it, he is most likely using it as a boon for some mortal to complete one of his treacherous schemes.

The powers of the Ever Scroll: The scroll appears as a tattered piece of parchment paper four feet in length. All along the edges are runes and in the lower right hand corner is a large silver rune. If the owner of the scroll places a drop of their blood on the silver rune, only the owner may use the scroll. To all others looking at the scroll, any writing on it appears as unintelligible gibberish. The scroll can hold up to four separate spells, and each can be used numerous times. In fact each spell can be used 1D4+1 times before the writing for that particular spell fades away. In addition to the Ever Scroll allowing for multiple uses, when a mage puts new spells on the scroll (they require the spell, create magic scrolls for this), it only takes half the duration to create, but the P.P.E. cost to add new spells is double. After the ritual is complete the spell can be used 1D4+1 times before it fades from the scroll.

Market Price: Priceless, and could easily fetch 5 to 10 million credits.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+10 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted.

Quantity Found: One of a kind magic artifact.

83-84% Elemental Stones

The Elemental stones are often mistaken for elaborate jewelry pieces. Unless someone knows what they're looking for, these magic stones can be easily missed. No two are exactly the same in terms of style and size of the gemstone used as the centerpiece.

The Coalition has seized a fair number, but recently Tolkeen rebels raided a Tolkeen cache and made off with several dozen. While using them in their fight against the Coalition is the knee-jerk reaction, selling them will help to raise much needed capital to stay in the fight. Many are being sold right in the Coalition's backyard in the 'Burbs of Chi-Town.

Earth Onyx. The Earth Onyx is an elaborate silver necklace with an onyx prominent in the center. The Earth Onyx and other elemental stones were created by a cabal of evil wizards in a far-off dimension. Tolkeen Artifact hunters found dozens of them and returned them to Tolkeen were they were handed out and used against the Coalition during the Siege on Tolkeen.

Powers: The following spells can be cast three times per day through the amulet. The spells are equal to a 5th level Warlock. Quicksand, Sand

Storm, and Wall of Stone. Finally, the amulet has the power to summon forth a Minor Earth Elemental one time per day for one hour.

Fire Ruby. The Fire Ruby is typically a necklace on a gold chain or adorned on the top of a scepter. They usually have a large ruby and smaller rubies as decoration.

Powers: The following spells can be cast three times per day. Fire Ball, Extinguish Fire, and Fuel Flame, all at a 5th level Warlock. Also, one time per day, a Minor Fire Elemental can be summoned and commanded for one hour.

Water Pearl. A water pearl is a large black or pure white pearl the size of a large marble. The jewelry varies from a pearl choker, a brooch, a tiara or an elaborate scepter.

Powers: The following spells can be cast up to three times per day. Swim Like the Dolphin, Purple Mist, and Circle of Rain, all cast as a 5th level Warlock. One time per day, a Minor Water Elemental can be summoned and commanded for one hour.

Air Sapphire. The air sapphire typically has a large sapphire stone or is made of numerous smaller stones. They are tend to be part of a necklace, broach or scepter.

Powers: The following spells can be cast three times per day each. Cloud of Slumber, Miasma, and Ball Lightning equal to a 5th level Warlock. Also once per day, a Minor Air Elemental can be summoned and commanded for one hour.

Market Price: 3 to 4 million credits each.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+30 M.D.C. each, but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted.

Type Found: 1-25% Earth Onyx. 26-50% Fire Ruby. 51-75% Water Pearl. 76-00% Air Sapphire.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% one. 51-90% two. 91-00% a small box containing one of each!

85-86% Bow of Strength

This magical bow is found in both long bow and short bows. It has a metallic sheen and the bow string looks like cable. The bow needs a P.S. of 25 or higher to draw, but the greater the strength the greater the benefits. For those with a P.S. of 25-30, the range of all arrows is increased by 20% and damage from arrows is +3. A P.S. of 31 to 35, increases the range by 50% and damage is +6. A P.S. of 36 or higher, doubles the range of the bow and damage is +10.

Market Price: 300,000-500,000 credits. Pretty rare.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6x10+40 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit with a long-range weapon; no penalty to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% One, 51-90% two, or 91-00% three.

87-88% Marksman Bow

This magical bow was crafted in another dimension. Each Marksman Bow is elegant in design and crafted from an alien ash tree. The body is elaborately carved, usually portraying a hunter or some type of warrior. Each has a sight carved from antler and the drawstring is always some kind of woven animal hair, making it exceptionally strong. The magic infused into the bow grants the shooter a +3 bonus to strike and increases their rate of fire by one. Not only does it increase the accuracy of the shooters, arrows can even ricochet off surfaces. -1 to strike for each ricochet with a maximum of three ricochets. Any arrow can be used, from normal S.D.C. arrows to magic or Mega-Damage arrows.

Market Price: 200,000-300,000 credits. Pretty rare.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6x10+15 M.D.C., but only takes damage when it is deliberately targeted. The attacker needs to make a Called

Shot with a penalty of -4 to hit with a long-range weapon; no penalty to strike in hand to hand combat.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-50% One, 51-90% two, or 91-00% three.

89-90% Magic Arrows

In all cases, damage is S.D.C. in S.D.C. environments, so if the arrow does 2D6 M.D. it does 2D6 S.D.C. on those worlds.

The Patriot. This magic arrow has a white shaft and red fletching. Made for long bows these arrows can be fired 50% farther. Damage is 3D6 M.D. (S.D.C. in those worlds) and returns after striking its target! Because of the extended range each arrow and time to return to its owner, it can only be fired twice per melee regardless of the rate of fire. Can be used indefinitely until the arrow cannot be recovered or is destroyed. (The Patriot has 1D6+3 M.D.C.)

Acid Arrow. These emerald green arrows are enchanted with magic to unleash acid cloud upon contact. The initial damage is 2D6+10 M.D. +1D6+1 M.D. per melee round for 1D6 melees. Acid arrows are heavier and as a result have half the range or normal arrows. They can be fired by any type of bow. Damage is the same for each bow type.

Shotgun Arrow. These magic arrows, once fired, splits into three flying arrows. The arrow is meant to strike multiple targets at once. Roll to strike as normal for just one target. On a miss, all three arrows miss. On a successful roll to strike, the main target and the next two closest targets within ten feet (3 m) are each struck. Damage is 2D6 M.D. to each target. Maximum range is 600 feet (183 m).

Rope Arrow. Another magic arrow with a unique use. It does minimal damage, only 1D4+1 M.D., but when it is fired it trails a length of rope behind it. The rope magically trails out behind the arrow for a maximum length of 500 feet (152 m), while the arrowhead embeds into a solid object that anchors it. The rope can hold a weight of up to 800 pounds (360 kg). This means it can be used to scale walls and mountains, create a zip line across a ravine or washed away bridge, or to hit and try to pull an enemy vehicle, robot, cyborg, etc. **Note:** The Rope Arrow can only be used once, and the rope is just normal rope and can be cut with 10 S.D.C. damage. Range: 500 feet (152 m).

Type of arrow found: 1-30% Patriot, 31-60% Acid, 61-80% Shotgun, 81-100% Rope Arrow.

M.D.C. of the Object: 1D6+1 M.D.C., unless stated otherwise. Only the Patriot arrow can be recovered and reused repeatedly until lost or destroyed. Acid, Shotgun and Rope arrows are ONE-time use.

Market Price per Arrow: Patriot arrow 20,000-30,000 credits each. Acid arrow 1,000 credits each. Shotgun arrow 2,000 credits each. Rope arrow 1,000-2,000 credits each.

Quantity Found (Optional): Roll percentile: 01-33% 1D6 arrows., 34-66% 2D6. 67-00% a quiver or box of 3D6+12 arrows. Likely to be all the same type of arrow. Or a mix of two different types, not likely to be a few of each type (G.M. discretion).

91-92% Splugorth Corsair

The Splugorth Corsair is a flying ship created by Splugorth craftsmen. They are sold in Splynn and many Splugorth markets around the Megaverse. The ships are built and enchanted with an Eye of Eylor. This gives the ships the capability of flight and additional built-in magical powers. Most of the powers focus on defense of the ship or to allow the ship a greater range of travel.

Those Corsairs in the service of the Splugorth are typically used as patrol boats. They are seen flying around the coast of Atlantis and often in areas like the preserves. Powerful or rich merchants buy them to transport goods around Atlantis. A few have made their way to Africa, South America and North America. It would only be a matter of time before a powerful nation like the Coalition or even Tolkeen, captured a few of these craft. During the final days of Tolkeen several flying ships were spotted ferrying away survivors as the Coalition invaded.

M.D.C. by Location:

Front Mast Pole – 45
Main Mast – 150
Sails (5) – 35 each
Main Body, Front Section – 600
Main Body, Mid-ship – 450
Main Body, Rear Section – 500
Rudder – 110
*Eye of Eylor – 120

*The Eye of Eylor is the source of mystic power on the ship. If it is destroyed all mystic powers end. The ship will not crash, but mystic control is lost and sailing skills would be required to direct the ship. Speed is also reduced by half.

Speed: Flying 75 mph (120 km), double on a Ley Line, 25 mph (40 km) on the sea.

Land: Not possible.

Maximum Range: Unlimited! Powered by magic. Maximum altitude is 10,000 feet (3,048 m).

Statistical Data:

Width: 20 feet (6.1 m).

Length: 80 feet (24.4 m).

Cargo as a patrol ship: 14 tons light or 42 tons heavy.

Cargo as a merchant ship: 22 tons light or 50 tons heavy.

Power Systems: Eye of Eylor.

Market Price: 30 million credits or 45 million with a rune dragon head.

Weapon Systems for a typical Splugorth Patrol Ship:

1. Lightning Cannons (6, three per side):

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

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

Mega-Damage: 6D6+6 M.D. per single blast. 3D4x10+10 M.D. per simultaneous broadside attack with all three cannons firing at once at the same large, target/enemy vessel.

Rate of Fire: Single shot. Maximum of one shot per each of the six cannons per melee round.

Payload: 60, recharges from the Eye of Eylor at a rate of one shot per minute. Recharges twice as fast on a ley line and three times as fast on a nexus.

2. Rune Statue Head. Only 25% of Splugorth Corsairs have a rune statue head. See **Rifts World Book 2, Atlantis** for the powers of the Rune Statue Heads.

3. Additional Mystic Abilities: The Splugorth only equip Corsairs with one mystic ability. Roll or select on the table below. High Lords can modify the Eye of Eylor and add one additional power, but often at a great cost, like owing them a favor or completing some task in exchange for the upgrade.

01-10% Armor of Ithan, Four times per day, 150 M.D.C. for a duration of 150 minutes. The entire ship is covered.

11-20% Breathe without Air, covers the entire ship as well as those below decks. It can be activated six times per day for 45 minutes.

21-30% Chameleon, three times per day for 45 minutes. The spell is only effective when the ship is stationary and its sails stowed. Also, movement on the deck can be detected.

31-40% Cloud of Smoke, nine times per day for 15 minutes.

41-50% Multiple Image, three times per day for 15 minutes.

51-60% Invisibility: Superior, three times per day for 30 minutes.

61-70% Summon Fog, once per day for 5 hours and a range of 50 miles (80 km). Typically used to hide or get away from other ships.

71-80% Calm Storms, once per day for 5 hours.

81-90% Rift Teleportation, once per day with a range of 1,000 miles (1600 km).

91-100% Dimensional Portal, once per week. A Rift opens in front of the ship allowing it and all crew to travel to another dimension.

Weapon Systems for a typical Merchant Ship:

1. The Main Gun Battery (6 cannons, 3 per side):

Option 1 – Plasma Cannon (6)

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Mega-Damage: 1D6x10 M.D. per each single cannon blast.

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks of the gunner.

Payload: Each long E-Clip has 10 shots.

Option 2 – Laser Cannons (6)

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

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

Mega-Damage: 1D4x10 M.D. per each single cannon blast.

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks of the gunner.

Payload: Each long E-Clip has 20 shots.

2. Rune Statue Head: Only 10% of Merchant Corsairs have a rune statue head.

3. Mystic Abilities: Same as the Splugorth patrol ship.

93-94% Splugorth Frigate

The Splugorth Frigate is rarely seen in Atlantis and is one of the hidden assets of Splyncryth. Sometimes they are used as raider ships on the coasts of Rifts North America, South America and Africa. They are widely used in dimensional exploration or where a larger Splugorth presence is needed.

While most flying ships look like their seaborne copies, the Splugorth Frigate has taken on a more alien appearance. Along the side rails of the ship are Eyes of Eylor imbedded as part of the ship, similar to the Slaver Barge. On the deck in the front and aft, joined to the Ship, are two Splugorth Slavers. They act as the ship's pilots and if one is killed, the other can pilot the ship. Otherwise, they divide up the duties of piloting and manning the ship's weapon systems. Just like their barges, the slavers can emerge from the containment chamber but only for short periods. The slavers can see through all the eyes on the deck as well as the escort of ten flying Eyes of Eylor. The remainder of the ship has sails, rigging and masts. Weapons tend to vary but can be a mix of modern weapons and magic.

In Splynn, owning a Frigate is seen as a status symbol and only the most powerful High Lords possess them. Wealthy and powerful individuals can also purchase the frigates less the connected slavers. You'll need an experienced crew to fly the ship without the slavers.

M.D.C. by Location:

Front Mast – 200

Mid-Mast – 350

Rear Masts (2) – 150 each

Large Sails (4) – 45 each

Small Sails (7) – 35 each

Main Body, Front Section – 2,000

Main Body, Mid-ship – 1,500

Main Body, Rear Section – 1,800

Rudder – 200

*Eye of Eylor – (2) 120 each

Lightning Cannons (10, five per side) – 100 each

Eylor Hunter, Seeker Scouts (10) Spear – 200, Eye – 120

Annihilate Cannon – 200

Medium-Range Missile Launchers (2) – 100 each

*The Eye of Eylor is the source of mystic power on the ship. If it is destroyed all mystic powers end. The ship will not crash, but mystic control is lost and sailing skills would be required to direct the ship. Speed is also reduced by half.

Speed: Flying 100 mph (160 km), double on a ley line, 25 mph (40 km) on the sea.

Land: Not possible.

Maximum Range: Unlimited. Powered by magic. Maximum altitude is 20,000 feet (6,096 m).

Statistical Data:

Width: 40 feet (12.2 m).

Length: 160 feet (48.7 m).

Cargo: 32 tons light, 50 tons heavy.

Power Systems: Eye of Eylor.

Market Price: 100+ million credits.

Weapon Systems:

1. Lightning Cannons (10, five per side):

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

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

Mega-Damage: 6D6+6 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Maximum of five shots per melee.

Payload: 60, recharges from the Eye of Eylor at a rate of one shot per minute. Recharges twice as fast on a ley line and three times as fast on a nexus.

2. Rear Deck Weapon System combines magic and technology. There are two medium-range missile launchers and an annihilate cannon. The annihilate cannon fires a mystically guided piece of anti-matter. Most small targets are instantly destroyed.

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Range: 2 miles (3.2 km) for the annihilate cannon. Medium range missiles will vary with type.

Mega-Damage: 1D4x100 M.D. Missile damage will vary with type.

Rate of Fire: The annihilate cannon can fire twice per melee. Each missile launcher can fire 1, 2, 4, or 6 medium range missiles.

Payload: The annihilate cannon has 30 shots before needing to be recharged by a High Lord. Each missile launcher has 24 shots. The cargo hold below the launchers has an additional 192 missiles.

3. Rune Statue Head. All Splugorth Frigates have a rune statue head. Private ships only have a 1-35% chance of having one. See **Rifts World Book 2, Atlantis** for the powers of the Rune Statue Heads.

4. Additional Mystic Abilities: Splugorth Frigates will have three powers. Roll of select from those under the Splugorth Corsair.

5. Eylor Hunter Seeker Scouts (10): As described in **Rifts World Book Two, Atlantis**. These floating eyes are linked to the two Slavers onboard. Each commands five eyes.

Damage: Laser 2D6 M.D. or 3D6 M.D. or Plasma 5D6 M.D.

Range: 2000 feet (610 m), for the Laser or Plasma blasters.

Rate of Fire: Up to four blasts per melee.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

6. Troop Capacity: In addition to the two slavers that control the ship, there are an additional 40 crew members typically made up of Staphra and Splugorth slaves. One High Lord is typically the ship's commander with one or two Conservators. The ship can also hold 90 warriors. A typical mix is 20 Power Lords or Overlords, 30 Blind Warrior Women, 30 Tattooed Warriors and 10 Maxi-Men.

95-96% Royal Battle Skimmer

There are times when King Creed of Tolkeen needed to travel overland without the convenience of teleporting. For those trips, Tolkeen Techno-Wizards designed the Royal Battle Skimmer. Built using the battle skimmer as the template, the Royal Battle Skimmer is twice as large, has multiple levels and is armed to the teeth, and has flight capabilities off of Ley Lines. It is also armored and not open like a conventional Battle Skimmer. It looks more like an exotic spacecraft.

The top level is the bridge, built like a naval bridge, the captain sits in the middle and is surrounded by multiple stations that monitor ship sensors, weapon systems, engineering systems and mystic hornets. Below the bridge are crew quarters and a galley for the crew. The next level, which is on the main deck, is the king's quarters, a large meeting room, small kitchen and dining room, a room for security and four additional

staterooms. The fourth level is below the main deck and has crew quarters, an armory, and storage. The final level is the engineering deck.

The Skimmer is not meant as a front-line combat vessel, but does have numerous weapon systems and TW systems to protect the king. Over the years the vessel was in a few battles and proved very effective. So much so that the king ordered additional Royal Battle Skimmers be created for the remaining members of the council. In total, six additional were created. At least two were captured by the Coalition, but the remaining four are unaccounted for.

M.D.C. by Location:

*Side Fins (2) – 900 each

Starfire Cannons (10) – 100 each

**Bridge – 500

Railing – 50 per 10 foot (3 m) section

Deck – 300 per 20 feet (6 m)

Mystic Hornet Launchers (4) – 225 each

Mystic Hornets (20) – 35 each

Main Body – 3,600

* Destroying a side fin will reduce the Skimmer's speed by half and reduce maximum altitude by half. Destroying both fins will reduce speed by 90% and altitude will be limited to 100 feet (30 m).

** Destroying the bridge will take out the nerve center of the Royal Battle Skimmer, but it can still be controlled from the engineering deck, but piloting is -15%.

Speed: Flying 300 mph (480 km). On a ley line speed is 450 mph (720 km). The Skimmer has VTOL capabilities, and like the TW Battle Skimmer the craft is completely silent.

Maximum Range: Unlimited powered by magic. Maximum altitude is 30,000 feet (9,144 m). Each level in the Royal Battle Skimmer can be sealed and has an independent life support system.

Crew: The Royal Battle Skimmer has a crew of 20, 1 captain, 4 bridge crew, 1 chief engineer, 4 engineers and 10 other crew members.

Statistical Data:

Width: Deck 40 feet (12.2 m) plus 75 feet (22.8 m) for the downward swept wings for an overall width of 160 feet (49 m).

Length: The deck is 180 feet (55 m) long overall.

Cargo: The cargo holds can hold a total of 600 tons.

Power Systems: Two mystic generators provide power off the ley line. Otherwise it is powered by ley lines.

Market Price: 40-70 million credits to the right buyer.

Weapon Systems:

1. Star Fire Pulse Cannons (10): Gunner cupolas are located on the main deck with five on each side of the craft.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Range: 2,000 feet (610 m).

Mega-Damage: 2D6x10 M.D. per individual blast.

Rate of Fire: Each blast counts as one attack.

Payload: 32 shots. The cannons are connected to a mystic generator. Shots are restored at a rate of one per minute.

2. Mystic Hornets (20): An experimental weapon mounted on all Royal Battle Skimmers, Hornets are spherical balls of energy that look like ball lightning when activated. The tactic is to swarm a target and blast it with electrical energy. In addition, they are like ley line Observations Balls that provide numerous views for those on the bridge. When dormant they are metallic spheres the size of bowling balls. Each sphere can fire four electrical blasts per melee and each is +2 to strike. The spheres travel at 125 mph (200 km), double on a ley line.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Secondary Purpose: Assault.

Range: Can fly as far as one mile (1.6 km) away from the Skimmer. The electrical bolt has a range of 200 feet (61 m).

Mega-Damage: 4D6 M.D. or 1D4x10 M.D. in a kamikaze strike that destroys the sphere.

Rate of Fire: Four blasts per melee per mystic hornet.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

Note: Each launcher only holds five mystic hornets. An additional forty are stored in the cargo hold. The hornets can be active indefinitely while on a ley line, but only have enough power for four hours off a ley line. They need to be returned to the launch system and charged for four hours before they can be used again.

3. Mini-Missile Launchers (2): Mounted forward and aft, these launchers are meant solely for defense of the ship, primarily to knock out enemy missiles and to keep power armors at range.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Secondary Purpose: Anti-Missile/Anti-Power Armor.

Range: Typically one mile (1.6 km).

Mega-Damage: Varies with mini-missile used.

Rate of Fire: One at a time or in volleys of 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10.

Payload: 50 per launcher.

Troop Capacity: The king or a member of the council has 25 security personnel. This allows for 7 full-time guards and a squad commander. The last man is the head of security and rotates his duties as needed, but typically accompanies the king at all times. There is also an additional 24 soldiers which are a mix of magic users and conventional mercenaries.

Mystic Capabilities: The Royal Battle Skimmer has a second mystic generator specifically for the following T.W. enhancements. They are activated from the bridge.

Invincible Armor, 375 M.D.C. and regenerates as per the spell. It also provides a breathable environment for those outside on the main deck. The *Invincible Armor* can be activated six times per day.

Illusory Terrain, used to hide the ship when it is not moving. It makes the skimmer blend in with the current terrain or creates new terrain entirely. It has an eight hour charge per 24 hour period. The *Illusory Terrain* can be activated numerous times, but each activation is equal to an hour.

Rift to Limbo, used as an escape measure or a place to hide. It has an eight hour charge per 24 hour period. The *Rift to Limbo* can be activated numerous times, but each activation is equal to an hour.

Teleport: Superior typically used to get the craft home, but not limited to there. Can be used twice a day at 15th level. The crew member activating it sets the location which has to be preprogrammed into the Royal Battle Skimmer's mystic computer.

Dimensional Teleport, only used to cross the dimensional threshold. It can only be used once per week and requires a full seven days to recharge. If used, all other mystic abilities are temporarily drained and need a full eight hours to recharge.

97-98% Rune Spell Book – Boundless

Type: Rune Book, a Greater Rune Creation.

Alignment: Anarchist.

I.Q.: 19

Powers: Boundless is a rune book that is a wizard's dream come true. The book has the same size and thickness of the Palladium Fantasy RPG and the same weight. It is, of course, indestructible with Runes on the cover as well as on the pages. The book comes with a Rune pen that is stored in the binding. A wizard can write their spells in the book for study and safekeeping. Regardless of what page a particular spell is written on, the book will organize all the spells according to the owner's desire. Most are from lowest level to highest level. Spells can be reorganized whenever needed, and for whatever spell is needed to be studied the book will automatically open to the desired page, no flipping through the book to find it. Spells can be verbally added and the runic pen will write them down. Also, spells can be erased at will, permanently or even temporarily if desired.

There is no limit to the number of spells that can be stored in the book. It can easily store hundreds of thousands of spells if that many existed. Of course the book is indestructible, water and fireproof, and can be locked and only opened by the owner.

Learning new spells that may be found in a Boundless takes half the normal time and it is likely to have a variety of spells already found within. The book also provides a +5% to convert scrolls and get them scribed in the book. If the book is found or purchased, there will be 1D4+1 new spells that the owner likely does not have. They can include spells from different types of magic like Necromancy or Temporal magic.

Curse: Obsession, magic. The mage will find that they are slowly becoming obsessed with the acquisition of magic, especially new spells to add to the Rune Spell Book. It's not just common spells, but strange and unusual spells, such as Temporal spells, Biomancy, Necromancy, and the like. Also, during combat the owner will rely entirely on spells and out of combat they are constantly researching where the next spell can be found or how to convert a scroll.

Personality: The book has an intellectual personality and seems to get along with most magic users, especially if they have an I.Q. higher than 13. To non-magic users, especially warriors, the book will be a snob and standoffish, preferring to be with its intellectual equal.

History: Boundless recalls very little of its history. He knows at one point he was handed down for several generations in a particular family where they studied the discipline of Wizardry. How he got to Rifts Earth is a mystery and where his previous owners ended up is also unknown.

Market Price: Some consider it priceless, but if bought or sold it could easily sell for 10 to 30 million credits.

Quantity Found (Optional): Hundreds were created in their native dimension. Tolkeen artifact Hunters found a cache and returned them to Tolkeen before the war. There are likely to be a few dozen on Rifts Earth, and considered rare. Roll percentile: 01-99% One, 00% Two.

99-100% The Infinity Tome

Type: Rune Book, a Greatest Rune Creation.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Powers: All common rune powers plus the following:

1. The Infinity Tome is a True Tome of Images.

2. This book describes dozens of dimensions in detail. Those who read it cover to cover and memorize its teachings (a process that takes 1D4+2 months), will gain the Lore: Dimensions skill as described below. The first percentage is for those who do not have the Lore: Dimensions skill. The second percentage is for those who do have it.

General Knowledge: Includes dimensional makeup, is the dimension suitable for humanoid life and so on. Information found in **Rifts® Dimension Book 7: Megaverse® Builder™**, 65%/96%.

Specific locations like dimensional nexuses or dimensional hot spots, think Center, Worldgate, Splynn, Tolkeen and similar locations 45%/76%.

Notable Individuals of the dimension such as leaders or movers and shakers, like Thraxus in Center, Lord Splyncryth of Atlantis and similar notable individuals as well as groups; 25%/57%.

Unique or rare magic artifacts (or magic knowledge) that may be from that dimension; 5%/37%.

3. The Infinity Tome has a 24 page section in the middle consisting of a number of brilliant colored illustrations of various dimensions. Each of these pages has an illustration on one side and strange runic writing on the other side. Should the reader speak aloud, the runic inscription on the back of any of these pages, he will be magically transported to the location in the illustration! The effect is similar to that of a Circle of Travel; anything within 20 feet (6.1 m) of the reader may come along with him – friends, treasure, equipment, desk, etc. This takes three melee actions to read and execute.

Every time the reader flips to one of these pages, the location in the illustration will be different. It is as if each page is a window to some randomly selected dimension. Once the reader travels through one of these "Gate Pages" however, that page becomes fixed; it shall hold the illustration until all pages are fixed, at which point the owner can read an inscription in the back of the book that will unlock all pages.

The last Gate Page of The Infinity Tome will contain an illustration of the character's exact location when they first used the book. The other

twenty three pages will all generate their locations at random. Game Masters should feel free to use **Rifts® Dimension Book 7: Megaverse Builder™** for a table of random dimensions.

4. The Cave Page. There is one page with a hand drawn picture of what appears to be a large cave. Reading the inscription on the back of this page teleports the reader and those he chooses (within a 20 foot/6.1 m area) to this cave.

The cave has an unnatural light and is not pitch black. Exploring the cave will reveal running water and miles and miles of tunnels. This seems to be its own dimension that is isolated in a Time Hole. While in this cave complex, time is frozen and the owner can stay in this cave for years (if they have supplies). The only way in or out of the cave is through the book. The dimensional fabric is impenetrable and there is no presence of magic or ley lines. Access and exit can only be gained via the book. The time hole is meant as a private sanctum for the owner where they can retreat and hide or rest and return back within moments or hours of leaving. The effects are the same as the Time Hole spell at 15th level, except using the book, the owner can choose to take people or objects within 20 feet (6 m) of the mage.

Curse: None other than the fact that the book is extremely valuable and likely coveted by others, especially Shifters. Additionally, the book will,

from time to time, look through its owners eyes and probe its owner's thoughts to add to its volume of dimensional knowledge. If the owner has traveled to four or more dimensions with The Infinity Tome, their name will be inscribed as one of the writers of the book. While not a curse per se, if the book falls into someone else's hands and the owner is named, this could be used for good or bad intentions.

Personality: The book loves the thrill of adventure and dimensional exploration and loves to be on the road traveling through new dimensions. With this in mind, it will always try to convince its owner to go on that next grand adventure to step through that Rift.

History: The book was a collaborative effort between an Elf and a Dwarf during one of the peaceful interludes of the Elf-Dwarf War. Since that time the book has had over a dozen owners, all experienced in dimensional travel.

Note: The Infinity Tome is a large book that easily fills up the majority of a backpack. It magically locks when closed and can only be opened by the rightful owner. Otherwise, it remains inert and unreadable. The book itself is indestructible.

Market Price: Some consider it priceless, but if bought or sold it could easily sell for 100 to 300 million credits.

Quantity Found: One of a kind magic artifact.

Cairo, 1st July 1941

TRANSFER ORDER

TO: _____

Sir / Madame ,

you are hereby activated under code SIGIL and directed to join Allied special detachment THESEUS. For this purpose you will repair post haste to Aldershot, South-Eastern Command Hq. to

- i- report to Act. Lieutenant-General B. Montgomery for further orders and
- ii- join SD Theseus to serve under its commander.

YOU are herewith transferred to XII Corps until you will have completed your mission when you will revert to your function prior to activation.

C Auchinleck

C. Auchinleck, Lieutenant-General
C-in-C Middle East Command

Cairo, 1st July 1941

TRANSFER ORDER AND WARRANT

Lt. _____
No. 7 Commandos

Lieutenant,

you are hereby required and requested to assume command of Allied special detachment THESEUS. For this purpose you will repair post haste to Aldershot, South-Eastern Command Hq. to

- i- report to Act. Lieutenant-General B. Montgomery for further orders and
- ii- join your new command.

and are herewith transferred to XII Corps until you will have completed your mission when you will re-transfer to Layforce.

Further, for the duration of your new command you are herewith brevetted to the rank of captain.

Congratulations and good luck, captain!

C Auchinleck

C. Auchinleck, Lieutenant-General
C-in-C Middle East Command

Aldershot, 18th July 1941

XII CORPS OPERATION INSTRUCTION No. 27

Bvt. Cptn. Comdg. Special Detachment Theseus

Reference Maps: Topographical Map of Crete, German Assault Plan May 1941, Allied Disposition May 1941

A. Situation

1. Axis powers took Crete on 1st June 1941. Axis forces have reinforced their position. At the time of this order we can assume only a remainder of token resistance by under-armed and untrained Greek civilian resistance units. Support is not available.
2. Crete has been divided into 4 prefectures by the Axis. The 3 western Chania, Rethymno, Heraklion are controlled by German forces. The easternmost province Lasithi is controlled by Italian forces. Lasithi is mountainous, mostly rural and sparsely settled. Vegetation is sparse. Roads are few and damaged.
3. Enemy strength is overwhelming; total c. 60,000 strong. The German prefectures are held by the 164th Infantry Division, known as Fortress Division Crete, under Generalleutnant Josef Flottmann, and not yet withdrawn elements of the elite German 1st Parachute Division. The Italian 51st Infantry Division Siena, including the 141st CCNN, under General Gualtiero Gabutti, garrisons Lasithi. Avoid enemy contact.
4. Intelligence obtained reports that elements of the SS Panzergrenadier division Totenkopf deaths head have been put under the command of Standartenführer SS Colonel Professor Horst-Helmut von Hummelburg. Hummelburg appears to have full use of, at least, a 120 men strong SS Sonderkommando special command of the 3rd SS Armoured Division.
5. Hummelburg is a high-ranking member of SS Ahnenerbe, the study society for Intellectual Ancient History, which has the personal protection and sponsorship of Hitler and Himmler. The purpose of Ahnenerbe is to experiment and launch expeditions with the intent of proving that prehistoric and mythological Nordic populations Aryans had once ruled the world. Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler claims and promotes that the Aryans originally came from Atlantis and are beings directly from heaven, i.e. did not evolve as other humans did. Intelligence received that Hummelburg is conducting experiments to weaponize the occult.
6. A small task force will consist of men and women from various units of Allied and affiliated forces, including SOE and LAYFORCE. Most members of this detail have special capabilities. General Montgomery will disclose further details in person.

B. Mission

7. Report to General Montgomery for mission briefing post haste.

8. Leave Aldershot on 20th July at 4 am. Report to Wing Commander Huxley at Aldershot airport. Huxley will taxi to Crete.

9. Parachute into Lashiti Prefecture, Crete, depending on weather conditions on either 21st or 22nd July. The DZ is in a largely unsettled mountain area 1 mile south of the village Sitanos. Sitanos lies 3 miles west-south-west of Zakros and 5 miles west of the small harbour Kato Zakros.

10. Interface with Greek resistance at Sitanos if possible. The village headman, Kostas Tefhanikos, is your contact. He will be able to provide shelter, provisions, and further information.

11. Primary Task is to reconnoitre the digging site near Kato Zakros, determine what Hummelburg is really doing and destroy, or remove to Cairo, any occult tools, weapons, books, and other artefacts.

12. Secondary Tasks at Kato Zakros are to kill, or kidnap and remove to Cairo, Hummelburg, and to gain any information on troop deployments, especially the North African theatre. The military commander of the SS Sonderkommando, Major Hartlaub, may have pertinent military intelligence: until recently, he served on General der Panzertruppe Rommel's staff.

13. This is a specific raid and recon mission, use judgement what else can be achieved as Tertiary Tasks, such as destroying Axis materiel and weapons, especially any aircraft, provided doing so does not endanger the success of the Primary and Secondary tasks. Reduce Axis capabilities on Crete, preferably where relevant for the North African and European theatre.

14. When the mission is complete, contact the landlord or Georgios Tavern at Kato Zakros. He will organise your transport to Cairo. Reach Cairo at best possible speed.

The successful completion of this mission is essential for the progress of the Allied African campaign. No secret of occult weapons must interfere with Allied progress. Gaining further intelligence is paramount. The swastika flying over Cairo is unacceptable. I expect a full report, especially on the suppressed De Lisle carbine, in due course. Godspeed!

Bernard Montgomery
Act. Lt-General
Cmd. XII Corps

Feldpost

VERSCHLUSS-SACHE

Herrn Reichsführer-SS
Heinrich Himmler

- persönlich / vertraulich -

Feldpostnummer: 334 789 A



Transcript of a letter to
Reichführer-SS Heinrich Himmler

Crete, 5th June 1941

Lieber Heinrich,

I am happy and honored to be able to report that Ahnenerbe Archaeological Expedition Minos is within reach of the most exciting archaeological find. A find that will even surpass Schliemann's discovery of Troy! At long last, we will be able to prove without a shred of doubt the link between Aryan and Atlantean as well as the existence of Atlantis. I expect to hold the first Atlantean artifact in my hands soon, although I have to admit this will depend on the results of further experiments and inquiries with the Minoans. The Minoan informed us of a "rainbow bridge under the water" that would lead to the "treasure chamber of the masters".

Heinrich, my friend, it is as you always said: "Rainbow bridge" and "masters" if that is not perfect further evidence that the Nordic Herrenrasse was ever present here, I do not know what is. Aryans have ruled then and now. The circle will be complete for another 1000 years! The Greek also said that "the Atlanteans used a lance that could shoot rays of sunlight capable of destroying a war chariot in the blink of an eye". We must find this!

I will send any artifact I can unearth and a fuller report to Berlin forthwith. Thank you for your permission to do the other experiment, I will put it to the best use; it will make a formidable present to our beloved Führer.

Your obedient servant and faithful friend,
Dein Horst



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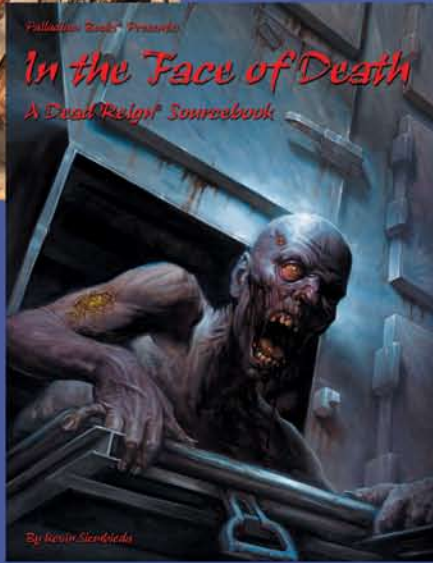


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