

Palladium Books Presents:

# Best of THE RIFTER

Your Guide to the Megaverse®

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YEARS

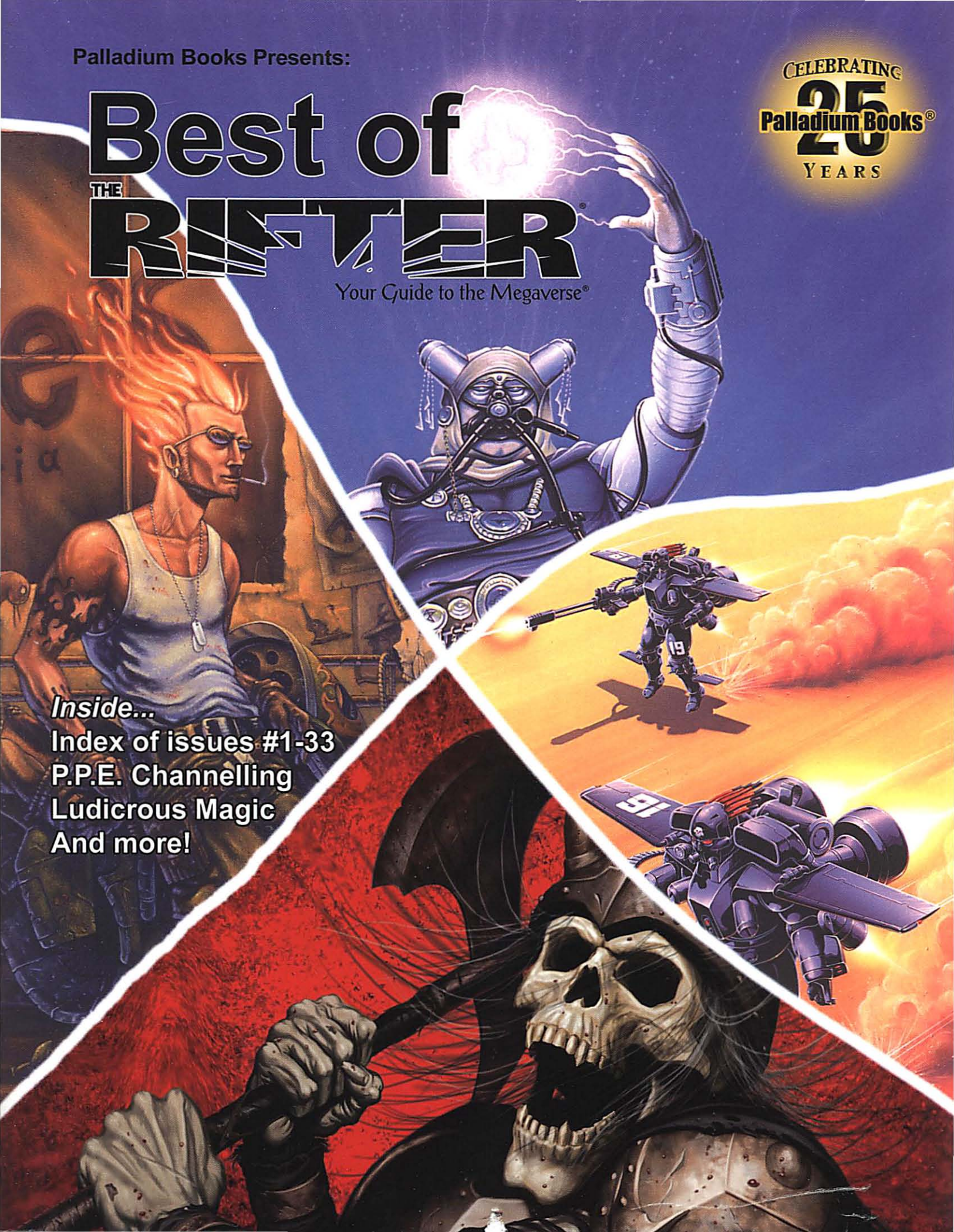
*Inside...*

Index of issues #1-33

P.P.E. Channelling

Ludicrous Magic

And more!





# Warning!

## Violence and the Supernatural

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## Best of The Rifter® & The Rifter® Index



**A Palladium Books® 25 Year Anniversary Special**

**Dedicated to everyone** who has had the courage to share their ideas and submit gaming material, stories or artwork to *The Rifter*®, whether it was published or not.

To Palladium stalwarts: *Wayne Smith, Alex Marciniszyn, and Julius Rosenstein*, who have worked on every single issue of *The Rifter*® for these past nine years – may many more years follow.

To those inspired by our feeble efforts to write, draw and unleash your imaginations in any venture.

*And to all of you*, the quiet multitude of gamers for whom we publish *The Rifter*® and dedicate all our creative efforts. Keep those imaginations burning bright.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2006*

First Printing – February, 2006

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Palladium Books® Presents:

# Best of The Rifter®

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**A Palladium Books® 25 Year Anniversary Special**

**Special thanks** to all our contributors, writers and artists from past to present for expanding the Palladium Megaverse® and inspiring fellow gamers. Our apologies to anybody who got accidentally left out or their name misspelled.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2006*



## A Note to the Readers

**The Rifter®** is one of those rare “noble experiments” that is a success. A quality, professional-looking quarterly sourcebook series that is really a “fanzine.” A fan magazine put together, paid for, published and distributed by a professional company for its fans. Palladium’s way of giving a little back to its most dedicated fans, spreading fun ideas, and encouraging imagination.

As a fanzine, **The Rifter®** is predominantly written by ordinary gamers, not professional RPG designers or writers. Oh sure, there’s the occasional guest article by me or Wujcik or some other Palladium writer/designer, but overall, the material is by ordinary gamers, and fans of Palladium’s role-playing games.

Not only do the fan contributors get to see their work in print, and have it read (and collected) by thousands of other gamers, but they get paid a nominal fee and get free copies of the issue they appear in. Nice.

**The Rifter®** is also a talent search where those fans with the talent and a dream of becoming a professional writer or artist *may* get their start. Like a comedian at a Comedy Club who catches the right eye, that ordinary fan *may* get a shot at writing or contributing to a Palladium sourcebook or RPG. I think the number of freelance writers and artists who started with work printed in **The Rifter®** is now around one dozen, and climbing.

It also gives Palladium a vehicle with which to spread news and information to our most dedicated, core audience, the readers of **The Rifter®**.

Launched in 1998, **The Rifter®**, turns eight years old. To his credit, *Wayne Smith* has been the sole guiding hand who picks the source material, cleans it up, and puts it all together every issue. Wayne’s done a great job, especially since I think **The Rifter®** is better than it has ever been.

2006 being *Palladium’s 25 Year Anniversary*, I thought it would be nice to collect *some* of the most popular and fun articles of past Rifiers and collect them in a special edition. It made sense, since **The Rifter®** spans the entire Megaverse® of Palladium RPGs, but there are so many good ones it was tough making the final selections. To those of you who made the cut, don’t let it go to your head, there was a lot of other material that almost took your place. For the multitude of you who didn’t make it this time, smile, because you were probably considered, and you have been part of something special. Truth be told, to offer a fair representation of the “best” this book should be 224 pages or bigger! But that seemed rather excessive.

**The Rifter® Index.** This wonderful series has needed some kind of index and listing for years. A reference to find your favorite articles, source material, G.M. tips and adventures. I decided to tackle that job, personally, and hope it meets with your approval. I also thought it was important to give a nod to *every* contributor these past nine years, and to let readers locate material written by their favorite authors, hence the inclusion of an *Authors’ Index*.

I hope you enjoy all our efforts and continue to read (and contribute to) **The Rifter®** for years to come.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2006

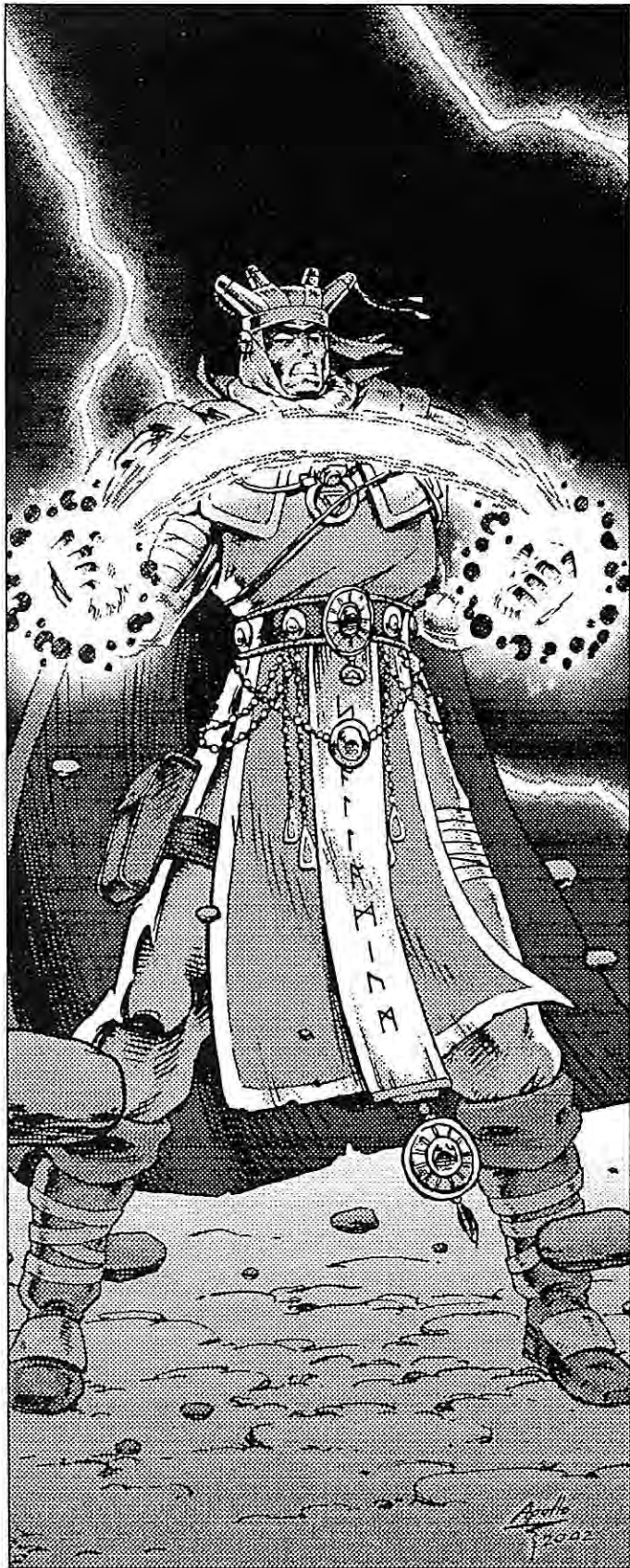
## Contents

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P.P.E. Channelling by Jason Richards . . . . .	5
G.M. Tips: The Name Giver by Erick Wujcik . . . . .	9
G.M. Tips: Thinking Big by Erick Wujcik . . . . .	13
Fantasy: 13 Deadly Magicks by James Calder . . . . .	16
Knights of the Dinner Table by Jolly Blackburn . . . . .	22
Rifts®: Trickster Mage by Kevin Siembieda . . . . .	24
Rifts®: Ludicrous Mage & Magic by Daniel Denis . . . . .	34
HU2: Where’s Wayne by Paulie Ferkleberger . . . . .	73
Fantasy: Into the Shadows by Jon Thompson . . . . .	81
Nightbane® Morphus Tables by Aaron Oliver . . . . .	91
Rifts®: Three Words by Jason Marker . . . . .	101

<b>The Rifter Index</b> . . . . .	104
<b>Contents for Issues #1-33</b> . . . . .	105
<b>Index by Category</b> . . . . .	116
<b>Index by Author</b> . . . . .	121

# P.P.E. Channeling



## An Optional New Spell Casting System for All Palladium Games

By Jason Richards

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #21

Not too long ago, I was serving humbly as Game Master for three of my best friends. We were sitting around my coffee table strewn with books, scrap paper, and various fried snack foods when I began to marvel as the one level five character and his two fourth-level companions suffered terribly at the hands of fate, as the players rolled one, after one, after one on the crystal blue 20-sided die. Not only were their strike, parry and dodge rolls suffering, but damage rolls were falling far below average, and not one of them had passed a Prowl roll in more than an hour of gaming.

It was at this time that I became concerned for the fate of the fictional world in which they adventured.

After all, they were nearing the inner sanctum of *Glade the Worldcleaver*, a tenth-level magic user of incredible power. Their armor was running low as they managed to make a few Prowl rolls and stay hidden from the guards long enough to make it into the lair of their nemesis. They were about to come face to face with the end of a six month campaign and the probable doom of their badly injured player characters. Still, they had a world to save...

As wonders never cease, they got the drop on the mage, who was deep into some dark ritual to bring about a new age of chaos. The sniper was out of ammunition, the hand to hand nut had basically zero armor, and the psychic had barely enough I.S.P. left to repress the pain of his many wounds. They knew that it would take less than a minute for the mage to summon the score of minions waiting outside in the main chamber for their master to finish his ritual. Out of options, three mid-level characters charged the biggest menace I had ever thrown at them. They were completely outmatched.

And they won.

They didn't just win. They trounced the villain. Destroyed him. He never even got off a decent shot. If he had been able to raise his *Armor of Ithan* he would have at least beaten them back, but he didn't have seven seconds to spare.

It took one attack for the heroes to cover the distance to their enemy. He instantly responded with a defense, to empower his *Armor of Ithan*. He began to chant his mantra and focus his energy. He chanted as he dodged the punch of the penalty-laden psychic and parried a poor punch by the sniper. (Note: I am aware that dodging or parrying should have negated the spell and forced the mage to start his mantra over, but I had to do *something!*) The man at arms landed a punch and knocked back the mage, who lost his focus and had his spell fizzle. Bellowing for his guards, *Glade the Worldcleaver* decided the best defense is a good offense, and began to summon a *Fireball* with which to take the fighter out of commission. Wham! Another punch connected, fizzling the spell.

When the heroes pulled their knives I knew it was over. Within the next attack the mage was unconscious, and he was dead by the time his guards came charging through the door a few seconds later.



Like I said, it took about seven seconds. Of three attacks from each of the three heroes, a total of five hit. How much damage they did was irrelevant. The simple fact was that they never should have had a chance doing things the way they did. My players had no satisfaction from the victory. Nobody had any fun, and my players looked to me to fix it.

## The Problem

Right then and there I set my mind to developing a house rule that would balance things out. I talked to my players and asked why none of them had chosen a magic O.C.C. I came to realize that while magic users across the boards in Palladium's system have vast spell knowledge and power at their command, they are terribly unbalanced in combat and any other situation where time is a factor.

Not only that, but a level ten mage has no advantage when it comes to casting spells over when he was level one. Spell effects may be increased, and success rates go up (via Spell Strength), but it still takes the mage half of a melee round to cast Globe of Daylight.

While I do not believe that spell casters have huge advantages over mundane characters in many respects, I have found a variation on Palladium's official rules that allows for magic-using characters to hold their own in a great many more situations, while keeping the same spirit of the rules laid down by the writers of our favorite games. It even adjusts for some ways that these hard-luck mages might have it a little too easy.

## Actions vs Attacks

You might note that in the following description I use the word "action" instead of "attack" when describing the casting of spells. This is to differentiate between a physical attack gained from Hand to Hand or Boxing, being ambidextrous, having a tail, or other such bonuses. In the **Rifts® Game Master Guide™**, Palladium outlines how those without Hand to Hand training can perform non-combat actions at (roughly) the same speed as combat savvy characters can shoot a gun or swing a sword. If a mage does not have a Hand to Hand skill, spells are cast using the non-combat actions instead of combat attacks. This gives them a comparable (but usually lower) number of actions in a melee round. For more information on actions for those without a Hand to Hand skill, see the G.M. Guide, pages 44-45.

If the mage has taken a Hand to Hand skill, all the better. Use attacks instead of actions and don't worry about it (I would still *exclude* extra attacks from extra limbs, tails, Extraordinary P.P., etc.).

The other question that arises is "How does combat training help one to cast spells faster?" In other words: "Why does someone with Hand to Hand: Assassin get to cast more spells in a melee than someone with Hand to Hand: Basic?" This is strictly a game balance issue. If you need more than that, assume that a mage with HtH Assassin (a rarity, to be sure) has practiced using spells in combat and incorporated it into his combat styling. This is the best explanation that can be given without requiring a major change in the Palladium combat sequence, and it certainly isn't unreasonable.

## P.P.E. Channeling

This is the basic rule, and following sections outline special cases, examples, and clarifications. This section is all that you really need to use this optional spell casting system.

Instead of the purely time-based system found in **Rifts®**, **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**, **Beyond the Supernatural™**, and all other Palladium games, I developed (with much help from my players and the Palladium Bulletin Boards) a system called "P.P.E. Channeling." This determines the rate at which a magic-using character can "channel" P.P.E. into casting a spell. Most mages can channel 5 P.P.E. per level of experience, per melee action.

Thus, it takes a first level character only one action to cast the spell Levitation (5 P.P.E.), one action to cast Blinding Flash (1 P.P.E.), two actions to cast Shadow Meld (10 P.P.E.), or three actions to cast Energy Disruption (12 P.P.E.).

A third level character can channel up to 15 P.P.E. per action. So, he can cast Levitation, Blinding Flash, Energy Disruption, or any other spell with a P.P.E. cost of 15 or less in a single action. In two actions he can cast Invulnerability (25 P.P.E.) or Exorcism (30 P.P.E.). On the other hand, it will take the character ten actions to cast Summon Shadow Beast (140 P.P.E.).

Everything else stays the same. He cannot take other combat action while casting, and he must have enough P.P.E. available. The spell caster can be interrupted to negate his spell as normal, and rituals remain unchanged. Each spell cast uses at least one attack/action, regardless of how little P.P.E. it costs.

## Different Kinds of Mages

Ley Line Walkers, Mystics, Wizards, and other basic "sorcerer" types are **Full Mages** and have the widest range of spell knowledge, and have no penalties when channeling P.P.E. for casting spells. All of their spells can be channeled at the standard 5 P.P.E. per level, per action.

Conjurors, Shifters, Warlocks, Necromancers, Temporal Wizards, and other such classes are **Specialists**, and channel at 5 P.P.E. per level, per action when using spells within their narrow area of specialty. However, they can only channel 3 P.P.E. per level of experience per action for spells outside their area of expertise. This nearly doubles the amount of time required to cast a spell outside the mage's specialized area of knowledge. In the case of the Techno-Wizard, the penalty to cast the spells only occurs when attempting to cast spells in the "traditional" manner and not into a device. The creation of the device is effectively a ritual, and therefore unaffected by the P.P.E. Channeling rule. Also remember that many of these classes already have advantages in P.P.E. costs to cast certain spells.

There exist, in various games, character classes that can learn to cast spells, or have the ability to cast them as a natural ability, which we'll call **Dabblers**. Also included are those who are spell casters second to some other skill, such as Temporal Warriors or the Battle Magus. Another example is any character that casts magic through another being's power, such as a Priest, Witch, or Mystically Bestowed character. There are also magic items, amulets, and talismans that may require the use of one's own P.P.E. to activate the magic. In all of these cases, and in any case where the character is not *primarily* a mage of some

kind, the person can only channel 3 P.P.E. per level, per action. This is due to a lack of training – years of training in the case of most spell casters. They simply aren't as "in-tune" with magic and aren't as disciplined or practiced. This penalty also applies to people who are not mages but can "reload" Techno-Wizard devices. Psychics can always pump I.S.P. into TW devices in a single action (where applicable), but are subject to this penalty if using P.P.E. to power a device.

Summoners, Diabolists, Alchemists, and to a lesser degree, Techno-Wizards, are examples of **Ritual Mages** that already have time built into the process of casting their magic, and are therefore not involved with P.P.E. Channeling as presented in this rule.

## Other Bonuses and Unique Situations

Supernatural creatures (demons, sub-demons, Godlings, Demigods, true Giants, and most creatures with natural magical abilities) get an extra two P.P.E. per level, per action. Supernatural creatures are just that: characters, creatures, or beings who have some link with the supernatural (not just some supernatural attributes). So, a Godling with Shifter spell casting abilities will be able to cast 7 P.P.E. per level, per action (instead of the usual 5). If that same Godling learned a Line Walker spell, he would channel 5 P.P.E. per level, per action (instead of the usual 3). This is normally not an issue, because supernatural creatures generally either have their own methods of spell casting (x times per day, x spells per melee, etc.) or can't learn anything outside of their initial discipline. Their powers tend to be natural abilities rather than learned spells.

Creatures of Magic (dragons, Sphinx, Faeries, Lord Magus O.C.C., etc.), gods, and Supernatural Intelligences get an extra 5 P.P.E. per level, per action. So, a dragon that was a Shifter (primarily) gets to channel 10 P.P.E. per level, per action (instead of the usual 5). If the Shifter dragon learns a Line Walker spell he channels 8 P.P.E. per level, per action (instead of the normal 3).

There are times, especially as a character reaches high levels, when mages learn additional areas of magic other than their primary one. It may be assumed that these new skills are fundamentally different, and therefore must be treated as spells outside their general knowledge. So, if a 10<sup>th</sup> level Wizard learns to be a Necromancer, all Necro Magic spells are only channeled at 3 P.P.E. and Wizard spells at 5 P.P.E. The difference comes from years of training in one art, then having to adjust to the nuances of a second one. They do, however, get to use the higher of the two levels of experience for channeling purposes. So, in the above example, Wizard spells are still channeled at 50 P.P.E. per action, and the Necromancer spells are channeled at 30 P.P.E. If, at some point, the Necromancer level of experience reaches level 11, the tables are turned. Necromancy becomes the primary spell casting category and is channeled at 55 P.P.E. per action, and Wizard spells drop to 33 P.P.E. It should be noted that such changes are rare, and usually occur at high levels of experience where the P.P.E. channeled per level becomes less significant, in some ways. The difference to a player between channeling 30 and 50 P.P.E. is much less than the difference between 3 and 5 P.P.E., especially when that character is just trying to get off a quick spell to defend himself.

## Advantages and Disadvantages

The advantages of this system to a mage are clear. It allows him to cast simple spells in a single action, greatly enhancing his usefulness in combat or defense, while keeping him under the usual restraints of P.P.E. usage, the need for constant concentration, and the necessity to speak the power words for that particular spell. By allowing characters to use magic more effectively for defense or attack, it decreases the dependence on armor and traditional weapons, and allows him to better play in character and rely on his own powers and abilities. It also offers a great new way for mages to advance as they gain experience, becoming more powerful and casting higher-level spells more quickly.

Disadvantages are few, but major. Many spells (especially spells of high level) will require longer to cast than under traditional rules. This is a change for the positive, as in the existing system some high level spells require 30 seconds (two melee rounds) to cast, such as Talisman and Dimensional Portal, that have huge P.P.E. costs, but were lumped together with less costly spells such as Remove Curse. The second disadvantage is that a mage can now blow through P.P.E. in a matter of melees, not over several minutes. This is a big issue, and will make mages think twice before expending lots of P.P.E. or using magic without enough consideration.

## A Quick List of Mages by Category

### Full Mages

(5 P.P.E. per level, per action for all spells.)

- Wizard/Sorcerer (Heroes, Fantasy, Nightbane)
- Ley Line Walker (Rifts)
- Mystic (Rifts, Heroes, Nightbane)
- Astral Mage (Nightbane)
- Geo-Immortal (Nightbane)

### Specialists

(Normally 5 P.P.E. unless casting a spell outside their specialty, then 3 P.P.E.)

**Note:** Most of these mages cannot normally learn outside magic, so using a spell that required penalized channeling would be very unusual.

- Necromancer (Fantasy, Rifts)
- Warlocks (Fantasy, Rifts)
- Fleshsculptor (Nightbane)
- Shifter (Rifts)
- Conjuror (Rifts, Fantasy)
- Techno-Wizard (Rifts; only when casting magic as a normal spell caster and not into an item.)
- Temporal Wizards (Rifts)



## Dabblers

(Casts at 3 P.P.E. for any spell cast, can not learn other disciplines.)

- Super-Spy (Rifts)
- Arcane Detective (Nightbane)
- Channeler (Nightbane)
- Priest (Most games; this is the case when using one's own P.P.E. to use powers granted by a god or powerful creature.)
- Witch (Fantasy, Rifts; see note on Priest above.)
- Mystically Bestowed (Heroes; see note on Priest above.)
- Temporal Warrior (Rifts)
- Battle Magus (Rifts)

## Ritual Mages

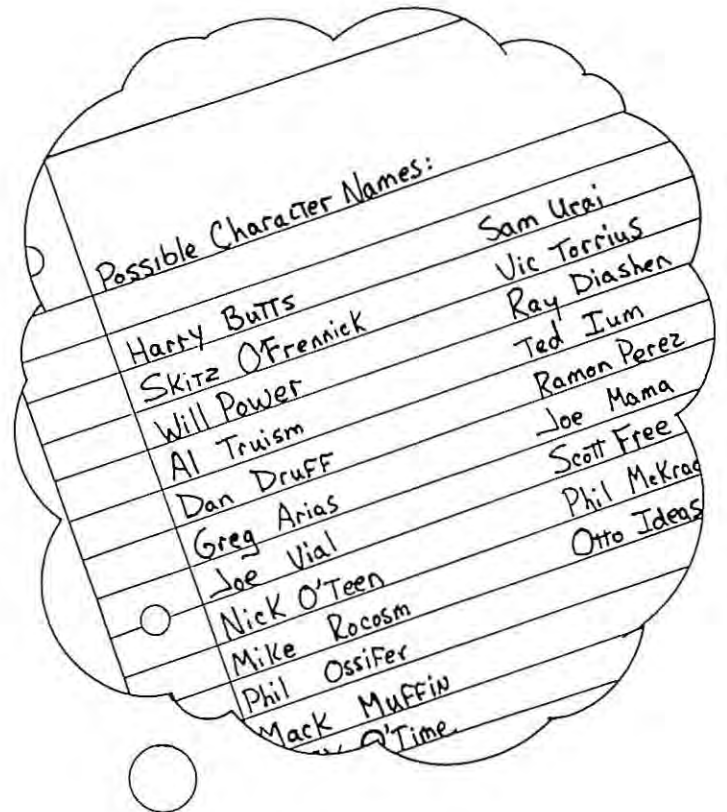
(Skill is unique, with time already included in the performance of the ritual, and does not "channel" P.P.E. in the traditional sense.)

- Summoner (Fantasy)
- Diabolist (Fantasy)
- Alchemist (Fantasy)
- Techno-Mage (Nightbane)
- Techno-Wizard (Rifts; only when creating his devices.)

In addition to all of the above examples, there are literally scores of other magic character classes across the Megaverse, but these should give you a good idea of how to categorize all of the others.

## Closing Remarks

Of course this is an optional rule, but one that has shown to maintain a tight game balance. It also jibes closely with the spirit of what Palladium had intended for mages to do: focus and use their Potential Psychic Energy to achieve miraculous effects. After all, that is where the time consideration came from in the first place. Enjoy.



# The Name Giver

G.M. & Player Tips by Erick Wujcik

## First Appeared in The Rifter® #1

It isn't just a part of the job, as Game Master, it's what we do.

Coming up with names. Rich, meaningful, resonant names. Interesting, quirky, memorable names. Cool, funny names that the players remember. Names that strike fear. Names that inspire awe.

Bucky, James the Timid, Isaac Gump, Urenfogger are all names that don't have much of a charge. They work perfectly for getting the player characters to underestimate the competition. Which shows that names can also be wonderfully misleading, a mask, or another truth-behind-the-truth.

Names for characters. Names for animals, creatures, monsters and bugs, from pet puppies to pet pterodactyls. Names for places, including buildings, towns and cities, geographical oddities, mountains and valleys and deserts and plains, streams and rivers and lakes and oceans, worlds and moons and comets and suns, clusters and galaxies, not to mention all the myriad alternate universes in the Palladium Megaverse.

Names for items, artifacts, foodstuffs, tools, weapons, whole new sciences and technologies. Philosophies, religions, magical systems.

There is really no limit to the number of names that a Game Master needs to invent.

The art of naming is complex.

On the one hand, the more research the better. Coming up with names involves book work, a keen observational eye, and a lot of doodling around with a pencil (better yet, a word processor) trying out different combinations of letters and syllables.

On the other hand, a really good Game Master can whip out names with lightning speed.

Want a model? Check out the movie "The Usual Suspects." For those of you who haven't seen it, I won't spoil things. Suffice to say, they used one of my favorite tricks for smoothly coming up with a lot of names.

That's one great trick. Here are a whole bunch of others...

## Green-Grass Golem-Gash

Try saying it. "Green-Grass Golem-Gash." Do it fast, do it in strange voices, do it with an accent. Sure, you'll trip a few times, but it's not that hard to master a smooth rendition.

Green-Grass Golem-Gash is one of my all-time favorite names. I have no idea where it came from. It was just one of those things that popped into my head when I was trying to fill in a list of magical swords.

Since I had a "Circle of Twelve Mages," and a "Circle of Twelve Artifacts," in the early (the first!) Dragonwright Campaign, I thought there ought to be at least twelve interesting magical swords.

I had already come up with a handful of good names. Deathkiss, for example, was planted in the Tombs of Gersidi, a

very early adventure in the campaign. Blackbright, a sword that could only be wielded by one who was undead, was another early entry. I sat down and started listing a bunch more. Ironfrost, Victrionix, Righteous Wraith, Bloodseed, and... hmmm... what comes after that?

Green-Grass Golem-Gash.

It sounded funny. It sounded good. It sounded right.

I had no idea of what it would be, what it would do, what purpose it might serve in the campaign. I just liked saying it.

Green-Grass Golem-Gash.

It worked beautifully. It was one of those unforgettable names, and it helped me create a personality for the sword that was unique. After all, if I liked saying "Green-Grass Golem-Gash," it made sense that the sword itself also liked the sound of its own name, and that every time the sword spoke (which was a lot!), it liked to refer to itself, Bob Dole-style, in the third person.

How do I know it was a successful name?

The only way to judge it is by getting the reactions of the player characters. Do they like the sound of it? Do they refer to it by name? Does the use of the name create a reaction? Green-Grass Golem-Gash was a success by any measure.

By the way, filling out the rest of the list of swords are Mercyblade, Krugenfelder, Dragon-Hewer, Tammarande and Opal's Eye (no, the group still hasn't found all these mystical blades). All interesting names. Some names that have become legendary. None as good as Green-Grass Golem-Gash.

**GM Tip:** One of the big advantages of coming up with a list of names, early in a campaign, is to build in a lot of anticipation. No, you don't need to know what each item does, or even have a clue as to what the item is (for years the group debated the nature of such items as the "Ard of Bright" and the "Illonath Barecth"), just come up with the names. When the group found an old ruined temple, complete with the names (and a few tantalizing fragments describing the items), they were really excited to finally have a complete list of all the names of the "Circle of Twelve Artifacts." It was a big deal. Finding each new item from the list, a task that took over ten years, was always exciting, because the anticipation was so great.

## My Big Mistake

If there is one thing I did wrong, back in the early days of creating my various role-playing campaigns, it was taking names from other sources.

Back when I was young and stupid, too often I took the easy way. I stole names from wherever I found 'em. From books, television, movies, whatever.

That turned out bad in the short run, and in the long run.

Right away, almost instantly, many of the names I used were recognized by the players (who would have suspected that so many upstanding young students would know all the names from an obscure television soap opera?). Whenever the names were recognized I had to put up with either (1) ridicule or (2) criticism.

It was worse later on. First were problems with getting things published (game manufacturers are a tad skittish about printing something bearing a name trademarked by, say, Disney, or



Lucasfilm). Too many changes were needed, and I was always afraid that I'd slip up and miss one.

Even more important was the impact on the player characters. Names that I invented, that were my creations, had more of a long-term impact on the campaign. Players took them seriously. Original names had a chance of becoming legendary, at least among my circle of gamers (and really, when it comes down to it, does the opinion of anyone else really matter?).

I can't emphasize it strongly enough.

Game Masters should create their own names.

Don't think you are good enough? Work at it. As with any aspect of role-playing and Game Mastering, the more you do it, the more likely it is that you will get better, that you will find yourself with a valuable new skill.

## Tools of the Namer

### Dice

Using dice to come up with names has the advantage of being fast. However, just as a batch of monkeys banging on keyboards is unlikely to generate great literature, so using dice to come up with names is unlikely to produce any really epic name. Back in the old days, when I was in a hurry I used the following technique.

First, roll a six-sided.

If the result is low (one, two or three), then roll a twelve-sided for the exact letter from the start of the alphabet. In other words, 1 = A, 2 = B, 3 = C, 4 = D, etc.

If the six-sided roll is high (four, five or six), then roll the twelve-sided and start in the middle of the alphabet, where 1 = M, 2 = N, 3 = O, 4 = P, and so on.

Not a perfect system, since it leaves out W, X, Y, Z, but I found that I tended to make too many names starting with X or Z anyway.

Since you need more vowels than consonants, alternate rolling a six-sided where 1 = A, 2 = E, 3 = I, 4 = O, 5 = U, and 6 = Y.

The good thing about rolling up names like this is that it is fast. Whenever the group would meet a new non-player character, or hear about a monster, or come into a town, I could come up with plenty of odd-sounding names.

The not-so-good thing about this system is that most of the names were garbage.

Oh, they were okay for an hour or two. It's just that almost none of them stuck. None of the names turned into the names that the players would use when telling their war stories.

That's not to say that I don't use the dice anymore. Far from it. I'm always grabbing for the dice when I'm stuck for a name. Now, however, I only roll one letter, just as a starting place. Then I roll it around in my mind, seeing what kind of possibilities my imagination can generate.

### Reference Books

While dice have their place, the main tool of a good name giver is a good library. Of course, make use of your local public

or school library. It's also a good idea to start putting together your own set of good reference books.

No, I'm not talking about spending money. A lot of my best volumes on naming were freebies.

One of the nice things about the books that come in handy for name reference is that they are mostly worthless. For libraries, bookstores and most book-owning people, it is important to have the latest, most accurate, most up-to-date version of a dictionary, encyclopedia, or any other reference book.

As someone looking for good names, new isn't necessarily better. In fact, some of the very best books are old. Obsolete, even.

For example, just last week, as I was preparing for the writing of this article, I stopped by a local used bookstore. There, sitting on the "free" shelves (ask, most used bookstores have a batch of books that they are eager to give away), was an old "Winston Simplified Dictionary," inscribed with "Kermit Jacobs - Nov 18 1920." Heavily defaced (by Kermit, or by later generations of Jacobs, I don't know), filled with graffiti, and otherwise pretty damaged (I don't know how, but somebody drilled a small hole all the way from the front cover to page 49, centering on the word "bathe"), this is still a handy book for any Game Master.

Oddly enough, the older the better. Why spend the big bucks on a brand new dictionary when it will be out of date in a year or two (in case you haven't noticed, our language is changing all the time; what with the internet, et al, even the rate of change is accelerating)? Old dictionaries are better, partly because they are cheap (somewhere in your area is a scuzzy used bookstore, where there are piles of big old dictionaries, selling for something less than ten cents a pound). When it comes to dictionaries, I recommend getting one of the really big suckers, filled with all kinds of obscure words.

Speaking of obscure words, sometimes "real" words work very well as names. An example from the Dragonwright Campaign is "Heresiarch," defined as a messiah who preaches heresy. One of the players happily accepted the title of "Heresiarch" and used it for quite some time before he happened to find it in a dictionary.

Another category of free, or really cheap books, are old foreign language books. Scan through a French-English dictionary, or a textbook on Chinese, and you'll come up with plenty of odd sounding words.

One of my favorite tricks is using a foreign dictionary, and looking up a word that might be some kind of clue. For example, I see "betray" is "trahir," and "betrayal" is "trahison" in French. I wonder how many players might figure out that there is something wrong with "Trahir Trahison," the new sword they've hired?

Another good source for names is, no big surprise, name books. Again, check around the used bookstores. You'll find a surprising number of books on names. Among the cheapest, and also the most useful, are "baby naming books" (also ask your older relatives), which contain the names and meanings of hundreds of first names.

I paid real money for a copy of *The Writer's Digest Character Naming Sourcebook* by Sherrilyn Kenyon, Writer's Digest Books, 1994. It's pretty handy, especially if you need a name

associated with a particular language, since it contains thirty-five different name lists, each divided in female and male sections. I haven't used them yet, but I never know when I'll need a list of "Arthurian Legend Names," or names based on Native American or Teutonic languages.

Final stop on our list of good reference books is a volume that you already have. It's called a telephone book. Especially when it comes to creating contemporary names, there is really no better resource. Don't just take the names as they are. Either mix them up, matching different first and last names, or use the names as inspiration to create your own strange variations.

**GM Tip:** Combining dice with books is another cool way to come up with names quickly. Take a quick peek at the total number of pages in a book. My 1945 *Japanese-English Dictionary of Sea Terms* by Lt-Cdr. C. Ozaki (another free book!) has 731 pages of dictionary. To generate a name I start by rolling an eight-sided, for the hundreds, and then a set of percentile dice. So a roll of 4 on the D8, and a roll of 51 on the percentile takes me to page 351 (round down on the D8, so you don't miss the first ninety-nine pages). Once there I notice that "Koganfu" means "inshore wind." Depending on what I need at the time I could use "Koganfu," shorten it to "Kogan," or just use the name "Inshore," which also sounds pretty good.

## Computer Software

A good Thesaurus is an excellent reference book, but I much prefer the electronic version. I'd be surprised if you had to add a thesaurus on to your computer system, because most good word processors have one built-in. Once you get past the initial learning curve, finding neat names on a computer thesaurus is wicked fast.

For example, let's say the characters meet a character who is wearing a very fancy outfit. I start by looking up the word "fancy," which gives me a long list that includes the word "ornate." That's a possibility, but then I click on "ornate" and get "rococo." Nice sound, rococo. Jimmy Rococo? Andreas Rococo Vaughn? Rococo Zimphere? The possibilities are endless...

You might also want to check out some of the more advanced features of your spell checker. Using mine (I'm still using WordPerfect 5.1 on this machine, which dates from the age of MS-DOS), I can use the asterix character ("\*") to do "wild card" searches. For example, if I need a word that ends with "ithian" (because I like the sound of the name "Corinthian" in Neil Gaiman's *Sandman* comics), I enter "\*thian," and get "nabothian" which sounds excellent (oddly enough, I can't find it in my big dictionary, so I guess I'll have to make a trip to the library)...

## Building Original Names

As good as it is to consult reference books, the best names are often those that you invent from scratch. Of course spending a lot of time with dictionaries, breaking down words according to their component parts, and fiddling with the pieces, that's all a necessary part of the process...

## Suffixes, Prefixes, & Infixes

Back in the late 1940's, my Aunt Camille received a scholarship to study art in New York City. Just as Camille was about to leave on the train, her mother, my grandmother, had some kind of bad feeling.

"I'm coming with you," said my grandmother, and hopped on the train as it pulled out of Detroit. Camille argued, pointing out that the school would take care of everything. Besides, what help could her mother be? Gram spoke fluent Armenian, but broken English, and she was on her way to New York, a city where she had no friends and no family.

Sure enough, when they got to New York, it turned out that Gram was right. Camille had no place to stay, and very little money.

So Gram, my wise grandmother, picked up a copy of the New York City telephone directory. Then she started calling Armenians all over Manhattan. And pretty soon she had set up Camille with all the necessary living arrangements, in a community where she would be looked after and protected.

How?

Simple enough. Most Armenians have a common suffix. That is, most (not quite all, but most), have a last name that ends in "ian." Evarian, Dekarnikian, Gerarian, Kervorkian, Serafian, and Misralian. Go through any telephone book and, if you avoid the listings for names like "O'Brian," you'll find plenty of Armenians.

A lot of nationalities have common *suffixes*, or endings. "Chavez," "Mendez" and "Vasquez" are clearly Hispanic. "Atagnostopoulos," "Kaloyropoulos" and "Panapolos" are obviously Greek.

A trio of the suffixes I've used in the Dragonwright campaign are "-al," "-ahz" and "-nar." This helps to identify names like "Ba-al," "Aprek-nar," "Muj-ahz" and "Unba-al" as belonging to a particular class of gods and demons, or with the characters who worship those demons and devils.

*Prefixes* that you might find in the telephone book include "van" and "van der" for Dutch names, "von" for German, and "O'" for Irish.

I've come up with a bunch of family names, associated with a particular fantasy ruling class, all with the prefix "d'." So "d'Althin," "d'Fingal," and "d'Voren" are all clearly marked.

Just as prefixes are standard chunks attached to the beginnings of names, and suffixes are the pieces stuck on the ends, so *infixes* are bits that go in the middle of a name. This isn't common in English, but lots of other languages, such as the Philippine language, Tagalog, have all kinds of interesting infixes. For example, adding "le" into the word "valea" (meaning "stupid"), turns it into valelea ("stupidity") in the Niutao dialect of Tuvaluan in Polynesia.

Take a couple of Niutao infixes, like "fu," "ka," and "pu," add them to some standard English, and you easily generate some cool sounding names.

David can be Dafuvid or Dakavid or Dapuvud. Maryann becomes Mafuryann or Makaryann or Mapuryann.

Also consider the following names; BillyJoe Magee and BetsyJoe Magee, CindyLou and MaryLou and DonnyLou Krammer, EdnaLouise and SaraLouise Smith, not to mention



JoeBob and JimBob Kovlowski. “Joe,” “Lou,” “Louise,” and “Bob” are all infixes in these examples.

While coming up with an infix is a bit more difficult, it can also have a certain rhythm when used with a whole batch of related character names.

## Stream of Consciousness

So, now that you know about prefixes, suffixes and infixes, here is a detailed example of how they can be used.

My players have grown wary of a group of particularly nasty elves, who combine magic into a form of technology. Among these elves, who aren't exactly enemies, but who can be quite dangerous, they've met characters named Chromatic, Necrophon, and Styolite.

Back when I first came up with the elves, I tried to make all the names sound vaguely technological. They do, to my ear. When I want to come up with another one of their group, when I need another name, I usually just try to take some contemporary technological term, and warp it.

So, “Prosak” could be “Prosakton” or “Sakrapon” or “Orsopak.”

How?

I start with “Prosak.”

Then add components of the names of the elves we've already met. Chromatic, Necrophon and Styolite. The suffixes would be “tic,” “phon” and “ite.” (I'll leave it as an exercise to the reader to work out the prefixes and infixes.)

Adding extra sounds on the end, I could get Prosakton, Prosakic, Prosakite. Prosakton, of these three possibilities, just sounds better.

In this case, putting extra sounds at the start just doesn't seem right.

Break it into “Pro” and “Sak.” One prefix, one suffix.

First, just switch 'em around.

Sakpro?

Not enough of a name, I think.

Sakpronic? Maybe.

Sakprotic? No way.

Sakpropon? Okay, at least it sounds like a name. It's just that “propon” is sort of hard to say. Too easy to twist up the tongue. “Sakropon” is better. “Sakrapon” is better yet, since it seems to lend itself to an interesting pronunciation; “Sa-KRA-pon.”

So how did I end up with “Orsopak?”

More switching around. “Pro” backwards is “Orp,” but “Orp” sounds dumb. “Or” isn't too bad... If it started with “Or,” then what?

Orpak? Naw. Too short.

Orpropak? Hmmm...

Orcropak? Ormapak? Oryopak?

I just kept messing around, putting in different sounds.

Until I came up with Orsopak.

It sounds good to my ear. I can say it out loud. It seems to fit in with the others, Chromatic and Orsopak, Orsopak and Necrophon, Styolite and Orsopak.

In other words, I just keep messing around until I come up with something that sounds right.

## Magic Names

Playing around with suffixes, foreign dictionaries and software tools are all okay, but the real art of naming is finding a name that fits.

It isn't science, or technique. There is no trick to this.

Finding just the right name is more a matter of instinct. It's an art. Like all art, it's impossible to explain. The best I can do is come up with examples. Here are some of the best names I've invented.

Vagrant and Reaper.

In a conventional sense they aren't even “names.” They are words that you might find in a dictionary. However, as names they have worked brilliantly.

Both are from my original *Amber Diceless Role-Playing* campaign. In the case of “Reaper,” I was looking for the name that would describe the father of several of the player characters. He wasn't going to be a nice guy (you probably figured that out, just by the name). More, he was going to be downright nuts. And I very much wanted the players to fear him. I'm happy to say that I succeeded. Even now, years after one of the player characters cut off his head, the name “Reaper” still inspires fear and dread in the players.

As for “Vagrant,” I was looking for a name for one of the important figures in the Courts of Chaos (a kingdom of powerful demons and shape-shifters). As an assistant to the royal family I came up with a title, “High Lord of Protocol.” He would be big and powerful, with incredible political clout. Someone who could intimidate with words alone. Someone who would always know exactly the right etiquette and proprieties in every situation. I pictured a huge demonic figure, covered in glittering green and black scales, wearing... nothing but a tuxedo vest and a black g-string. I have no idea where the name “Vagrant” came from. It seems so counter-intuitive. Yet the juxtaposition of the name “Vagrant” with the campaign's most “proper” figure worked out perfectly.

## Doc Feral

When it comes to a character name, this is another of my perfect assignments. For those of you who don't recognize him, Doctor Victor Feral was the main villain created in the original Palladium game, *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Other Strangeness* (made way back in 1985). Here was a character who believed in putting humans first, and in subjugating mutant animals (i.e., the player characters). He was a delightful combination; a character who was totally upstanding in his dealings with humanity, and completely venal otherwise. Short, sassy, and full of spit, Feral is still a great name...

## Haldeman and Napalm

Ask the players in the Dragonwright Campaign about really powerful mages, and you'll likely hear these two names.

Napalm was one of my very first, the holder of the entryway to “Napalm's Dungeon.” There is no substance known as “Napalm” in the campaign, but the name is clearly evocative. I don't know if the players ever saw Napalm cast a fireball, but you know they've got to be thinking that he must have something pretty hot up his sleeve.

As you may recall, there was a prominent figure in Nixon's Watergate Scandal named Haldeman. Of course, that Haldeman didn't have exclusive rights to the name, since there are plenty of other Haldemans, famous and otherwise (Joe Haldeman, the author of "The Forever War," is a fine science fiction writer). Still, choosing to name the evil sorcerer in my fantasy campaign "Haldeman," has worked out very, very well. While the name has a modern ring, it works just fine in a Palladium setting.

## Left-Side-Wound and Two-Trees

Early in the Dragonwright Campaign, nearly two decades ago, the characters first met up with Kankorin and Emerin (see Palladium's *Monsters & Animals*). The ritual of being adopted into the tribe had two parts. First, each player character was paired with a young Kankorin and sent out for a ritual combat with an Emerin. The survivors were given tribal Kankorin names. However, the names were to be based on what happened during the ritual combat. The result was that many of the player characters have memorable names to this day. The names weren't really mine, I didn't invent them, but I can take credit for introducing the tradition. Speaking from experience, when a player character has a tribal name based on the wounds they received in a desperate battle, it is a very good name...

**GM Tip:** A couple of years ago, I ended up running a role-playing session with a huge group, along with two other Game Masters. While I had designed the scenario, I wanted to keep it open-ended, and to give the other two Game Masters enough freedom to move with the flow of events, as well as to invent new non-player characters (NPCs) as needed. Still, I wanted it to look organized, from the point of view of the players. Most of the NPCs would be demons, but demons from two very different realms. Rather than hand out a list of names, I came up with a pair of simple rules. One batch of demons were all to have names based on automotive parts, and the other on words for astronomical objects. No, not just "carburetor" or "Venus," but switched around a bit. It worked fine, and it was clear to the player characters that "Anarator" and "Exafold" belonged to one group of demons, while "Evenus" and "Ijupar" were clearly from another. It turned out to be an easy, very quick, way of inventing names (it was easy to segregate the demons according to their names, so a big tough guy might have a name based on "engine block" while a smaller, smarter one's name could be based on "accelerator"), and it was a technique that was invisible to the players.

## Now it's your turn ...

I could go on.

Agranin, a major demon, Alstay the Bonestealer, a witch of supernatural proportions, Apnik, a minor demon-sprite, Ayeron the spider god... all the way to Zelerum, a suit of demon armor. All the good names found me, whispered in my ear, and demanded to be used.

All of my role-playing life I've been known as a guy good with names (for example, that little name, "Rifts," that was a good one). I like names, I like naming things, and I even like thinking about how to name things.

It didn't happen overnight. I didn't come naturally. Like just about everyone else, when I first started coming up with names

it seemed impossible. As if the people who invented good names were some kind of tricksters.

It turns out that it wasn't magic. For me, for you, for anyone who wants the knack of naming, all it takes is work and practice. And a little imagination...

**GM Tip:** Check out Palladium's *Mystic China*, for another take on coming up with names.

# Thinking Big

By Erick Wujcik

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #2

Last time around, on the subject of names and naming, I told you about some of my early errors, about how I made the mistake of "borrowing" names instead of inventing 'em. I mentioned that the names I'd ripped off from books, movies, television, etc., came back to bite me long after they were introduced into my role-playing campaigns.

If you read that and thought, "no problem here, my campaigns never really last," this column is for you.

This where I'd like to talk about thinking big, about stretching your imagination, and how that can help you create a role-playing campaign that will last and last.

Bopping back to something else I mentioned back in the last issue of *The Rifter*®, you may recall that I described the "Circle of Twelve Mages," and the "Circle of Twelve Artifacts," as stuff from the first Dragonwright Campaign.

Remember, that campaign is now over twenty years old. The same story, the same universe. Heck, we've even got some of the same player characters. What is even more amazing is that the Dragonwright Campaign was started by a pretty dumb Game Master. As I look back on what kind of Game Master I was twenty years ago, that guy looks pretty clueless. He (the old me) had never run a role-playing campaign of any kind, wasn't all that good a Game Master, and made a heck of a lot of mistakes.

Yet in one all-too-crucial way, I was a friggin' genius.

Because I thought big.

Thinking big was a lucky accident, the coincidence of starting in on role-playing and Game Mastering right in the middle of some pretty exciting computer science classes. Back in those days (circa 1978), the latest thing in systems engineering was something called "Top-Down Design." As applied to computer programming, the idea was to conceptualize the problem, whatever it was, in the most general way possible, and then to break it down into manageable pieces, one level of implementation at a time. That way, in theory, you could start with a really tough job (like designing a computer operating system), break it down into pieces (usually something like input, processing and output), and then break each of those pieces down into even smaller pieces.

For a visual image of "Top-Down" try to picture an organizational chart. You know, the kind with the little boxes and lines, with the "President" at the top level, then the various "Vice Presidents" at the second level, with progressively more little



boxes as you go down through the “tree.” And at the bottom of the chart would be the “Workers,” the people who actually performed useful functions.

In computer programming you can use pretty much the same chart, the same visuals. However, instead of the boxes containing the titles of people, each box would describe some function of the computer program.

As I said, at the time I was pretty involved in this whole new way of doing things, because of my computer programming classes.

So it wasn't much of a leap for me to apply exactly the same technique when it came to building my first big role-playing campaign, the monster that came to be known as “Dragonwright.”

## Before the Big Ideas Hit

By the time I got around to designing the Dragonwright campaign, I had already built three “dungeons.”

The first one, “KiddieDungeon” (which was, by the way, Kevin Siembieda's very first encounter with role-playing), wasn't much more than a collection of rooms stocked with monsters and treasures. Fun, in a limited way, but with nothing to keep the player characters interested for more than a couple of hours of killing and figuring out puzzles.

By the time I got to my third dungeon, “Napalm's,” my designs were considerably more complex. There were dozens of levels, thousands of rooms, and whole categories of monsters. Better yet, the dungeon actually made sense (well, not really, but as much sense as you'll find in most fantasy novels). Different areas of Napalm's were controlled by the worshippers of competing gods, each charged with protecting various shrines, treasure rooms and artifacts.

Also, Napalm's was enormous. Using the most detailed graph paper I could find, and a selection of colored pencils to represent all sorts of detail, I wrote up hundreds and hundreds of detailed descriptions. Plus mazes, traps and countless interesting magical items.

It was around that time that I figured out one big problem.

Napalm's was really too big.

Oh, it was fun. For about half a year people would send their player characters tromping into Napalm's, happily mapping and exploring, fighting and running, and grabbing all sorts of interesting loot (those happy few who survived—this was back in my days as a “killer” Game Master).

However, it started to become obvious, to me at least, that a lot of the important stuff in Napalm's was never going to be discovered. It took hours and hours for the players to fight their way in, follow up on a few obscure clues, and then fight their way out.

Also, after a solid six months of work, as the designer, I was nowhere near finishing Napalm's. Worse, it seemed like the more I built, the less chance there was of any of the player characters actually finding the cool stuff I was inventing.

In other words, Napalm's wasn't all that much fun.

It was around this time that I had my epiphany.

Why, I thought to myself, spend all this time designing dungeon levels, forcing the players to wander around for hours, when I could just put the interesting stuff right in front of them?

My favorite authors didn't waste pages and pages describing the boring parts. No, they'd just say something like “after two weeks of searching,” or “he crawled for hours,” and then jump right into the good stuff. Why couldn't I do the same thing?

Instead of forcing the players to march through hallway after hallway, seeking the one real treasure room among the dozens of fakes, I could just skip ahead. Better yet, instead of drawing all those dozens of rooms, I could just concentrate on the fun part, just on designing the one room.

Whew! What a relief!

Right away I started moving stuff around in Napalm's. Cool stuff from deep inside was moved right into the path of the on-coming player characters.

Suddenly the role-playing got a lot more interesting, and a lot more fun. Plus, it was easier for me...

## Thinking Big for the First Time

Napalm's, as I've described it, and in many other ways, was a beautiful learning experience. By trial and error I'd managed to figure out a lot of what made role-playing interesting, and also what could make it deadly dull.

I had learned that people liked following a chain of events, that they were more involved in the experience of the role-playing if they felt like every detail might be part of a bigger picture. In my own particular version of a fantasy world, that meant understanding the politics behind different gods and the religions that worship them (you thought it was a coincidence that I wrote the Gods section of *Dragons & Gods?*).

However, trying to work out all the details in a campaign, in advance, was looking to be a pretty futile exercise.

After all, what was the point of designing a really cool room if no one was likely to find it? Wouldn't it be better to just design the stuff that was right in front of the player characters?

That was it. That was the trick.

I needed to think big, but I also needed to avoid wasting time on details that weren't important.

Which brought me back to the scheduling part of the philosophy of Top-Down.

You see, it's the job of a systems analyst to break apart a big problem, to separate it into manageable chunks, and then to assign the different parts of the problem to different computer programmers. Big projects usually require time scheduling as well, so that different parts are tackled at different times in the development schedule.

That way of looking at things can be translated into role-playing terms.

Think of the player character group as a set of problem solvers. Whatever the point of the overall role-playing campaign, it's up to the player characters to meet the challenge, and to solve the problem.

Obviously, the player characters aren't going to be able to solve everything at once, no more than a computer programmer can write an entire operating system in one sitting. They need to tackle the problem one step at a time.

In the case of the Dragonwright Campaign, in order to succeed, the player characters had to collect all the scattered objects that made up the "Circle of Twelve Artifacts."

Now, since I was thinking big, back when I first created the Dragonwright Campaign, I already knew the purpose of the Circle of Twelve Artifacts (sorry, I can't include that information here, since my players haven't figured it out yet). Back then I didn't even know what the artifacts looked like, what their names might be, or much of anything else.

I just knew that there would have to be a Circle of Twelve Artifacts, that there would be twelve of 'em (duh!), and that they had all been scattered, hidden, and locked away, thousands of years before the player characters came on the scene.

Since each of the twelve artifacts was of major importance, I figured I'd have to work up, basically, twelve different "quests." Yes, I had to work up the first one, in detail, pretty carefully, but the others could definitely wait.

So, as the campaign progressed, I gradually filled in more and more of the particulars. About a year after we started, the group found a structure where all of the twelve artifacts were named and pictured, but that gave me a full year to figure out each of the names. Eventually, over the years, all of the twelve were discovered, and all fell into the hands of the player characters.

This was interesting for the player characters (imagine knowing about a mystic item for ten years, knowing its name, its appearance, and something about what it can do, and then, finally, finally, having the opportunity to get your hands on that very item!).

Even more important, for me as a Game Master, the Top-Down approach gave me a framework, a blueprint upon which I could build a campaign. A campaign that would prove to last for decades.

## Thinking Big with Maps

Let's take worlds as an example.

Say you've decided to run a campaign where, for starters anyway, the player characters are going to be dealing with a little town.

You know the kind of place. In *Rifts* it would be a place with a few buildings, a couple of dozen scruffy inhabitants, maybe built on the ruins of an old intersection, where there used to be gas stations, strip malls, and maybe an old motel.

No big deal, just a place where the characters can rest up, have a couple of harmless encounters, maybe set up a bar fight.

Probably, if you're like most Game Masters, you know the town isn't all that important. Certainly not worth putting in a lot of work.

After all, knowing the way *Rifts* player characters move around, they'll be there only a short time, they'll squash the place flat, and then they'll be off somewhere else, never to return.

Why waste time and effort on such a nowhere place?

Exactly because the player characters are going to be moving around. Because whatever happens in this little town is really only a set-up for the next big encounter.

One approach would be to start mapping with the town at the center of the map. You could figure out that the Coalition is this way, and the Federation of Magic is over yonder, and there's a nasty Rift off to the south, and so on...

Then, as the group moves around, you can just fill in the necessary details, always adding to your map in little ways.

Which is actually a good approach.

It's just easier, and more effective, to start out with a big map in the first place.

Start with a world map (don't worry, it's mostly going to be blank). Now sketch in, in rough fashion, the big areas you know you're going to include in your campaign. The Coalition, Atlantis, etc.

Now focus on the general area where you want to put your little town. Figure out what's in the general area. Add in some interesting details like rivers or mountains. As you get closer to the target area, to the exact location for the town, get more and more specific.

See the difference?



Yes, you can still extend your map, still fill it in as the player characters wander around. The difference is, starting with the big picture, with the big idea, is that you've got a map that is more manageable. It's clear, right from the start, how everything fits together.

In the long run, starting with a global map, with a world map, even if you have very little of it figured out, makes for a better campaign.

## Thinking Cosmic Big

So far, so good. If you've paid attention up to this point, you probably realize that designing a world is, in a lot of ways, easier than designing one village at a time, one encounter at a time. Thinking big, at least when it comes to worlds, makes things easier for the Game Master.



Likewise, it makes sense to try to think big in time as well as space. That by building an interesting past, you also leave yourself open for some room to design a complex and interesting campaign.

Now prepare to really let loose.

The idea is to give your imagination full reign, full scope. To kick on your brain's afterburners, and really think big.

Bigger than worlds, bigger than solar systems, bigger than galaxies. Universe big. Cosmic big.

Cosmology big.

According to my big dictionary, cosmology is the branch of science that deals with the philosophy of the origin and structure of the universe, which includes such minutia as the nature of

time and space, the existence of god (or gods), and even stuff like causality (which came first, the chicken or the egg?).

For me, this is the real pay-off of role-playing, and the real kick I get out of Game Mastering. In just about any other creative endeavor, there are limits, boundaries (and budgetary constraints). Not so in our little hobby.

You have the power to decide, in your own pocket universe, exactly how creation happened. Who and what are the gods. You get to decide all the big questions.

Better yet, your universe can consist of many universes. Alternate dimensions (Rifts!), different time lines, realities based on whatever rules you wish to impose or create.

The bigger you think, the better.

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# The Thirteen Deadly Magicks

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## Palladium Fantasy RPG<sup>®</sup>

### Optional Source Material for the Palladium Fantasy RPG<sup>®</sup>

By James Calder

First Appeared in *The Rifter*<sup>®</sup> #13

*"It's been a long time since anyone has asked me about the lost magic said to wake up the Old ... shhh. I forget that sometimes it's bad luck to even invoke their name. Let's just call them 'them.' Well, I'm not too sure about you but there's this old book that recounts that there are 13 spells that will unlock their magical slumber. I have a book somewhere in here that ... let me see if I can remember if I can't find it.*

*"There are eight spells said to unlock the process. 'Key spells' they are called, and each one contains an essence or a fragment of the Old ... 'their' power. Each one is unremarkable in itself, causing a bit of nastiness I'm sure, but other than that, somebody could cast them and not realize what they are doing. Calling on 'their' power though tends to make the caster a little funny, if you get my drift. Takes a bit of their sanity with them. At any rate, as the story goes, these spells are what need to be cast first. If you don't cast them, the next five don't even exist as far as I can gather.*

*"The next four are elemental spells, but not ones the Warlocks use. As the elements are the near perfect embodiment of chaos, these destructive spells use portions of the elements as well as the power of a couple of 'them.' So, you'll have one element plus the focus of two of 'them.' Amazing, I'd say, if it were true.*

*"Lastly is the ultimate spell of chaos. This one, it is said, brings down the very heavens in a tumultuous blast of entropy. Like that last sentence, eh? Heh heh. Thought of it myself. Not*

*sure what it does. If I can find that blasted book, I'll show you the story.*

*"But of course, it is just a story."*

**G.M.'s Note:** What follows is a possible way for the Old Ones to be reawakened in the Palladium universe. The following spells are keys to unlocking their slumber. In most cases, the spells are out of reach for the average player to be able to cast, but could be just right for their diabolical arch-villain. Understand also that this need not be the way the Old Ones are awakened, and may be just a legend, which could lead to interesting adventures in trying to prevent a villain from using the magic which, while destructive and very powerful, will not release the Old Ones.

For more information on the Old Ones, see **Palladium Fantasy RPG<sup>®</sup> Book II: Old Ones**, pages 7-10.

"The Thirteen Deadly Magicks" is a legend that's been around for about a thousand years. For millennia, rumors held that the key to unlocking the slumber of the ancient Old Ones has ranged from rituals performed by the Minotaur chaos priests to a great ancient artifact scattered in pieces across the Megaverse. This legend is one that surfaced when adventuring scholars discovered a parchment in the ruins of an abandoned temple.

The parchment, as the legend goes, details the fragmenting of the Old Ones' power across the Megaverse, and says that the essence of each of the Eight lies locked in the magical words of thirteen spells referred to as the Thirteen Deadly Magicks. The thirteen spells are broken down by "function." There are eight Key Spells, four Elemental Awakening Spells, and the final Spell of Chaos.

## The Thirteen Spells

It should be noted that there are a fixed number of these spells, and that destroying one merely creates another copy elsewhere. Either in the rambling writings of a madman, or in the

research of an ancient dragon-mage, the spell will be re-crafted, as the essence of the Old Ones cannot be destroyed.

## The Eight Key Spells

The Eight Key Spells, as they are collectively known, are eight regularly powered spells that directly invoke the essence of the Old Ones. It is said that with a casting of each of these spells, it slowly draws a portion of the Old Ones' power back to reality. It is also said, that with each casting of these spells, the caster is slowly driven to the edge of insanity, as his or her mental endurance is eaten away at with each calling of power. It is said that until each of these spells is cast at least once, the other five deadly magicks cannot be cast.

As each spell is cast, the caster delves deeper into insanity — an attribute of the Old Ones that spawned this hideous magic. After each casting, the caster must roll to save vs insanity (must roll under their M.E. attribute) or develop one insanity instantly. As each spell has the effect of reducing the caster's Mental Endurance, take note of their bonuses to save vs insanity after the spell casting.

As these spells are largely unremarkable, there may be a copy existing in treasure hoards, innocuous spellbooks, or in the attics of ancient sages.

### Price of Power

**Range:** Self.

**Duration:** 1D6 melee rounds.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 10, +1 point of M.E. permanently, per 30 P.P.E. points in casting cost of the subsequent spell, rounded up (see below).

**Level:** 15.

**Old One Invoked:** Xy (Power Incarnate).

This spell, unbridling the Great Old One's power, will allow the mage to cast one other spell, regardless of level or cost, for a mere 10 P.P.E. plus possibly, his sanity. Expending the 10 P.P.E. points will unlock the magic of the next spell. Only after the caster willingly loses himself to the casting by giving up his grip of reality, will he be able to flow the magic through himself at no cost. This power comes at the price of 1 point of M.E. per 30 P.P.E. points in casting cost. A wizard may, if he chooses, dilute the *Price of Power* with his own P.P.E. base to defray the cost of the spell. The wizard has 1D6 minutes to cast the second spell or lose 1 point of M.E. permanently just for invoking Xy.

For example, a wizard casting *Price of Power* in order to cast a *Summon & Control Storm* spell without fronting any extra P.P.E. will have to pay 10 P.P.E. plus 9 M.E. points ( $260/30 = 8.67$ , or 9 when rounded up). The same wizard casting *Price of Power* and diluting the *Summon & Control Storm* with 100 P.P.E. points of his own would pay 10 P.P.E. plus 6 M.E. points ( $160/30 = 5.33$ , or 6 when rounded up).

Of course, only a fool would use this spell if he had the P.P.E. to spend. Or would he? Sanity may seem a small price when a *Sanctuary* spell can be cast for 10 P.P.E.

## Harbingers of Despair

**Range:** 20 foot (6 m) area, up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away, centered on a target.

**Duration:** 1 minute (4 melees) per level of experience.

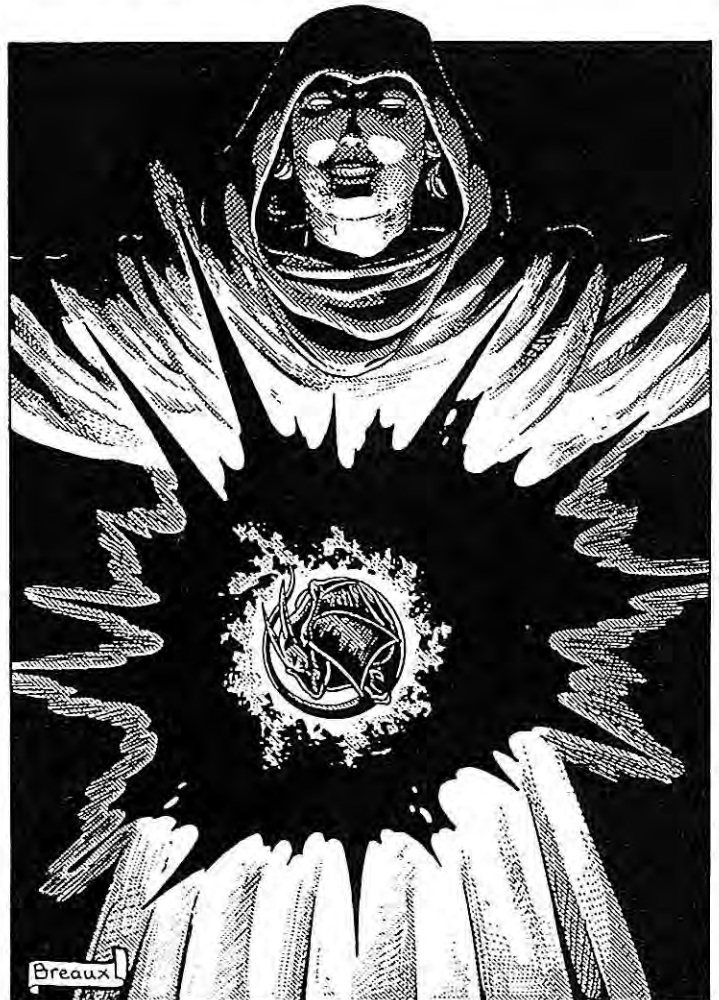
**Saving Throw:** Special; save vs Horror Factor for the first effect, and save vs ritual magic for the second.

**P.P.E.:** 75.

**Level:** 10.

**Old One Invoked:** Netosa (Suffering, Despair, the Undead).

*Harbingers of Despair* functions similar to a *Fear* spell with a slight twist. Like the *Fear* spell, this enchantment creates a sensation of fear over a particular area as defined in the range. Anybody within the area or entering the area must save vs Horror Factor 16. A failed roll has the same effect as the *Fear* spell. The second effect, whether the first save was successful or not, attaches the *Fear* spell central to the individuals that have entered the area or were in the area when the *Harbingers of Despair* was originally cast. That is, if the character fails to make a subsequent save vs ritual magic, the *Fear* effect will follow, and move with the victim as its center. It then essentially becomes a moving *Fear* spell.



## Diabolic Conception

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Instantaneous.

**Saving Throw:** Save vs ritual magic.



**P.P.E.:** 125, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Agu (Life, Birth, Rebirth).

This spell gives the caster the unenviable ability to impregnate a humanoid capable of giving birth, with a creature of pure evil. Upon a successful casting completion, including the touching of a subject, the expenditure of P.P.E. and of one permanent point of Mental Endurance, the victim of this spell will be carrying a demonic entity until birth. The creature will grow and develop within the subject for a period of 1D6 months before the birth occurs. This spell duplicates a summoning of a lesser demon, and protection from a lesser demon.

The creature will appear to be a member of the same species as the “mother,” but will have demonic characteristics of a Succubus or Incubus. Upon birth, the offspring will see the mother as the summoner who brought it to this plane, and attempt to kill her immediately.

## Covet

**Range:** Touch or within 10 feet (3 m).

**Duration:** 1 hour per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Save vs ritual magic.

**P.P.E.:** 65, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Al-vil (Envy, Jealousy).

When this enchantment is cast upon a person or an item, all individuals failing a save vs ritual magic within eyesight of the object or individual targeted by this spell will instantly crave and desire the subject, and will go to any means to obtain the object of their desire. If the target is sentient, he or she is immune to the effects of this casting (that is, they will not desire themselves). The feelings the victims of this enchantment experience will be those of envy for the target and the desire to woo the individual away from others. If the target is inanimate, they will try to wrest control of the target away from its possessor. The caster of the spell is also immune to the effects.

## Shadow of Death

**Range:** Touch or within 10 feet (3 m).

**Duration:** 1 day per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Save vs ritual magic.

**P.P.E.:** 100, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Erva (Darkness, Death).

Like a far-reaching *Feign Death* spell, *Shadow of Death* causes the target of the spell to appear dead. All signs of life will be missing, such as heartbeat, pulse, breathing and movement. The victim of the spell is for all intents and purposes, truly dead and, if cast by a powerful mage, will appear as such for some time. This magic also has the effect of obscuring most detection spells like *Sense Magic* or any spells used to detect life, like *Sense Aura*.

In addition to appearing dead, the victim of the spell will also react as though they were dead to other spells and rituals affecting the dead. For instance, the victim of *Shadow of Death* may

be animated through an *Animate & Control Dead* spell and subsequently turned through *Turn Dead*.

The true horror of this spell is that the victim is not dead, and is completely conscious and aware of all that is happening to him or her. They are quite helpless, should a ceremony or funeral take place. Once the duration has elapsed, they will return to a normal state – wherever they are.

## At All Costs

**Range:** Touch or self.

**Duration:** 1 hour per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None; save vs ritual if on an unwilling victim.

**P.P.E.:** 125, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Ya-ahk-met (Power, Light).

This spell helps the target of the spell to persevere under extreme conditions and damage. The cost? The target of the spell will sustain no damage so long as there are living, breathing creatures nearby. Each point of damage inflicted on the target is immediately applied to a random creature within 30 feet (9.1 m) per level of experience. A successful save vs magic by this alternate victim reduces the damage by half. The target of this spell cannot choose the alternate victim.

For instance, a 10<sup>th</sup> level Wizard casts *At All Costs* on himself and is subsequently assaulted by a *Fire Bolt* spell. The 5D6 points of damage is subsequently applied to his Ranger companion (determined randomly), who crumples to the ground in burning agony while the Wizard stands unscathed in the face of their enemy.

This spell is a redirection of damage, not a redirection of attack types. So, for instance, if a creature only affected by magic weapons is the only creature in range, it will still suffer damage, even if the target of the spell is attacked with non-magical means. The initial attack doesn't have to be effective against the secondary victim, just the initial target/recipient of this spell.

## Hatemonger

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** 1 hour per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Save vs ritual magic.

**P.P.E.:** 80, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Tarm-kin-toe (Hatred, Treachery, Vengeance).

The target of this spell becomes the target of uncontrollable hatred and violence by strangers and friends alike, for what may appear to be no reason. This spell will not affect gods, godlings, demon lords, entities, elementals, or alien intelligences. Anybody within a 20 foot (6.1 m) radius will react with great animosity towards the character, depending on his or her relationship with the character. Strangers may hurl insults or objects (like tomatoes or stones) at the victim. Friends may take the opportunity to steal from the victim or bully them. Remember, even best friends can grow to loathe the character.

Hostile forces, racial enemies (whether ancient or modern), and individuals disliking the victim will immediately harass and attack the target of this spell, regardless of the situation. For instance, two warring parties may be brought together to declare a truce when a soldier enchanted with this spell sparks another outbreak.

Complete strangers and neutral third parties will act with great disdain towards the character, unable to interact without hurling insults or small objects. They may even accuse the victim of a small transgression like shoplifting, or make an obscene gesture towards them, sparking a fight or confrontation.

Friends, loved ones and acquaintances will grow weary of the victim, believing their ally of conspiring against them, hurting their cause, or generally just behaving poorly. A confrontation at some point may be inevitable or the victim may be driven off.

Once the duration has passed, the enchantment ends and the people who previously acted against them will remember all that has transpired. They will know that at one point they disliked the victim for some reason, but will not know why as the magic has ended and their cloudy memories take over.



## Wasting

**Range:** 60 feet (18.3 m), +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 3 melee rounds, +1 melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Save vs ritual magic.

**Damage:** Reduce S.D.C. and Hit Points by half.

**P.P.E.:** 95, +1 point of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Ten.

**Old One Invoked:** Ya-blik (Pestilence, Betrayal, Pain).

This spell, when cast, has the effect of simultaneously casting the *Age*, *Agony*, and *Life Drain* spells. At the same time, the victim will immediately be incapacitated with pain and lose all attacks per melee, and cannot move or speak (losing all combat bonuses and skill rolls). The character will appear to age immediately to the maximum limit of their species, thus reducing all of their physical attributes by half (P.S., P.P., P.E., P.B. and Speed). This is all in addition to losing half of their total remaining S.D.C. and Hit Points.

Once the spell duration has elapsed, the target will require 1D4 hours to regain their composure; physical attributes and combat bonuses will return to normal after that time. They will return to their normal age and the pain will stop immediately upon cancellation of this magic. The victim will regain S.D.C. and Hit Points at the standard rate.

## What Happens Now?

If all eight Key Spells have been cast somewhere by anybody, then the four Awakening Spells detailed below will come into existence at the four corners of the realm. There is a 1% chance that a Warlock will be aware of their appearance, sensing that elemental power of some significance is present. It is also at this time that divine intervention may come about to prevent the next five castings. Priests may receive prophetic dreams.

## The Four Awakening Spells

These four spells harness the powers of the elements. Their purpose is to cause a great disturbance in the mortal plane, in the hopes that they will awaken the Old Ones from their slumber. These four spells will not appear in the mortal world until the eight Key Spells have been cast.

While elemental in nature, these spells are not available to Warlocks.

### Nefarious Vacuum

**Range:** 1,000 foot (305 m) radius, +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 1 month per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Ritual; if the victim saves, they may try to escape the vacuum. Victims may roll every 30 seconds until they fall unconscious.

**P.P.E.:** 3000, +5 points of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Legend.

**Element Invoked:** Air.

**Old Ones Invoked:** Netosa and Erva.

This spell is more than just an amplified version of the sixth level spell *Vacuum*, though they do share some common similarities. This spell rips a hole in the atmosphere, causing a jet-black vacuum to form in a 1,000 foot (305 m) radius over the



target, which will cause a void to remain for 1 month per level of caster. Those caught in the vacuum will choke and gasp for air, dying from suffocation within 6 minutes. The darkness perpetuated by the vacuum is as inky black as the outer space it is connected with. No light, either magical or natural, can penetrate this darkness.

Victims that succumb to the effects of the *Nefarious Vacuum* are raised as the undead as though they were raised via an *Animate & Control Dead* spell cast by the caster of this spell.

## Fiery Avatar

**Range:** Self.

**Duration:** 1 hour per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 2000, +5 points of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Legend.

**Element Invoked:** Fire.

**Old Ones Invoked:** Ya-ahk-met and Tarm-kin-toe.

Fueled by the lust for power given by Ya-ahk-met and consumed by the hatred of Tarm-kin-toe, the caster of *Fiery Avatar* becomes a living juggernaut of fire. The caster takes on the appearance of a giant Fire Elemental towering some 40 feet (12.2 m) tall, but maintaining a resemblance to the caster. The caster gains all the abilities and physical attributes of a Major Fire Elemental, except that the avatar cannot keep itself from automatically setting fire to any combustibles it touches (perhaps due to its uncaring state of being). Combustibles within a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius also have a 50% chance of igniting.

The avatar is immune to fire, heat, poison, drug, and disease attacks, in addition to being immune to water-based attacks. Water merely turns to steam upon impact with the *Fiery Avatar*. The caster consumed by this spell will attack all that surrounds him, including friends, in a hail of fiery fury. The caster cannot control himself in this form, short of destroying all around him.

Due to the overwhelming brightness of the avatar, due to Ya-ahk-met's power, characters attacking the Fiery Avatar are -2 to strike.

## Sinkhole

**Range:** 100 foot (30.5 m) radius, plus 100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience, up to 500 feet (152.4 m) away.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 2000, +5 points of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Legend.

**Element Invoked:** Earth.

**Old Ones Invoked:** Agu and Xy.

With this effect, the ground in the target area collapses in a gigantic "sinkhole" effect. The earth caves in below all that stands upon it and drops at a staggering pace; all that will remain is a crater. The ground drops straight down 10 feet (3 m) per level of the caster. Structures on the land that is sunk will be 10% destroyed per 10 feet (3 m) sunk. Characters will suffer standard falling damage when falling into the crater. Those on the edge may roll to dodge to attempt to get off before the *Sinkhole* takes effect.



Strangely, and perhaps due to Agu's influence, all plant life will remain unharmed (unless a stone or other humanoid-made structure lands on it), and the land that is affected remains untainted by evil.

## Torrential Flood

**Range:** Affects a 300 foot (91.4 m) radius and can be cast up to 500 feet (152.4 m) away.

**Duration:** 3 hours per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 2000, +5 points of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Legend.

**Element Invoked:** Water.

**Old Ones Invoked:** Al-vil and Ya-blik.

With this spell, the dual powers for betrayal and treachery unleash their wicked focus on those near water. For every hour this spell lasts, the water levels in the target area will spontaneously rise by one foot (0.3 m). This water can be from a lake, a river, or an ocean. A 10<sup>th</sup> level mage casting this spell will cause water levels in a 300 foot (91.4 m) radius to rise by 30 feet (9.1 m) – certainly enough to engulf most houses along a river. The flooding that results will certainly level or destroy most seaside towns and cause endless damage to larger coastal cities. This spell defies the laws of physics (duh!), and only the water affected will rise. Those outside the spell's range will see a huge column of water rise up out of the surrounding water, spreading to flood any land within the area of effect, but stopping as if running into an invisible wall at its borders.

Spells like *Calm Waters* will not affect the *Torrential Flood* spell except to make the waters not choppy or as torrential – they will still rise.

## What Happens Now?

The four elemental spells have caused great amounts of destruction, likely inciting some response from major governments like Timiro and the Western Empire, depending on where they are cast. Once all four spells have been cast, the Minotaur are awakened and realize the time is coming soon. Minotaur attacks and appearances will increase. It is about this time that the Final Spell of Chaos will come into reality.

If the Gods are not involved by this time, they will be now, sending minions and messengers to hunt for the final spell.

## The Final Spell of Chaos

This spell, as the legend goes, is the final spell that will awaken the Old Ones from their slumber and raise an army of Minotaur warriors and chaos priests.

**Note:** This spell is extremely powerful and obviously should not be cast by regular player characters. The P.P.E. cost alone should be enough to prevent anybody save the Gods themselves from casting it. Realistically speaking, the Gods would not likely willingly release the Old Ones.

## Reign of Entropy

**Range:** Self, moving outward from the caster to reach 100 miles (160 km) plus 20 miles (32 km) per level of experience. This spell could turn the Timiro Kingdom into a mass of chaos!

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 10,000, +10 points of M.E. permanently.

**Level:** Legend.

**Element Invoked:** All.

**Old Ones Invoked:** All.

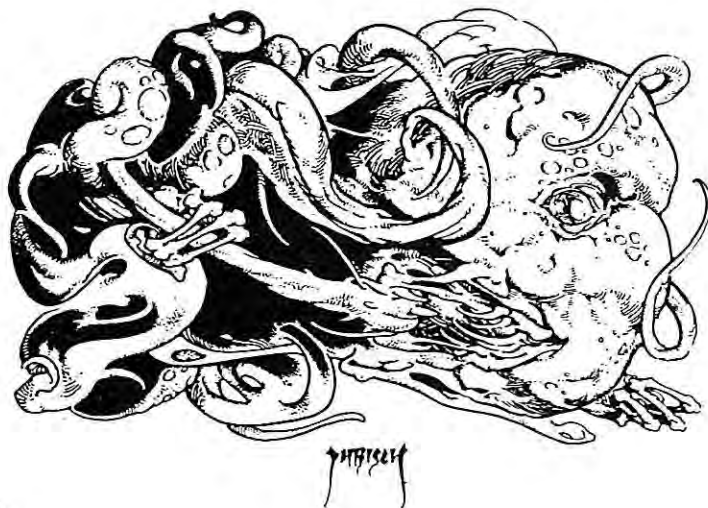
This final spell unleashes the power of all the elements and all of the Old Ones combined. All those within the area of effect, save the caster, are immediately affected as though a great casting of *Havoc* has taken place. Those failing a save against ritual magic immediately suffer 1D6 points of damage directly to Hit Points, as well as suffering -3 to initiative, strike, and parry, -6 to dodge and roll, -6 to save vs Horror Factor, and reduce attacks per melee and skill proficiencies by half, for as long as they remain in the area effect of the spell. An evil taint will never leave the area.

In addition, this spell summons 400 Minotaur (20% of which are Minotaur Priests of Chaos – see **PFRPG Book II: Old Ones**, page 14) to the area who are said to be the holders of the final summons buried deep within their subconscious. These Minotaur are immune to the other effects of the spell. The Minotaur will not rest until 400 are brought to the center of the casting to finish the spell. This may mean a long and lengthy battle.

If the Minotaur make it to the center of the casting area, they will begin a rhythmic chant in their own tongue and it is at this time that Xy will awaken inside Thoth. How Thoth reacts to Xy's presence or memories is unknown. At this point Thoth will know he is Xy.

## What Happens Now?

Thoth knows he is Xy. The remaining seven Old Ones have awakened. Ya-blik and Al-vil may believe Xy is dead and will assume control of the pantheon. Perhaps Thoth will remain Thoth and lead the gods against his old followers. This portion is left to the G.M., to decide the fate of the Megaverse.





OKAY YOU COME TO A FOUR WAY INTERSECTION IN THE **DUNGEON PASSAGE!!** TO THE LEFT IS A SET OF STAIRS LEADING UPWARDS INTO **BLACKNESS!!** TO THE RIGHT IS A SET OF STAIRS LEADING DOWNWARD FROM WHERE THE FAINT ECHOES OF RUNNING WATER CAN BE HEARD. AND DIRECTLY AHEAD IS A **LARGE PORTAL** WITH AN **EERIE GREEN GLOW** AND A **STATIC HUM!!!**

A PORTAL?? AND IT'S GLOWING??

I DRAW MY HACK-MASTER SWORD!!

OH MY!!

HOT DOG!! A MAGIC PORTAL!! I WONDER WHAT IT DOES??

IN **LARGE BLOOD-RED** LETTERS OVER THE PORTAL ARE THE WORDS, **'PORTAL OF DEATH!! ALL WHO ENTER HERE SHALL DIE!!'**

I PICK UP A ROCK AND TOSS IT THROUGH THE PORTAL!!

THE ROCK SEEMS TO FREEZE IN MID AIR AS IT ENTERS THE PORTAL. YOU HEAR A FAINT **SUCKING** SOUND AND THEN A **LOUD POP** AS THE ROCK VANISHES IN A **BRIGHT FLASH OF LIGHT!!**

**DAMN!!!** DID YOU SEE THAT?? I WONDER WHAT THE STORY IS WITH THIS **FRICKIN' PORTAL??**

WHO CARES?? THIS IS SOME **FREAKY STUFF** MAN!! I AIN'T MESSIN' WITH NO **PORTAL OF DEATH!!** I'M ONLY **700 E.P.'S** FROM **15TH LEVEL!!**

I SAY WE GO UP THE STAIRS AND LEAVE THIS AREA!!

NO WAY!! WE HAVE TO CHECK THIS THING OUT!!

WHAT IF THIS PORTAL **GRANTS WISHES** OR LEADS TO **FABULOUS RICHES???** HUH?? AND WHAT IF SOME **STUPID SCHMUCK** JUST WROTE, **'PORTAL OF DEATH'** ON IT TO **SCARE OFF THE WUSS-OF-HEART??**

WE CAN'T JUST **WALK AWAY** AND **NEVER KNOW!!**

BRIAN IS RIGHT!! WE HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHAT THIS THING IS!! **ONE** OF US IS GOING TO HAVE TO STEP THROUGH TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS!!

HULLLOOO!! MR. SCIENCE!! WE KNOW WHAT IT IS!! **PORTAL OF DEATH** - REMEMBER??

ST...ST...STEP THROUGH?? THE PORTAL??

LET'S DRAW STRAWS TO SEE WHO GOES THROUGH!!!

DRAW STRAWS?? **WHOOH!!!** HOLD ON A SEC, GUYS!! AS YOU STAND **GAWKING** AT THE **PORTAL OF DEATH** YOU NOTICE A LOT OF **GRAFFITI** ON THE ORNATE FRAMEWORK ONE PASSAGE READS, "WE SHOULD HAVE **HEEDED THE WARNING!!** LOST FIVE GOOD COMRADES HERE!" ANOTHER ONE READS, "BOY WERE WE **STUPID** TO MESS WITH THIS THING!!"

I DUNNO GUYS. MAYBE WE SHOULD LISTEN TO SARA AND JUST AVOID THIS AREA. LET'S GO UP THE STAIRS!!

HERE! HERE!!

CANT YOU SEE **B.A.** IS BLOWING SMOKE?? HE KNOWS I'M ON TO HIM!!

BRIAN'S RIGHT!! HOW COME **B.A.** DIDN'T MENTION THE **GRAFFITI** BEFORE?? HUH?? HE'S JUST **MAKING STUFF UP** TO THROW US OFF THE SCENT!!

YEAH!! HE SEEMS REALLY INTENT ON **NOT** LETTING US GO THROUGH THAT **PORTAL** DOESN'T HE??

DOESN'T IT MAKE YOU WONDER **WHY??**

**WHY??** BECAUSE HE DOESN'T WANT TO SEE THE **ADVENTURE TRASHED** BECAUSE WE **STUPIDLY** KILL OURSELVES!!

YOU'RE SO GULLIBLE, SARA!!

YOU WANNA GO THROUGH THE **PORTAL OF DEATH??** FINE!! BE MY GUEST!! BUT **NO TAKE BACKS!!** GOOD OR BAD, YOU GUYS WILL HAVE TO LIVE (OR DIE) WITH THE **OUTCOME!!**

BOY, IT'S REALLY **EATING YOU UP** HUH?? YOU REALLY CANT STAND IT WHEN WE OUTSMART YOU CAN YOU??

NOW I'M CONVINCED!! FORGET DRAWING STRAWS!! **I CALL DIBBS!!** I'M GOING THROUGH THAT PORTAL FIRST!! WHO KNOWS HOW MANY CHARGES IT HAS?? I DON'T WANT TO GET SCREWED ON A **FREE WISH** OR SJMTHN!

ALAS POOR EL RAVAGER! I KNEW HIM WELL!



NICE TRY **NUMB DICE!!** I'M AT THE **HEAD OF THE MARCHING ORDER** SO I'M CLOSER. I **JUMP** THROUGH THE **PORTAL** BEFORE YOU CAN EVEN TAKE YOUR **FIRST STEP!!**

**JERK!!** STEP BACK AND LET ME GO **FIRST!!** I **CALLED IT!!**

GUYS WHY **RUSH** INTO THIS?? THE **PORTAL** ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE. MAYBE WE'LL FIND MORE **CLUES** ON IT'S PURPOSE ELSEWHERE IN THE **DUNGEON**. WE CAN **ALWAYS** COME BACK LATER.

**DAMN!!** ONCE AGAIN THE **MAGE** GETS THE **SHORT** END OF THE **STICK!!** I SHOULD HAVE BEEN **FIRST!!**

OKAY, **KNUCKLES** THE **SIXTH** LEAPS THROUGH THE **PORTAL!!** I'LL HAVE MY **CROSSBOW OF SLAYING** READED JUST IN CASE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!! YOU **REALLY** JUMP THROUGH?? (GROAN). ONCE AGAIN YOU HEAR A **SUCKING SOUND**, A **LOUD POP** AND **KNUCKLES** DISAPPEARS IN A **FLASH OF LIGHT!!**

I **PULL** DOWN THE **VISOR** ON MY **GREAT HELM** AND PREPARE TO STEP THROUGH AS WELL.

DON'T YOU WANT TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS TO **BOB** FIRST?



OKAY!! DON'T KEEP ME IN **SUSPENSE!!** WHAT DO I SEE??

**TWENTY SIDER??** OH WOW!! SOUNDS LIKE YOU GET TO ROLL ON A **RANDOM TABLE** OR SOMETHING!!

C'MON **BOB**. LET'S GO IN THE OTHER ROOM AND I'LL TELL YOU WHAT HAPPENS TO YOUR **CHARACTER**. BRING YOUR **CHARACTER SHEET** AND A **TWENTY SIDER!!**

**HOODY HOO!!** LET'S GO!!

GOOD LUCK, **BOB**, AND REMEMBER!! **LOW NUMBERS** ARE BEST ON **RELIC** OR **MAJOR ARTIFACT TABLES!!**



**FIVE MINUTES LATER...**

DUDE WHAT HAPPENED?? WHAT'S WITH THE **PAPER BAG??**

UH-OH!! I GOT A **BAD FEELING** ABOUT THIS!!

I'M NOT ALLOWED TO TALK ABOUT IT. **B.A.** MADE ME WEAR THE **BAG** SO I CAN'T CONVEY ANY MESSAGES WITH **FACIAL EXPRESSIONS!**

**KEWL!!** I'M GOING THROUGH!!



**THIRTY MINUTES LATER...**

DON'T WORRY **SARA**, AFTER WAITING AT THE **PORTAL** FOR SEVERAL HOURS YOUR **CHARACTER** IS SUFFICIENTLY CONVINCED HER **COMRADES** ARE ALL **DEAD** AND THAT THERE IS **NOTHING** SHE CAN DO TO HELP THEM.

SO I'M **ALL ALONE??** I GUESS I'LL WANDER BACK TO TOWN AND TRY TO FIND AN **ADVENTURING PARTY** TO TEAM UP WITH. (SIGH).

**DAMN!!** I CAN'T BELIEVE WE LET **B.A.** BAIT US LIKE THAT!! **THREE PLAYER CHARACTER DEATHS** IN **ONE NIGHT!!** HE'LL BE **GLOATING** OVER THIS FOR WEEKS!!

TURN'S OUT **PORTAL OF DEATH** WAS EXACTLY WHAT IT WAS.

YOU'RE NOT GOING THROUGH??



WELL, SO MUCH FOR THAT **CAMPAIGN!!** WE MIGHT AS WELL CALL IT A **NIGHT**. GUESS I'LL SEE YOU GUYS NEXT WEEK. BRING SOME **BLANK CHARACTER SHEETS!!**

**WE WERE ROBBED!!** THAT WAS NO **DUNGEON!!** IT WAS A **FRICKIN' SLAUGHTER HOUSE!!**

I'M CURIOUS. WHAT WAS THE **TWENTY SIDER** FOR??

TO DETERMINE HOW MANY PIECES THE **DEMONIC FORGES** ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE **PORTAL** TORE OUR **MORTAL BODIES** INTO.

**NEXT WEEK??** NO WAY IN HELL I'M COMING BACK TO THIS **STINKIN' TABLE!!** YOU'RE A **KILLER GM!!** THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE!!

I ROLLED A **NATURAL TWENTY!!**



# Magic Best Lost?

By Kevin Siembieda

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #9½

**Note:** The following new O.C.C.s and types of magic are ideal in any setting where magic is commonplace. They are perfect for use in *The Palladium Fantasy RPG*® and/or *Rifts*®. Actually, both O.C.C.s also work wonderfully in *Heroes Unlimited*™, the Ludicrous Mage especially as a wisecracking “pun”-isher or crazy hero or villain, and the Trickster Mage as a swashbuckling gambler type. They can also be adapted to *Nightbane*® and *Beyond the Supernatural*™, although their power levels and silly-factor may need to be toned down. Not only can both O.C.C.s be played for laughs, but as (relatively) straight and serious characters, especially the Trickster – believe it or not.

**Warning:** These characters can be loads of fun to play, but players need to exercise some measure of self-control, otherwise they can disrupt the game too much and ruin the fun for everyone. So try to be clever and/or funny, not annoying.

## A bit of history

On the Palladium World, during *The Time of A Thousand Magicks*, the mystic arts reached a level few worlds ever see. From the sublime to the insanely powerful (and sometimes just plain insane), magic soared to new heights. This meant specialization. Every application, use and philosophy seemed to become a new school or type of magic, sometimes to the point of splitting hairs. One might find a dozen or even a hundred different sects or brotherhoods of magic all claiming to be unique and different, but often separated by little more than a particular philosophy or approach to magic. The overwhelming majority of these mystic groups disappeared eons ago. Their names forgotten, and their special brand of magic lost to antiquity.

Some scholars and mages would argue that many of these magicks are best lost to modern men. Sometimes because the magic was too destructive, unstable or hellish in nature. Other times because of their ridiculous or frivolous nature. Such is the case of the *Trickster Mage* and *Ludicrous Mage*, both disciplines cut from the same tree, and both something of an embarrassment to the “serious” magic community.

In both cases, these mages “specialize” in their particular “lost art” of magic. This means that other than the first two or three levels of Wizard spell magic and a few higher wizard spells that involve trickery, deception, concealment or subterfuge, traditional spells are NEVER learned. There are a few reasons for this strict code of practice. One is a fear of poisoning their area of specialty and unique expertise or being lured away from their life of tradition. Another, usually stronger reason, is to buck and/or mock the establishment. The *Trickster* and *Ludicrous Mage* tend to be Unprincipled, Anarchist or evil when it comes to alignment, and both tend to be risk takers, entertainers, and definitely unorthodox and irreverent. The gambling, entertainment and “trick” aspects of these two areas of magic is what

removes them from the ranks of “serious” disciplines, and are typically dismissed as a “joke” and frivolous waste of magic knowledge and skill. Few “serious” sorcerers will give these unorthodox practitioners of magic the time of day, and often chide them as “childish fools,” “clowns,” and “misanthropes.” Only the most open-minded will, grudgingly, acknowledge the *Trickster* and *Ludicrous Mages* as highly imaginative, inventive, resourceful and clever. In turn, this contributes to why neither Mage learns much in the way of the accepted and traditional mystic arts. Besides, they enjoy the distinction of being rebels, irreverent and outcasts; it’s part of the appeal and their legacy.

**Note:** Both the *Trickster* and *Ludicrous Mage* (or some fundamental equivalent) can be found on the *Palladium World*, *Rifts Earth* and *Phase World*, as well as other parts of the *Megaverse*™. That being said, they are both extremely rare on *Rifts Earth*, *Phase World*, and in most places. The only exception is the *Palladium World* where they have existed since *The Time of A Thousand Magicks*. Yet even there, perhaps only one in 200 (maybe more like one in 500) follow one of these ancient mystic arts. Although comparatively uncommon even on the *Palladium World*, the *Trickster* and *Ludicrous arts* are believed to originate on the *Palladium World*, and are enjoying something of a recent comeback.

## Trickster Mage O.C.C.

The specialization of the *Trickster* is gambling, sleight of hand, trickery and the use of playing cards as the focal point for magic. Similar trick-type and illusionary magic can also be selected, but the main focus is always playing cards.

The typical *Trickster Mage* is a social butterfly right out of the pages of *GQ* magazine – well dressed, suave, debonair, and charming, yet at the same time, bold, daring and a little bit dangerous. While they may be irreverent and cleverly sarcastic (able to cut rivals, cads and ruffians down with a few choice lines), most know when to “fold” and “shut up” before getting themselves into serious trouble. Most are playful and witty even during serious moments, high-stakes gambling or facing death. Many also have an open fondness for the opposite sex, and love nothing more than coming to the rescue of a damsel in distress (or a hunk in over his head, as the case may be). Consequently, *Tricksters*, whether male or female (40% are female), tend to be a combination riverboat gambler of the old American Frontier and James Bond rolled into one.

Some have dismissed *Card & Trickster Magick* as simple, and the *Trickster* agrees. However, he sees this simple magical craft as the perfect union with cunning, misdirection and ingenuity. In fact, they are very proud of their clever use of this simple magic. These spell casters are also quick to point out that most of their “simple” magic requires a minimum of P.P.E., making it especially effective.



## Special Abilities of the Trickster Mage

**1. Entertainment Factor:** The Entertainment Factor is similar to Horror Factor or Awe Factor, except it's funny and entertaining. The character starts with an Entertainment Factor of  $7+1D4$ . This increases by +1 at level 3, 6, 7, 9, 12 and 15.

In the case of the Trickster Mage he must be performing with cards and may involve magic or sleight of hand (palming, concealment, etc.). Everybody watching must roll for *Entertainment Factor*, those who fail to save are so enthralled by the performance that they lose track of time, momentarily forget about a chore or order, and are not likely to notice things going on around them (those sneaking past or around are +15% to their prowl skill). Even after being roused by danger or combat they fight without initiative, lose one melee attack and are -1 to all actions (-5% on skill performance, too) for one melee round (15 seconds). **Note:** Bonuses to save vs Horror Factor also apply to saves vs *Entertainment Factor*. This distraction "tactic" can only be done during a moment of calm or festivities and NOT in the middle of a crisis or combat. It is not a magical power, but a result of showmanship and charisma. No P.P.E. is expended.

**2. Unnerving Calm & Confidence:** Facing down an opponent (whether in a card game or combat) and staying cool and confident can make the Trickster become eerily disturbing ("Does he know something I don't?" "Does he have a trick up his sleeve?" "Why is he smiling like that?"). This inhuman calm and defiant confidence is unnerving and challenging. The end result is making his opponent or opponents (as many as four +1 per level of experience) unsure of themselves, nervous and even frightened.

**Range:** 30 feet (9 meters); line of vision.

**Duration:** One minute (4 melee rounds) +1 melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Special. Those within 30 feet (9 meters) must roll to save vs *temporary insanity* – must roll 16 or higher.

**Damage/Penalties:** Those who fail to save lose initiative, are -3 to all combat maneuvers (strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and -2 melee attacks per round. In addition, those who are trying to perform a skill will suffer from a -15% penalty due to nerves.

**P.P.E.:** 4 P.P.E. required to perform the Unnerving Calm.

**Note:** Anybody who can see the Trickster and his calm, confident demeanor is affected, even those who are in vehicles, power armor, or robots.

**3. Spell Knowledge:** Unlike other magic users, the Trickster Mage's magic knowledge is limited to Card Magic and only a handful of common Wizards spells. The mage starts with 8 +1D6 Card Magic Spells selected from levels 1-4 and 1D4 Wizard spells selected from levels 1-2. At each level of experience thereafter, the mage may select an additional three Card spells up to two levels above his current level of experience or two Wizard Spells from levels one or two.

**Additional Types of Available Spell Magic:** The Trickster Mage can NOT learn or perform *ritual magic*, only spell magic, and even then the types of magic he can learn is limited to Ludicrous Magic levels 1-6, Wizard spells levels 1-2 as well as Wizard spells that create illusions/deception (i.e. Mask of Deceit, Multiple Image, etc.), and stage effect type magic (i.e. Blinding Flash, Cloud of Smoke, Ignite Fire, Escape, etc.), but nothing overtly combat oriented (no Fire Balls, Befuddle, Nets, etc.).

**4. Base P.P.E.:** P.E. attribute  $\times 3 + 3D6$ . The Trickster Mage will gain an additional 2D6 P.P.E. per each level of experience.

**5. O.C.C. Bonuses:** +1 to I.Q., +1D4+1 to M.A., +2 to M.E., +1 to P.E., and +1D4 to P.P. attribute; +4 to save vs illusion, +5 to save vs Trickster Magic, and +1 vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, and 12 (in addition to all other attribute bonuses, special abilities and R.C.C. bonuses). +1 to spell strength at levels 4, 7, 10, 13 and 15.

**6. Notes:** Like the Ludicrous Mage, Tricksters dislike braggarts and people who are too full of themselves, condescending and bossy. This includes many "serious" practitioners of magic (i.e. Wizards, Diabolists, Line Walkers, Mystics, etc.) and authority figures (military officers, mayors, kings, queens, etc.) who are demeaning to others and/or dismissive of those "beneath them." The Trickster finds himself compelled to embarrass and/or cut such people down to size. Consequently, they are the unlikely champions of the weak, innocent, underdogs and ordinary people, believing that everybody has worth, and no man should set himself as vastly higher or superior than any other.

## The Trickster Mage O.C.C.

**Alignment:** Any, but typically Scrupulous, Unprincipled or Anarchist.

**Attribute Requirements:** An M.A. of 14 and P.P. 13 or higher. A high I.Q., M.E. and P.E. are useful, but not required.

**O.C.C. Skills:**

Basic Math (+30%)

Two Languages of Choice (+20%)

Radio: Basic (+10% – Public Speaking +10% in Palladium)

Cardsharp (+20%)

Concealment (+14%)

Escape Artist (+15%)



Forgery (+10%)  
Palming (+20%)  
Pick Pockets (+15%)  
Seduction (+10%)  
Streetwise (+8%)  
Dance (+20%)

Two Ancient W.P.s (three if a Fantasy character)  
One Modern W.P. (none if a Fantasy character)

Hand to Hand: Basic

\* Hand to Hand: Basic can be exchanged for Hand to Hand: Expert at the cost of one O.C.C. Related Skill, or Martial Arts (or Assassin if evil) at the cost of two.

**O.C.C. Related Skills:** Select eight skills from the following categories, plus one at levels 3, 6, 9, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

Communications: Any (+10%)

Domestic: Any (+10%)

Electrical: None

Espionage: Any (+5%)

Mechanical: Basic and automotive only.

Medical: First Aid and Brewing only.

Military: Any

Physical: Any

Pilot: Any (+5%)

Pilot Related: Any

Rogue: Any (+5%)

Science: Any

Technical: Any (+10%)

W.P.: Any

Wilderness: None

**Secondary Skills:** The character also gets to select four secondary skills from those listed, plus one at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

**Standard Equipment:** Robe or cape (with or without a hood), 1D4 colorful hats, two sets of expensive clothing, light body armor (seldom wear heavy armor, because it reduces their speed and mobility by half), knapsack, backpack, 1D4 packages of 25 balloons, 2 small sacks, one large sack, make-up kit (usually 5 bright colors), canteen/water skin, flashlight (or torch with tinder box), a dozen pencils and a dozen markers (or graphite sticks, chalk and bottle of ink), sketch pad, two pair of six-sided dice, a dozen pieces of bubble gum, 1D4+6 packs of playing cards (four unopened), one Tarot deck, and 2D4 personal items. Trickster Mages love *magic items* and will use them whenever they can (on Rifts Earth that includes Techno-Wizard items).

Weapons as per W.P.s plus two small knives (1D4 damage), a scalpel or razor blade, and 1D6 extra clips of ammunition for modern weapons.

Vehicle of choice: Starts with a motorcycle or hovercycle, or horse. The vehicle is typically small, fast and maneuverable for fast getaways.

**Money:** *Rifts* characters start with 1D6x1,000 in credits and 3D6x100 in black market items.

*Fantasy* characters start with 1D6x100+500 in gold (sorry, no magic items to start).

Roughly one third of all Tricksters are gambleholics who spend money on card gambling (their favorite) and other types of "betting" as freely as other men buy a cup of coffee. Another third are reasonably good with their money but enjoy the finer things in life and spend their money freely. The final third are amazingly frugal and can amass a fortune (typically ferreted away at several secret locations and/or bank accounts). All are usually ready for "fun and games" with little need for encouragement.

**Cybernetics:** The Trickster Mage will avoid cybernetics and bionics at all cost, but *may* consider a couple of minor Bio-Wizard augmentations.

## Card & Trickster Magic

Unless stated otherwise, any type of hand-sized cards or smaller may be used, from playing cards to Tarot cards or post-cards. However, the material must be stiff and no larger than 5x8 inches.

**Note:** Unless noted otherwise, the damage listed (1D6, 2D6, etc.) does S.D.C./Hit Point damage in S.D.C. world settings like *The Palladium Fantasy RPG*® or *Heroes Unlimited*™, but does Mega-Damage (M.D.) in *Rifts*® and other Mega-Damage settings. Likewise, magical S.D.C. becomes M.D.C. on Rifts Earth and other Mega-Damage settings. P.P.E. cost remains the same in all world settings.

## Level One

### Floating Card

**Range:** 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience from the spell caster or above or in front of his hand.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of the spell caster as long as he is directing the movement, one minute if he leaves the area leaving the floating card to bob and float around on its own.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Two

The trickster can magically make a single card float or spin in mid-air. The floating card can hover stationary or move around, no higher than eye level (3-7 feet/0.9 to 2.1 m).

This spell has a number of possible uses:

1. Good for entertaining and creating a distraction (everybody watching the card is -2 on initiative and those nearby engaged in activities like prowling, palming, picking pockets or picking locks do so with a +5% bonus).

2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual (i.e. a note is written on the card or the face of the card has a symbolic meaning – Death's head, Hangman, rose, etc.). Said individual must be within line of sight.

3. Tricking somebody, especially those nervous or phobic about ghosts, into thinking spirits are present. The G.M. needs to gauge how effective this ruse really is and how the "spooked"



individual reacts (may run away, cover his eyes/face and shout to make it go away, have a reaction equal to Horror Factor of 14, try to communicate with it, etc.).

## Pick A Card, Any Card

**Range:** Touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Three

The mage can magically pick any card requested from a deck, no matter how well shuffled or buried it may be. This can be done by shuffling through the deck with the card appearing on top or bottom, magically appearing in the mage's hand, or magically sliding out of the deck and flopping face up to reveal itself.

## Sense Marked Cards

**Range:** Touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Three

The mage can magically detect if a deck of cards is "marked" by a cheater, but can not tell who did it (unless it is obvious, like, "Here, let's use my deck." or is the deck used by a gambling establishment). **Note:** The character can also sense if said card(s) is magical.

## Spinning Card

**Range:** 15 feet (4.6 m) from the spell caster.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** One

The trickster can magically make a single card spin and hop on a table or other flat surface like a top. The spinning can be stationary or move across a flat surface up to 15 feet (4.6 m) away. Good for entertaining and creating a distraction (everybody watching the card is -2 on initiative, and those nearby engaged in activities like prowling, palming, picking pockets or picking locks do so with a +5 bonus).

## 52 Cards in Your Face

**Range:** Six feet (1.8 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** No physical damage, loses two melee actions and initiative.

**Duration:** Counts as one melee attack.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge only, but victims are -10 to do so and need a 10 or higher to save/dodge.

**P.P.E.:** Two

The spell caster enchants a deck of cards to fly, unerringly in the face of an opponent. Unless a successful dodge is made, the startled individual loses two melee actions, initiative, and his attacker has the advantage of taking the first/next action or attack.



# Level Two

## Count Cards

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of spell caster.

**Bonus:** Adds +10% to Card Sharp skill.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The Trickster is magically imbued with the ability to remember each and every card played from a new deck. This means he unerringly knows what cards are out of play, which cards remain in play, and the odds of the card(s) he needs falling into his hands. This is especially useful in Black Jack and Poker.

## Flick Cards

**Range:** 10 feet (3 m) +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Parry or Dodge.

**Bonus:** +2 to strike with "flicked" playing card. +1 additional at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12.

**P.P.E.:** Two

**Note:** Each "flick" of a card counts as one melee attack/action.

A single card can be "flicked" 10+ feet (3+ m) with surprising precision. This can be done for the following effects.

1. Entertainment value and/or gambling ("Nobody can make that shot!" "Oh, yeah, put your money where your mouth is.>").

2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual (i.e. a note is written on the card or the face of the card has a symbolic meaning – Death's head, Hangman, rose, etc.). Said individual must be within line of sight and within range.

3. A card flick to the face will startle the victim and cause him to move out of the way (uses up one melee action) or block/parry the flying card. If it strikes it does no damage unless it strikes the eye. To hit the eye, a called shot must be made. If it hits, the victim will lose on melee action and suffer one point of damage (and probably be angry).

## Magically Mark Cards

**Range:** Self and the cards magically marked.

**Duration:** Ten minutes per level of spell caster.

**Bonus:** Adds +10% to Card Sharp skill.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The mage can magically "mark" the cards so that he can identify them. Most normal people and even supernatural beings can NOT see the magical markings. However, those who can *Sense Magic* will know the cards radiate with magic and are probably magically marked ("something's fishy here"). Meanwhile, those who can *See Aura* or *Detect Concealment* can actually see the markings and will know the mage is cheating (and may use this knowledge to their benefit in any number of ways).

**Note:** Other Tricksters who are third level or higher automatically see and recognize Magically Marked Cards.

## Shuffle Deck Magically

**Range:** 10 feet (3 m) from the spell caster or by touch, or above or in front of his hand.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Two

The mage can magically (and honestly) shuffle a deck of cards without touching them. A cool parlor trick and a good way to make certain a card deck has been shuffled honestly and not rigged.

## Spinning Hypnotic Card

**Range:** 20 feet (6 m) from the spell caster.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**Limitation:** Only affects one character per level of experience.

**P.P.E.:** Four

Everybody who looks at the card spinning in mid-air is enchanted unless they save vs magic. A failed roll means they see beautiful colors swirling around the card and they can't take their eyes off of it. Time passes quickly without them realizing it and they are oblivious to everything around them. If attacked, these hypnotized folk fight as if in a daze – their number of attacks reduced by one and all combat bonuses are halved.

# Level Three

## Change Card Face

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** The transformed card can remain changed for up to five minutes per level of spell caster, or the spell cancelled (returning the card to its normal self) at any time.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Six

A wonderful way to cheat, play tricks, or send a warning, in which the spell caster can physically transform the face of one card to any image he wants. When used to cheat, card counting can come in handy to avoid creating a card already played and likely to be remembered by one or more of the other players.

## Card Tossing

**Range:** 15 feet (4.6 m) +3 feet (0.9 m) per each level of experience.

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Parry or Dodge.

**Bonus:** +4 to strike with playing card. +1 additional at levels 4, 8, and 12.

**P.P.E.:** Four

**Note:** Each "toss" of a card counts as one melee attack/action.

This spell is similar to the **Flick Card** spell except it has greater range of distance and special properties. The mage can "toss" cards with amazing accuracy at a specific target/item as

well as into buckets, under doors or through an open window, at a weapon or item, and even into somebody's pocket or face.

This can be done for the following effects (the first two are the same as *Flick Card*).

1. Entertainment value and/or gambling.
2. Delivering a message directed to a specific individual.

3. Pelt an opponent. Each strike by the card does one point of damage (good for getting somebody's attention and chasing away pests). A shot to the eye requires a called shot and if it strikes, will hurt, does double damage (2 S.D.C. or 2D4 if an Iron Card is used), and will cause the victim to lose two melee actions.

4. Knock over/down/away small, light items such as an empty glass, light figurine or toy, candlestick, a piece of paper, bottle of ink, spoon, key, etc. There is a 10% chance, per level of experience, that the item will fall exactly where the mage wants it to fall.

5. Snuff out a candle's flame with a tossed card!

6. Hit and press a button or move a switch. The magically charged card strikes with enough force to press a button or to flick a switch. A light, small switch can be flicked on or off with one strike, a larger one may require two or three strikes to flip all the way, and a giant-sized or heavy switch may take a dozen tries or more (it may even be impossible to flip this way; G.M.'s discretion).

## Cut Deck, Literally

**Range:** Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.

**Duration:** Instant and permanent.

**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The spell caster can chop/slice a deck of cards in half as if a magical, invisible axe just cleaved it in two! Typically done when angry, to emphasize a threat or accuse someone of cheating.

## Magically Palm Cards

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** Two minutes per level of spell caster.

**Bonus:** Adds +5% to Pick Pocket and Card Sharp skill.

**Saving Throw:** Special, roll as if performing a skill. If the roll fails the mage is caught "palming." Otherwise undetectable.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The spell caster can magically palm cards at 79% proficiency +1% per level of experience. Fundamentally the same as the *Palming Skill*, however, this magic applies only to playing cards, small bits of paper and paper documents folded to be no larger than 5x8 inches.

## Where did it go?

**Range:** Touch; toss up into the air.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The Trickster can toss an entire deck of cards or any small or comparatively light item up into the air (usually when nobody is looking) where it will remain hovering silently. Since most people don't look up, they never see it. Meanwhile, the mage can allow himself to be searched, confident that the item can not be found on his person. **Note:** The item will rise and hang an inch below the ceiling or 50 feet (15 m) high, whichever is appropriate.

## Level Four

### Endless Deck of Cards

**Range:** Within eye shot of the spell caster.

**Duration:** One hour per level of the spell caster's experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 10

Great for long hours of gambling, because the deck never changes cards, makes card counting more difficult (-15%), and there is no delay in breaking open and reshuffling a new deck. The cards are randomly shuffled and can NOT be magically "stacked" or "marked."

### 52 Card Pick Up (Curse)

**Range:** 20 foot (6 m) radius/area affect.

**Damage:** None, enchantment.

**Duration:** Until all cards are picked up; typically about 1D6+3 minutes up to a maximum of 16 minutes. Half that time if three or more people are involved.

**Saving Throw:** -1 to save.

**P.P.E.:** 10 for the saving throw, above. However if the P.P.E. amount is doubled (20 points), victims are -6 to save.

**Limitations:** A complete deck of 52 playing cards must be used; no Jokers can be included and no card may be withheld or hidden – all are tossed out to fall where they may. Cannot be tossed on the surface of water. **Note:** If the enchanted individual is attacked or directly threatened, the enchantment is broken on him. The spell ends after 16 minutes whether all cards were found or not.

Everybody within the radius of affect is magically *compelled* by a powerful (and thankfully, temporary) obsession to retrieve, count and put into order a deck of cards that has been scattered across the floor.

A failed roll to save means all those affected scurry about gathering the cards (they will work as a team), collect them in a pile, count to make sure they are all there and put them in numerical order by type (i.e. hearts, diamonds, clubs, and spades). During this time, those affected can do nothing else and ignore all other activity around them (fighting, people going by, people ransacking the room, etc.).

A successful save means no effect.

### Iron Cards

**Range:** Transform cards by touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.



**Duration:** Stay iron for 5 minutes per level of the spell caster.

**Damage:** 1D4 per thrown card.

**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**P.P.E.:** 10 temporary or 150 to turn permanently into iron.

The spell caster can turn two cards per level of experience into metal. The card turns grey, but still has the appearance of a playing card complete with its suit and number, but is hard like a small, thin sheet of iron. These cards can be thrown to inflict 1D4 points of damage or used as small metal rectangles to wedge in a door (between a lock?), patch armor, etc. May be used in conjunction with the Toss Card spell (same distance).

## Restore Deck of Cards

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Permanent, takes about 20 minutes to do.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The spell caster can magically restore old, worn, dog-eared, tattered, faded and marked cards to their original, like new, condition. To do so, the spell is cast and he must wipe his hand over each card individually. When all 52 are restored, the magic makes all cards as good as new and unmarked in any way.

## Smear Ink

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Spell lasts for one minute per level of the spell caster. Ink marks last until washed off with soap and water.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Three for a single card, 15 for an entire deck.

This spell causes the ink on a playing card or deck of cards to smear off and onto the hand(s) of the individual touching or handling them. However, there is only a 01-10% chance the handler will notice the ink on his or her hands and will touch and leave ink on clothes, face, other items, etc. Often done as a gag (after a character handles the cards, the Trickster says something like, "Oh, there is something on your nose – or cheek." The inky character unwittingly touches his face leaving a comical black and/or red smear). May also be used to mark a target or cause embarrassment. The ink smears all disappear at the end of the spell's duration or the instant the mage cancels the spell.

## Stack Deck

**Range:** Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) away; line of sight.

**Duration:** Instant and undetectable.

**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The Card Sharp spell caster can magically stack the deck any way he desires, completely undetected and without touching it! Great for gambling (odds are 60% +2% per level of his experience in his favor!). A must for cheating scoundrels. Characters of unprincipled and good alignments will not use this while playing an "honest" game of cards.

# Level Five

## Create Deck of Cards

**Range:** In hand or a few feet away.

**Duration:** Varies with the amount of P.P.E. spent.

**Saving Throw:** -2 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Six P.P.E. for cards that last 30 minutes, 12 P.P.E. for cards that last one hour per level of experience and 30 to make a permanent deck.

The mage can magically create an ordinary deck of 52 playing cards with two Jokers! These cards can be used as normal.

## Knots

**Range:** Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; line of sight

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**P.P.E.:** Six or 12 P.P.E.

The spell caster can magically and instantly make one perfect knot (of any kind) per level of his experience. All that is necessary are two pieces of untied material (shoelaces, thread, string, rope, rags, etc.). These knots will not untie or pull loose unless deliberately undone.

For double the P.P.E. amount, the mage can actually mend or fuse two pieces of rope (or similar) together as one seamless and strong piece.

## Teleport Card

**Range:** Five miles (8 km) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Requires one full melee round (15 seconds) to teleport.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The Trickster can teleport a single card or sheet of paper or cardboard to some location known to him up to five miles (8 km) away. The only requirement is that he touches the card. Success Ratio: 80% +2% per level of experience, 99% if the location is within line of sight. An unsuccessful roll means the object disappears and is never seen again. This spell is often used in entertainment and to deliver information, a message or a warning to somebody.

# Level Six

## Mark of Guilt

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** 12 hours per level of the spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 15; double this P.P.E. amount doubles the duration of the mark.

This spell is used to mark those guilty of some wrongdoing with a mark on the forehead or chest that indicates his crime. The mark is left by the Trickster pressing a deck of cards or even a single Joker card to the victim's forehead or chest. When it is removed a playing card-sized mark is left behind. Nothing other than a successful Remove Curse spell can make the mark vanish before its normal duration. Note that the magic is such that it can NOT be used to falsely mark or accuse an innocent person. If the intended victim is not guilty of his or her crime, no mark will appear.

Joker with two faces (one happy, one snarling and mean) marks a liar or a cheat.

Smiling Joker with Money/Coins falling from the eyes like tears, marks a thief.

Joker with a skull for its face and knife clenched in its teeth marks a murderer.

Joker laughing with large fangs and pointed teeth marks a rapist or child molester.

Joker with no face marks a shapechanger; often reserved specifically for Changelings.

## Stairway to Heaven

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One minute per level of the spell caster, can be cancelled at any time he or she desires. Duration time can be doubled by spending 30 P.P.E.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 15

After completing this incantation (counts as one melee action), the spell caster can toss cards with unbelievable precision and get them to line up in mid-air to create a series of steps or stairway in mid-air! These magical card stairs actually create an invisible force wider than the cards (basically a short step) that allows characters to walk or run up them like they would a staircase. Each "step" can support up to 1000 pounds (450 kg) at a time and can be made to rise as high as 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of the spell caster's experience.

## Level Seven

### Buzz-Saw Cards

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Damage:** 1D6 points of damage per level of experience!

**Saving Throw:** Parry at -5 or dodge at -2.

**P.P.E.:** 18 P.P.E.

The Trickster fans a deck of cards into a circular shape while casting this spell. At the end of the incantation, the now spinning fan of cards launches itself at a target of the spell caster's choice and strikes like a magical buzz-saw! +4 to strike (the mage's bonuses do not apply as the buzz-saw is magically powered). After it strikes it can be made to fly and strike the same target or a different target again and again. Each buzz-saw attack counts as one of the spell caster's melee attacks.



### Card Daggers

**Range:** Self by touch, or can be thrown 100 feet (30 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** 1D6

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge at -1.

**P.P.E.:** 10

The spell caster can magically charge a deck of card to effectively turn them into hard, razor-sharp blades, although they still look like ordinary playing cards. The cards can be used like daggers to cut and slash when one or two are held between the user's fingers (1D6 damage).

The Card Daggers can also be thrown one or two at a time. Each thrown card counts as one melee attack/action. Throwing two Card Daggers simultaneously counts as one attack, does double damage (2D6 each), but is -2 to strike (no penalty applies when one is thrown). Each card thrown turns into an ordinary card moments after it hits. The Card Daggers can never be turned against their creator and never cut him.

Parrying with Card Daggers is possible only when the deck is held in a "fan" shape; +1 to parry.

### Turn Object into a Playing Card

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 22 P.P.E. or 220 to make the transformation permanent.

**Limitations:** Magic items can NOT be transformed. Period. Nor can items weighing more than one pound (0.45 kg).



The mage can turn one object, be it a coin, locket, dagger, comb, empty pouch, glove, or other small object weighing no more than one pound (0.45 kg), into a playing card. This can be used to entertain (always a crowd pleaser), steal (“As you can see, I do not have that woman’s necklace on me”), or to sneak in a weapon, tool or item. The mage can cancel the spell at will. At the end of the duration or upon being cancelled, the card turns back into the item.

## Level Eight



### Magic Cards of Vengeance

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +15 feet (4.5 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** Varies with the type of card.

**Duration:** The deck of cards will remain in the caster’s hands for 5 minutes (20 melee rounds) before having to make it reappear. All card effects are instantaneous unless noted otherwise.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge; some cards have secondary effects.

**P.P.E.:** Five P.P.E. to make the deck appear, and each type of card requires a certain amount of additional P.P.E. to create and use.

**Note:** Based on concepts by *Daniel Denis*.

The character creates an enchanted deck of cards in his/her hands. These cards are very powerful, with each card requiring a certain amount of P.P.E. to make them release their magical properties. Even with the little cost needed to make the Magic Cards of Vengeance appear, its creation uses up half the spell caster’s attacks/actions for that first round. Each use of a particular card counts as one melee action and requires the necessary P.P.E. to use. The exact type of card desired appears with but a thought or simple verbal command (“Red Queen”). Timing can be important with this spell.

**Red Cards numbers 2 to 10:** A single card or as many as four may be summoned and used. When dropped or thrown, the card(s) turns into a ball of fiery plasma that inflicts burning damage when it strikes. **P.P.E.:** A single card costs 8, a burst of four cards costs 32. **Damage:** 4D6 per card; when tossing 2-4 cards it’s fastest to roll 4D6 times the number of cards thrown. Beings vulnerable to fire or magic suffer double damage. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +30 feet (9 m) per level of experience.

**Black Cards numbers 2 to 10:** A single card or as many as two may be summoned and used. When dropped or thrown, the card(s) turns into a lightning bolt that inflicts blasting electrical damage when it strikes. **P.P.E.:** A single lightning card costs 12 P.P.E., a pair costs 24. **Damage:** 1D6x10 per card. **Range:** 1000 feet (305 m) +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience.

### Face Cards, Aces & Jokers

The image on all face cards can be made to come to life and fight on behalf of the spell caster! All are humanoid in appearance and stand about six feet (1.8 m) tall unless stated otherwise. All are impervious to poison, disease, illusions and psionics. Completely vanish when duration ends or the figure is destroyed, with a face card laying at that location. None engage in conversation nor can they be swayed by the words of others; follow the orders of their creator.

- **The Jacks** (any suit or color): Fast and furious fighters. **P.P.E.:** 60. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 70. **A.R.:** 11. **Attacks per Melee:** Four. **Bonuses:** +2 on initiative, +4 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, paired weapons. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 20, Spd. 20. **Damage:** Appears in light armor and armed with either a pair of axes or bastard swords that inflict 3D6 damage. **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed.
- **The Red Queens (2):** A Queen appears as a beautiful and regal woman in rich, red clothing of silk and velvet with royal crown. **P.P.E.:** 70. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 80. **A.R.:** 12. **Attacks per Melee:** Three. **Bonuses:** +2 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 16, Spd. 16. **Damage:** No apparent weapons, but each Red Lady is impervious to fire (including magic fire and heat), slap attacks do 1D6 damage (a lady never punches) and she can breathe fire twice per melee round (each counts as one melee attack). Fire breath does 5D6 damage and has a range of 60 feet (18.3 m)! **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed. **Note:** During combat she screams, “Off with his head!”
- **The Black Queens (2):** A Queen appears as a beautiful and regal woman in rich, black clothing of silk and velvet with royal crown. **P.P.E.:** 70. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 80. **A.R.:** 12. **Attacks per Melee:** Three. **Bonuses:** +2 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge. **Attributes of Note:** P.S. 16, Spd. 16. **Damage:** No apparent weapons, but each Black Lady is impervious to ice and cold (including magic cold), slap attacks do 1D6 damage and she can breathe forth an ice blast twice per melee round (each counts as one melee attack). Ice breath does 5D6 damage and has a range of 60 feet (18.3 m)! **Duration:** Five minutes or until destroyed. **Note:** During combat she screams, “Freeze you scoundrel!”
- **The Red Kings (2):** Appears in silver plate armor with stripes of gold, red trim and red cloak; obviously fit for a “king!” **P.P.E.:** 100. **S.D.C. (or M.D.C.):** 130. **A.R.:** 15. **At-**

tacks per Melee: Four. Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +5 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge, paired weapons, impervious to fire (including magical ones). Attributes of Note: P.S. 22, Spd. 16. Damage: Punches and kicks do 2D6 damage. Armed with either a pair of flaming swords or a flaming pole arm that inflicts 1D4x10 damage. Once per melee round the Red King can unleash a fire ball that does 1D6x10 damage and fly up to 500 feet (152 m) away (counts as one of his attacks); +2 to strike. Duration: Five minutes or until destroyed.

- **The Black Kings (2)**: Appears in black plate armor with stripes of silver, and black leather cape; gold crown. P.P.E.: 90. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 100. A.R.: 14. Attacks per Melee: Four. Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, paired weapons, can see in pitch black darkness (even magical darkness) and is impervious to electricity (including magic lightning). Attributes of Note: P.S. 22, Spd. 16. Damage: Punches and kicks do 2D6 damage. Armed with either a pair of bluish-silver daggers or a two-handed sword. Each strike of the weapon inflicts 6D6+6 damage from electricity. Once per melee round the Black King can Shadow Meld at will (no P.P.E. cost). Duration: Five minutes or until destroyed.
- **The Red or Colored Joker**: This is the trickster and deceiver Joker who appears as a Jester in colorful clothing. P.P.E.: 60. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 45. A.R.: 8. Attacks/Actions per Melee: Two or one by magic. Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +4 to auto-dodge usually by somersaulting, back flipping or dancing out of harm's way (this dodge does not use up a melee action). Attributes of Note: P.P. 20, Spd. 12. Can perform the following Skills: Pick Locks, Palming, Concealment, and Detect Poison, all at 80%, Locate Secret Compartment (or Find Contraband) at 55%. Damage: 1D6 from punches, 1D6+4 from kicks. Special Attacks: Can cast any of the following spells: Blinding Flash, Climb, Chameleon, Extinguish Fire, and See the Invisible as often as once per melee round (casting a spell counts as two melee actions), but the P.P.E. is drained from the spell caster.
- **The Black Joker**: This is the sinister Joker who appears as a white faced Jester dressed in black and silver. P.P.E.: 55. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 50. A.R.: 10. Attacks/Actions per Melee: Two or one by magic. Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to auto-dodge usually by somersaulting, back flipping or dancing out of harm's way (this dodge does not use up a melee action). Attributes of Note: P.P. 20, Spd. 12. Can perform the following Skills: Pick Pockets, Detect Forgery, Detect and Use Poison, all at 75%, and Track (humanoids) at 60%. Damage: 1D6+1 from punches, 2D6 from kicks. Special Attacks: Can cast any of the following spells: Turn Invisible (self), Befuddle, Fear and Cloak of Darkness as often as once per melee round (casting a spell counts as two melee actions), but the P.P.E. is drained from the spell caster. Or the Black Joker can *Negate Magic* with no cost to his creator, but instantly vanishes after that spell is cast.
- **Ace of Spades**: Appears as a faceless, white figure with a large "spade" symbol on the chest and forehead. P.P.E.: 40. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 40. A.R.: 8. Attacks per Melee: Two. Bonuses: +1 to strike and parry. Attributes of Note: P.S. 16, Spd. 12. Damage: Special Attack & Saving Throw: The Ace

of Spades is a P.P.E. vampire that absorbs its victim's P.P.E. with each punch/touch. Each time an opponent is struck or grabbed, he must save versus magic (14 or higher). A successful roll means only one P.P.E. point is lost, a failed roll means 2D6 P.P.E. were stolen. The Ace of Spades is instinctively drawn to opponents with large amounts of P.P.E.

- **Ace of Clubs**: Appears as a snarling Troll armed with a pair of cudgels. P.P.E.: 50. S.D.C. (or M.D.C.): 45. A.R.: 8. Attacks per Melee: Three. Bonuses: +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +5 to disarm. Attributes of Note: P.S. 20, Spd. 8. Damage: Each clubbing attack does 4D6 damage; half damage if trying to disarm his opponent. The Ace of Clubs is instinctively drawn to opponents who are warriors.
- **Ace of Diamonds**: Turns into a large, diamond-shaped shield that is impervious to all forms of attack, and provides a bonus of +2 to parry. The user can hide behind it for protection. Moreover, the wielder of the shield is impervious to fire and heat. P.P.E.: 30. Damage: 2D4 S.D.C. when used to strike an opponent (or 1D4 M.D.). Duration: 5 minutes or until destroyed.
- **Ace of Hearts**: The Ace of Hearts is also known as the pure card. The effects of the card vary. P.P.E.: 35. Damage: Varies. Special Power: 1. Healing Option: When activated by the spell caster or placed upon a character of good alignment who draws this card will be instantly healed with 6D6 H.P. and 3D6 S.D.C. (or 1D6x10 M.D.C.). Those in a coma get a +30% to save and 1D6 H.P. restored.  
2. Fight Evil Option: When activated by the spell caster and held up so the face of the card may be seen, it functions as the most powerful of holy symbols and will keep animated dead, vampires, demons and other supernatural creatures affected by holy symbols at bay (10 feet/3 m away per level of the spell caster). If the activated card is tossed at and strikes an evil creature of magic or supernatural monster it will explode on impact and inflict 6D6+24 points of damage! Targets may attempt to dodge.

## House of Cards – Spell of Legend

**Range**: A deck of cards by touch or up to 10 feet (3 m) away.

**Duration**: Permanent transformation.

**Saving Throw**: None.

**P.P.E.**: 130 or 460.

The transformation spell can be used in one of two ways. By spending the smaller amount of P.P.E., an ordinary deck of 52 cards, plus two Joker cards, can be transformed into a giant set of cards that seems to be made of wood. Each card is nine feet (2.7 m) tall and four feet (1.2 m) wide, and can be used like sheet wood building materials! The two Jokers can be nailed in place and for an extra 10 P.P.E., magically turn into a pair of completely attached doors or large glass windows. This use requires the erecting of a frame and actual building.

The spell requiring 460 P.P.E. will not only turn the cards into sturdy building materials but magically build the entire house within 1D6 minutes! Transforming a second deck of cards (requiring another 460 P.P.E.) will make the building larger or taller. The shape of the structure can be anything the spell caster desires, from tower or castle keep to that of an English manor or simple house.



# Ludicrous Mage O.C.C.

By Daniel Denis

with additional text by Kevin Siembieda

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #9½ & #22

*"Haven't you ever heard of the healing powers of laughter?"*

— *The Palladium Joker*

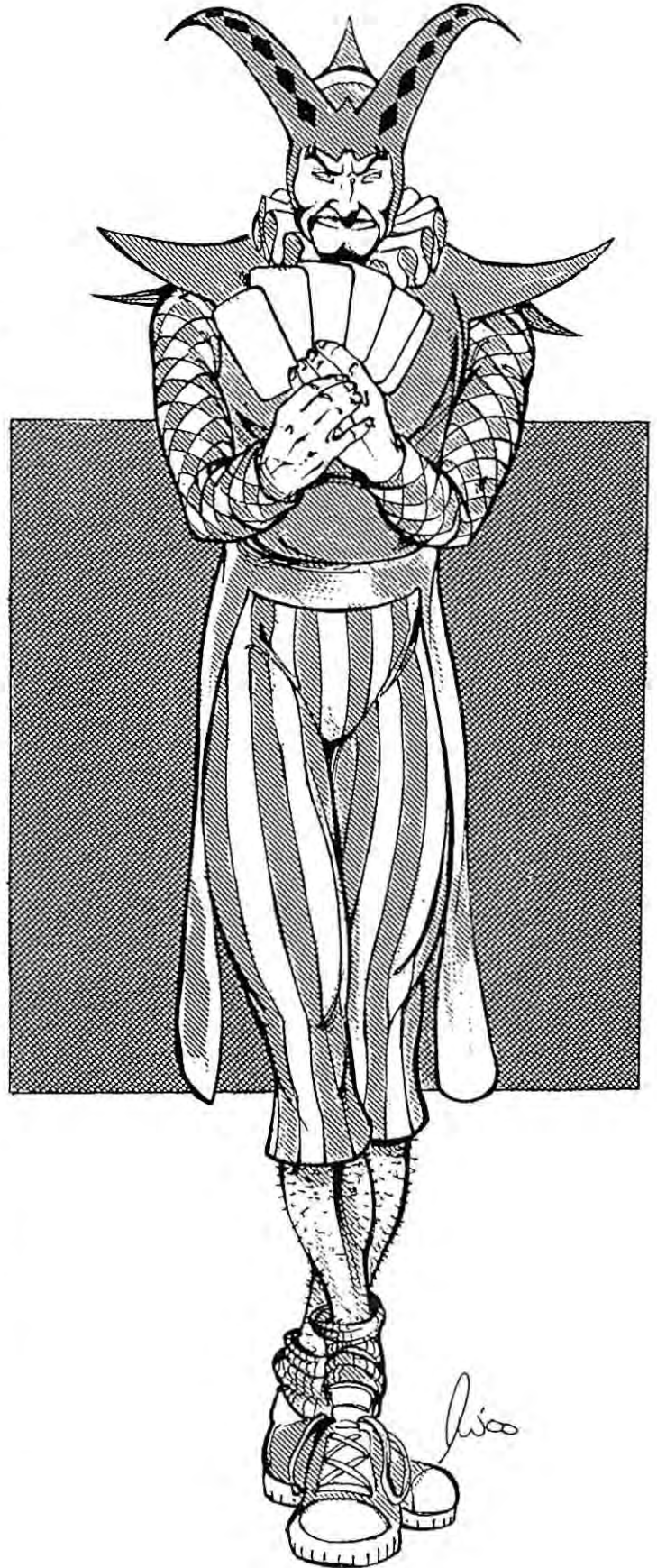
**Author's Note (Daniel Denis):** I personally created the Ludicrous Mage with the *Rifts*® setting in mind, but stats for both M.D.C. and S.D.C. settings are presented. My intention in creating the *Ludicrous Mage* and *Ludicrous Magic* is to add humor to an adventure, but, as you can tell, they can be rather deadly if you really want them to be.

On *Rifts* Earth, nobody knows for sure where Ludicrous Magic originated from, not even the Ludicrous Mages themselves, and this particular mystic art is quite rare. Scholars and practitioners of magic point to an old legend dating as far back as the disappearance of Atlantis from Earth that sheds some light as to the possible origin of this magic. Although this legend does not give a name to the creator of *Ludicrous Magic*, it does reveal the purpose of this odd creation: Revenge!

The legend tells a story of an alchemist who lost everything, including his family, to a selfish king (or ruler of some sort). For many years, the alchemist tried gaining support to battle the king's forces, but nobody believed it was possible. The alchemist was laughed at, for such a task would take an army. There was no way he would have been able to raise an army of any kind, but he didn't want the king to remain unpunished for what he had done.

He noticed that the king, like all kings, enjoyed entertainment, especially comedy. The alchemist knew that he'd get his revenge through a crafty new form of spellcraft that would literally amuse its victim *to death!* The idea was perfect. The victim would be unaware that he would be targeted for assassination until it was too late. Even more ironic was that the victim would be killed or badly harmed and nobody would suspect the "entertainment" as being responsible. They might think it was poison or some other means. And even if they figured it out, the "entertainer" would have made his escape long before they put two and two together. So it was to that end that the vengeful alchemist created his own unique branch of spell magic. His first students (a group of 10) were the original Ludicrous Mages and as payment for this rare knowledge, they eliminated the king who had wronged their mentor so long ago.

After the fall of the king, the alchemist really didn't have any more use of his Ludicrous Mages and he dismissed them from their bond of service to him. Free to do as they pleased, the Ludicrous Mages went off into the world to test their new powers. But the world wasn't kind. Thanks to its silly looking effects, Ludicrous Magic became the laughingstock of all spell casters, and none of the Ludicrous Mages were ever taken seriously (not even by their opponents)! Still, once word spread about their clever slaying of the king, the Ludicrous Mages became very popular with mercenary groups and assassins' guilds who could use these eccentric specialists in jobs of "discretionary murder."



As time went by, Ludicrous Magic “evolved” and the Mages became known as both cunning pranksters and deadly agents of vengeance (if not outright assassins). It is said that a schism arose within their ranks with those preferring to use their magic in entertaining and non-lethal forms of revenge, and the other more traditional faction who used their magic to hurt others. For the most fortunate, “hurt” came as mockery, embarrassment and character assassination. The less fortunate were made to emotionally and physically suffer, and, if need be, slain.

It is unclear whether the arts of Ludicrous Magic fell out of favor, or were never really accepted, or if the mages were hunted down to near extinction, but one thing is clear, the practice of this arcane art is rare to this day.

Even today on Rifts Earth, Ludicrous Mages are not treated the same as other magic users. They are viewed as the “joke” of magic, pranksters or as mages who just don’t have the discipline or maturity to master the serious arts. Consequently, many Ludicrous Mages are distrustful of other magic users and delight in showing them up, making laughingstocks of them and getting the upper hand over them (the rivalry among the Ludicrous Mages and most serious and accepted practitioners of magic is fierce). Because so many people underestimate them, they have learned to use this to their advantage. After all, in a dangerous world, overconfidence can be a deadly mistake.

One of the most notable downsides of these mages is their obsession with humor, practical jokes, puns, and silliness. A Ludicrous Mage seems to laugh and giggle at everything, especially when they cause mischief themselves. They love to instigate disagreements, brawls, and disputes, as well as embarrass and anger others with their magical pranks and jokes (typically those they dislike or disrespect). The most evil and undisciplined use mocking humor like a rapier to cut down their opponent and slash him to ribbons with barbed wit and cruel intentions. They have been known to tease their victims mercilessly, to the point of bringing on rage, tears of sorrow (not laughter) and even nervous breakdowns and heart failure. Depending on the disposition and alignment of the individual, these mages can be extremely annoying and cruel, or pleasant, compassionate and caring – using their humor and magic to be uplifting and kind rather than hurtful. But meanspirited or nice, humor, for them, is their way of life. They need to entertain someone (even themselves), love a large audience, and thrive on making people laugh.

Despite their more nefarious reputation, many Ludicrous Mages, especially those on Rifts Earth, have forsaken life and work as assassins and have become adventurers, bodyguards, and even heroic protectors of small communities and champions of freedom of speech. This has made them popular among Rogue Scholars, Scientists, City Rats, Mercenaries, wilderness folk and fellow adventurers who also value personal freedom. Others have become spies, bounty hunters, and Saddle Tramps, while still others make a living as honest to goodness entertainers out to make a credit by making people laugh. Because of their ability to use humor as a defensive and offensive weapon, they can be deadly foes or fun-loving companions. In the latter case, some Warlords and military leaders hire Ludicrous Mages to join their forces and entertain the troops, believing “a happy soldier fights better than a depressed or worried one.”

## Special Abilities of the Ludicrous Mage:

**1. Humor Factor:** The Humor Factor is like Horror Factor or Awe Factor, except it’s funny. The mage starts with a Humor Factor of 8+1D4. This increases by +1 at level 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 15.

The Humor Factor functions very much like the *Horror Factor*, except that the victims (those who fail to roll to save) are laughing so hard that they lose initiative, one melee attack and are -2 to all actions (-10% on skill performance, too) for one melee round (15 second). **Note:** Bonuses to save vs Horror Factor also apply to saves vs *Humor Factor*.

**2. Monologue:** A monologue is a humorous story or a stand-up comedy skit capable of amusing up to thousands of people. It may be used to pass time, send a moral message or as pure entertainment. A successful skill roll means that the Ludicrous Mage has captured the crowd with his entertainment and all are having a jolly good time. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience (+10% bonus if the Mage has an M.A. of 21 or higher; +5% if P.B. is 18 or more).

**A failed roll means** the timing is off and the jokes are bad, old, offensive, or the crowd simply doesn’t get the mage’s sense of humor. When this occurs, there is also a chance that the crowd will start a brawl because the mage picked the wrong subject to joke about, such as a monologue that stereotypes D-Bees, Dwarves, or whomever, when the crowd is primarily composed of those people and/or their supporters. An offended crowd could put the mage in grave danger, therefore, the G.M. should decide on the gravity of the situation and how they may respond. Roll on the following table.

01-20 An angry crowd hisses, boos, heckles and shouts serious threats. If the Mage does not get off stage within the next 1D4+1 minutes, they will start throwing rocks, sticks and even knives, along with mud, rotten fruit and vegetables. The Mage will suffer 3D6+6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. as is appropriate).

21-40 A brawl breaks out between 2D6 people in the crowd. Every few minutes an additional 1D6 people join the conflict. Everybody is now fixed on the fighting and don’t even hear the Ludicrous Mage anymore. Time for the Mage to exit, stage left, before he gets blamed for the trouble or is hurt in the brawl.

41-60 Offended listeners attack. That’s right, 1D4+1 people from the audience climb the stage and attack the Mage. These can be two-bit hoodlums or peasant farmers to mercenary fighters, soldiers or just about anybody. Thankfully they are not out to kill, only to extract their own brutal pound of justice, so the Ludicrous Mage may only suffer a beating or tar and feathering. Of course the Mage may try to defend himself or flee, but the former is likely to encourage 1D6 friends or sympathizing members of the audience to join the first group in “getting the Mage” and a serious fight could ensue (perhaps involving the other player characters). Fleeing will get a big laugh from the audience and the 1D4+1 ruffians will give up pursuit after only two melee rounds (30 seconds); they made their point and are satisfied with themselves.

61-70 “Lynch the Mage!” is shouted from the audience and 1D6+6 people from the crowd (typically aggressive nonhuman or warrior types) leap on the stage to do just that. The Mage is in a fight for his life! If he is smart, he (and the members of the



player group) will try to make a hasty escape and run for it. The lynch mob will give pursuit for 2D6 minutes before giving up. However, if they see the Mage later (or any of his “friends” they may recognize) they will renew their attack with deadly intent. It’s best to leave town, and we mean NOW! Exit stage right and through the back alleys.

**71-80 Riot!** No kidding!! The Mage sparks a riot that sweeps through 1D4x10% of the town, causing people to be injured, property damage and looting. The Mage will suffer 2D4x10 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. as is appropriate) in the ensuing carnage. Furthermore, the authorities *may* hold him personally liable for the damages (get outta town fast before the Mage finds himself imprisoned, stripped of all possessions or worse)!

**81-00 No violence, but a disappointed crowd quickly disperses** amid boos and cat-calls. Within 1D4 minutes the Mage is telling jokes to himself. Boy, can this stinker of a routine empty a place. If this has caused all or most of the patrons in a tavern or similar place of business to leave, the owner of the establishment will be none too happy. Not only will he refuse to pay the entertainer, but is likely to charge him for the loss of business (at least 1D4x100 credits or gold) and may have him physically tossed out on his ear by bouncers or burly cousin Ned. Best to cut one’s losses and be glad nobody got hurt (other than the Mage’s pride).

**3. Unnerving Laugh:** While in combat, the Ludicrous Mage can use an extremely annoying and/or menacing and unnerving laugh that has the potential of debilitating anyone who hears it. This slightly high-pitched and seemingly endless laughter has an audible radius of 500 feet (152 m), but only those within a 30 foot (9 m) radius suffer any penalties.

**Range:** 30 feet (9 meters); affects all who hear it.

**Duration:** One minute (4 melee rounds) +1 melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Special. Those within 30 feet (9 meters) must roll to *save vs temporary insanity* – roll 16 or higher.

**Damage/Penalties:** Those who fail to save are -3 to all combat maneuvers (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and reduce the number of attacks per melee by half. In addition, those who are trying to perform a skill will suffer from a -20% penalty.

**P.P.E.:** 8 P.P.E. required to perform the Unnerving Laugh.

**Note:** Those who are in vehicles, power armor, or have anything that can prevent them from hearing the annoying laugh are not affected.

**4. Make Balloon Animals & Monsters:** With balloons, the Ludicrous Mage can bind a few together to resemble an animal or a monster. A failed roll means that the balloon popped. It requires one melee round (15 seconds) to make a balloon animal/monster. This skill is used mostly to captivate an audience momentarily. **Base Skill:** 60% +2% per level of experience (characters with a P.P. of 19 or higher are +10%). **Note:** The *spell* “Create Balloon Animals/Monsters” magically creates balloons and molds them into specific shapes, while this is a “skill” that uses actual balloons.

**5. Clowning (special):** This is the act of making a joke, hilarious gestures, pratfalls, funny faces, or stupid comments. A successful roll means that those who are “entertained” must *save vs Humor Factor*. A failed roll means that the mage didn’t nail

the punchline or the clowning gesture wasn’t all that funny. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience (+15% if the Mage has an M.A. of 20 or higher and +5% if P.P. is 20 or higher).

**6. Spell Knowledge:** Unlike other magic users, the Ludicrous Mage’s magic knowledge is limited to Ludicrous Magic and only a handful of common Wizard spells. The mage starts with 8+1D6 Ludicrous Spells selected from levels 1-4 and 1D4 Wizards spells selected from levels 1-2. At each level of experience thereafter, the mage may select an additional three Ludicrous spells up to one level above his current level of experience or two Wizard Spells from levels 1-3.

**Additional Types of Available Spell Magic:** The Ludicrous Mage can NOT learn or perform *ritual magic*, only spell magic, and even then the types of magic he can learn are limited to Ludicrous Magic (all levels) and Wizard spells levels 1-3. They never study or use Card Magic.

**7. Base P.P.E.:** M.E. attribute x3 +3D6. The Ludicrous Mage will gain an additional 3D6 P.P.E. per each level of experience.

**8. O.C.C. Bonuses:** +2 to M.A., +2 to M.E., +1 to P.P., +1D6 to Spd attribute, +2 to save vs illusions, +3 to save vs Ludicrous Magic, and +1 vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 5, 8, and 12 (in addition to all other attribute bonuses, special abilities and R.C.C. bonuses). +1 to spell strength at levels 4, 7, 10, 13 and 15.

**9. Limitations:** The Ludicrous Mage is obsessed with humor. He will tell jokes, pull pranks, act dumb, or tease. Not being able to “entertain” someone (or even themselves) will seriously discourage them. If a Ludicrous Mage is alone for a period of 60 days, there is a chance of developing a new personality (01-10%) or phobia (11-25%; 26-00% means no new insanity). If he gets a new personality, the Mage will be content because he will have someone to entertain. [For determining this new personality, refer to the Multiple Personality description on page 59 of the *Rifts® RPG* or page 58 of *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.* (skip step one).] Roll one for every 60 days of loneliness.

Ludicrous Mages are not loners, therefore, they accept the company of anyone, humans and nonhumans alike. The only people the Ludicrous Mage has trouble associating with are “serious” practitioners of magic (i.e. Ley Line Walkers, Wizards, Mystics, etc.) and authority figures (military officers, mayors, kings, queens, etc.). Most other practitioners of magic see them as jokes and not true magic users, only on a rare occasion will one see another sorcerer associating with a Ludicrous Mage. The Trickster is an exception to this; these two usually get along very well.

## The Ludicrous Mage O.C.C.

**Alignment:** Any selfish or evil alignment. Because of their typically obnoxious sense of humor and their tendency to work as assassins or chaotic free-spirits, Ludicrous Mages are almost never of good alignment. The best of the best are typically Unprincipled. Some of the most evil find it humorous to take on the visage of the creepy and formidable “evil clown.”

**Attribute Requirements:** An M.E. of 12 and P.P. of 12 or higher. A strong I.Q., M.A. and P.E. are also useful, but not required.

### O.C.C. Skills:

- Basic Math (+25%)
- Two Languages of Choice (+20%)
- Radio: Basic (+10%)
- Acrobatics (+5%)
- Gymnastics (+10%)
- Cardsharp (+10%)
- Ventriloquism (+15%)
- Escape Artist (+10%)
- Play Musical Instrument (choose three instruments) (+15%)
- Dance (+25%)
- Sing (+15%)
- W.P. Paired Weapons & Targeting.
- One Ancient W.P. (three if a Fantasy character)
- Two Modern W.P. (none if a Fantasy character)
- Hand to Hand: Expert\*

\* Hand to Hand: Expert can be exchanged for Hand to Hand: Martial Arts (or Assassin if evil) at the cost of one "other" skill.

**O.C.C. Related Skills:** Select six skills from the following categories, plus two at level 3, and one at levels 6, 9, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency.

- Communications: Any (+5%)
- Domestic: Any (+10%)
- Electrical: None
- Espionage: Any (+5%)
- Mechanical: None
- Medical: First Aid and Brewing only.
- Military: None
- Physical: Any
- Pilot: Any (+5%)
- Pilot Related: Any
- Rogue: Any (+5%)
- Science: Any
- Technical: Any (+5%, but all lore skills get a +10%)
- W.P.: Any
- Wilderness: Any (+2%)

**Secondary Skills:** The character also gets to select four secondary skills from those listed, plus one at levels 4, 8 and 12. These are additional areas of knowledge that do not get the advantage of the bonus listed in parentheses. All secondary skills start at the base skill level.

**Standard Equipment:** Robe or cape (with or without a hood), 1D4 colorful hats, two sets of colorful clothing, light body armor (seldom wear heavy armor, because it reduces their speed and mobility by half), knapsack, backpack, 1D4 packages of 25 balloons, 2 small sacks, one large sack, make-up kit (usually 5 bright colors), 1D4 dozen peices of bubble gum, canteen/waterskin, flashlight (or torch with tinder box), pen or pencils (or graphite sticks and chalk), coloring crayons (box of 3D6+20 different colors), note or sketch pad. Ludicrous Mages like *magic items* and will use them whenever they can (on Rifts Earth that includes Techno-Wizard items).

Weapons will include a club or blackjack, a knife, hand axe, one S.D.C. pistol or rifle (1D4+1 throwing knives or staff if a Fantasy character), one energy rifle (short bow or cross bow if a Fantasy character), 1D6 extra clips of ammunition, and 2D4 personal items (like a frying pan).

Vehicle of choice: Starts with motorcycle or hovercycle, or horse. The vehicle is typically small, fast and maneuverable, as well as relatively inexpensive and easily replaced in case it is destroyed by a monster, bandits or an angry audience. Those who use a horse may include it in his "act."

**Money:** *Rifts* characters start with 1D4x1,000 in credits and 4D6x100 in black market items.

*Fantasy* characters start with 2D4x100 gold but also have two minor magic items selected from the following list: 40 foot (12 m) length of Cherubot Rope, six magic powders (of choice), two expensive fumes (of choice), three Roman Candles or six Smoke Bombs, three doses of Magic Make-Up Paint, one dose of Vanishing Cream, three Firewicks, a bottle of Mystic Ink, two Screech Bottles, eight feet (2.4 m) of Magic Bandages or one Marble of Transformation.

Ludicrous Mage spendthrifts are common, so these characters always find themselves spending money like drunken sailors. This explains why they often are on the lookout for new work.

**Cybernetics:** The Ludicrous Mage will avoid cybernetics and bionics at all costs, and will make fun of those who have them. ("Hey, ironbutt! That a torque wrench in your pocket or are you just happy to see me?").

**Note:** Ludicrous Mages are friendly, but may be rude at times. They have trouble associating with other magic users, but will be found among them if the other mages tolerate the humor. They always have a joke to tell, even when it might be inappropriate to do so (like when a teammate has just died). They love to entertain people and enjoy solving riddles. They often speak in rhymes or broken sentences or take on some other kind of vocal affectation to sound amusing. The worst thing for a Ludicrous Mage to be is boring.

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## Ludicrous Magic

Ludicrous Magic uses humor in a defensive or offensive fashion. Originally used for the purpose of assassination, many Ludicrous Mages found it satisfying to use these powers for good by either keeping morale high, or defending the innocent. For whatever the reason the character selects to use this form of magic, the primary purpose is basically to get laughs. *Ludicrous Mages* and *Tricksters* are the only ones who know the secrets of Ludicrous Magic, because other magic practitioners refuse to acknowledge this form of magic as anything but a waste of time. **Note:** Unless noted otherwise, the "Damage" is S.D.C./Hit Point damage on S.D.C. worlds, and Mega-Damage (M.D.) on Rifts and other M.D.C. world settings.

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# Ludicrous Magic Spell List:

## Level One

Alter Physical Features (4)  
Boo! (1)  
Cloud of Laughter (4)  
Fart Blossom (2)  
Funny Bone (3)  
Hand Buzzer (3)  
Identify Theme Song (2)  
Laugh of Death (3)  
Never Ending Handkerchief (2)  
Scents Evil (2)  
Scents Magic (2)

## Level Two

Alter Physical Color (5)  
Aura of Feebleness (6)  
Butter Fingers (3)  
Candy Smell (4)  
Color Blind (4)  
Cotton Candy (6)  
Create Candy (5)  
Diarrhea (4, 6)  
Enhanced Self-Image (5)  
Play/Replay Theme Song (2,3)  
Water Flower (Varies)

## Level Three

Animal Characteristics (Physical) (6)  
Balloon Flight (6)  
Bouncy Balls (5 per set)  
Caught With Your Pants Down (4)  
Hold Breath (6)  
I'm Too Sexy (5)  
Long-Range Slap (5)  
Lost for Words (6)  
Pies (Varies)  
Red Nose (5)  
Scaredy Cat (7)  
Turn Water to Beer (6, 10)  
Uncontrollable Laughter (8)  
Water Dump (8)

## Level Four

Alter Physical Clothing (8)  
Blissful Confusion (7)  
Bubble Gum Rope (8)  
Bubble Gum Stick-Um (10)  
Crazy Look (10)

Create & Animate Balloons (10, 15, 20)  
Depth Perception (10)  
Disbelief (8)  
Drunken Master (10)  
Fool's Gold (12)  
Funny Glasses (10)  
Imaginary Quartet (9)  
Itchy, Itchy, Scratchy (8)  
Monolingual (12)  
Moron I.Q. (10)  
Rail Thin (10)  
Rapid Weed Growth – Minor (8)  
Trampoline (6)  
Water Balloon (Varies)

## Level Five

Animal Speech (15)  
Bounce (12)  
Bubble Gum Flight (12)  
Descriptive Combat (12)  
Enhance Humor Factor (10)  
Fat Man In A Little Suit (10)  
Feeble Voice (8)  
Gullible (15)  
Heads-Up (12)  
Mask of Deceit (16)  
They're all Gonna Laugh At You! (10)  
Toy Guns (16)  
Trick Rings (8)  
Turn Foods into Candy and Sweets (10)  
Turn Water to Pop (12, 15)  
Ugly Kid Joe (10)  
Voice of Fear (12)

## Level Six

Animate Balloon Monster (30, 45, 60)  
Bigger Guns (16)  
Candy Cane of Doom (22)  
Curse: Tourette Syndrome (18)  
Giant Circus Ball (15)  
Giant Protective Bubble (20)  
Keel Over (20)  
Laughter of Weakness (17)  
Magical Boxing Gloves (20)  
Mystic Juggling (16)  
Paint Ball Gun (20)  
Passive Resistance (16)  
Reduce Self (6 inches) (18)  
Slip n' Slide (18)  
Spring Action Boots (20)

Talk Back (17)  
Thinking Out Loud (16)

## Level Seven

Animal Behavior (20)  
Animate Clothing (5)  
Cat Got Your Tongue (20)  
Create Tar Pit (30)  
Curse: Dirty Goat (25)  
Healing Power of Laughter (25)  
Magnetic Personality (22)  
Metamorphosis: Animal (30)  
Play It Again, Sam (25)  
Potato Head (8, 12, 15)  
Summon Personalized Rain Storm (25)  
Tied with Rope (25)  
Turn Water to Liquor (15, 25)  
Unlimited Ammo (24)

## Level Eight

Create Dough-Boy Golem (200)  
Create Mini-Me (or Mini-You) (50)  
Curse: Forget About It (25)  
Funny Monster (25)  
Look Cool Factor (22)  
Metamorphosis: Human (45)  
Metamorphosis: Insect (50)  
Metamorphosis: Pink Fluffy Bunny (40)  
Miniaturize Weapon (40)  
Obsess Much? (32)  
Quick Teleportation (50)  
Shrink Body Parts (8, 15)  
Tied with Chains (35)

## Level Nine

Balloon Flight (Superior) (40, 60)  
Blubber Boy (32)  
Clacking Teeth (45)  
Curse of Laughter (30)  
Curse: Theme Song (50)  
Metamorphosis: Doll/Puppet (60)  
Metamorphosis: Opposite Sex (45)  
Metamorphosis: Pig/Boar (50)  
Rapid Weed Growth – Superior (45)  
Remove Theme Song (40)

## Level Ten

Create Theme Song (80, 32)  
Laughter That Can Cure Phobias (70)  
Metamorphosis: Animation (60, 85)

Metamorphosis: Clown (70)  
Metamorphosis: Monster (90)

## Level Eleven

Metamorphosis: Giant (100)  
Metamorphosis: Toad/Frog (60)  
Multiplicity (150)

## Level Twelve

Create Clown Golem (500)  
Create Marshmallow Golem (700)  
Metamorphosis: Mist (200)

## Spells of Legend

Call Upon Backsmack (246)  
Create Carnies (150)  
Enhance Carnie (75)  
Laugh of Exorcism (200)  
Laugh of Resurrection (500)

# Level One



## Alter Physical Features

**Range:** Touch; self or other.  
**Duration:** Four minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.  
**Saving Throw:** Standard.  
**P.P.E.:** Four points per altered feature.

This spell permits the caster to alter any physical features he wishes, from enlarging or shrinking the nose or ears, to lengthening the beard or even giving a character buck teeth. This spell alters only physical features, it doesn't shrink any body parts nor does it add parts or weight. Moreover, it is typically used for comic effect. Adds +5% to Disguise and Impersonation skills.

## Boo!

**Range:** Up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, +30 feet (9.1 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Instantaneously.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** One

This spell permits the caster to startle his victim. The affected character will hear a loud "Boo" coming from just behind his right or left shoulder. The character suffers loss of initiative as he looks around for a few seconds to find the origin of the yell, and must roll against his P.P. to determine if he/she dropped whatever items were in his hands.

## Cloud of Laughter

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 meters).

**Duration:** 4 melee rounds +1 melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

This spell affects a 30x30x30 foot (9x9x9 m) area with laughing gas. The gas is invisible but has a sweet odor. Those affected will start to laugh uncontrollably until they leave the affected area. The laughing causes the victims to lose their concentration, thus inflicting a -4 penalty to all combat actions (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), loss of initiative and -10% to perform a skill. Note the laughing can get pretty loud, especially if several people are affected, and it will attract the attention of others (great for creating distractions).

## Fart Blossom

**Range:** 120 foot (36 m) area.

**Duration:** Two minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two

Basically the same spell as Cloud of Smoke (Rifts® RPG, page 168; Rifts® Ultimate Ed., page 198), except that the smoke cloud seems to billow forth from the character's ... um ... derriere ... behind, and has a bit of a burnt smell to it.

## Funny Bone

**Range:** 30 feet (9 m).

**Duration:** One minute (4 melee rounds).

**Saving Throw:** -1 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Three

The affected character will feel a tingle at the joint of the arm or leg that tickles as if a feather is being gently stroked across it.



This is distracting, causing the following penalties: -1 on initiative, -1 to strike, parry and dodge and -5% to skill performance per each affected limb with cumulative effect. This spell may even affect additional appendages (arms, tentacles, tails, etc.). One spell affects one limb.

## Hand Buzzer

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** One melee round.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Three

When the spell caster touches a person, a small buzzing sound is heard, and the victim starts to shake uncontrollably for one melee round, suffering a penalty of -4 to all combat rolls (strike, parry, dodge, etc.) and loses one melee action. No penalties if the character saves vs magic.

## Identify Theme Song

**Range:** Up to 120 feet (36.6 m), plus 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Instantaneously.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two

This spell has two applications:

1. It permits the caster to determine if his target possesses a theme song or not. The caster will know what the theme is, whether it is a curse or not, and will want to play it or convince the target to play it.

2. If a theme song is heard, this spell permits the caster to identify the exact origin of the theme song, its meaning, to whom it belongs and where the person is located.

**Note:** See the *Create Theme Song* spell for an in-depth description of the so-called “theme song” phenomenon.

## Laugh of Death

**Range:** Touch, or up to 50 feet away (15.2 m).

**Duration:** Three minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Three

The spell will make a person appear to laugh himself to death. The affected character will start to laugh uncontrollably, making a racket, and then suddenly drop dead. At least he will appear dead. The affected character will be under a death trance as per the *Death Trance* spell found on page 168 of the *Rifts® RPG*, page 198 of *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, or on page 91 of the *Rifts® Book of Magic*. All vital signs will be gone, and anybody who examines him will be convinced that the character is, in fact, dead. Only the caster can stop the spell at any time.

## Neverending Handkerchief

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of the spell caster or until destroyed or magically dismissed (vanishes in a poof).

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two

The spell caster reveals a handkerchief from his pocket, only to find another attached onto it. The length of the handkerchief is 30 feet (9 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. What makes the handkerchief “neverending” is that the mage can cast the spell again to add to the length. Each handkerchief has five S.D.C. and can be used as a rope, but can only support a total weight of 600 lbs (270 kg).

## Scents Evil

**Range:** 80 foot area (24 m area).

**Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two

Basically the same spell as *Sense Evil* (*Rifts® RPG*, page 168; *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 199), but a big nose appears on the spell caster to permit him to “sense” or “smell” evil – to detect its “scent” and presence.

## Scents Magic

**Range:** 120 foot (36 m) area.

**Duration:** Two minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two

Basically the same spell as *Sense Magic* (*Rifts® RPG*, page 168; *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 199), but a big nose appears on the caster to permit him to “sense” or “smell” magic – to detect its “scent” and presence.

# Level Two

## Alter Physical Color

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Five minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Five

The spell caster can change the physical color of a person, creature or thing. The colors are usually very bright, varying from white, bright red, pink, yellow, orange, and green to fluorescent colors. Designs may be added, such as polka-dots, stripes, large flowers, argyles and plaids. Coalition soldiers in particular hate getting nailed by this one. There just is nothing more silly looking than a Dead Boy in pastel pink armor.

## Aura of Feebleness

**Range:** Self or one other by touch.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The target of this spell is surrounded by a greenish glowing aura that makes them seem less powerful than they really are. This makes the character seem to be three experience levels lower, and 50% less stronger than he or she really is. It also temporarily "masks" supernatural strength, any superhuman powers, or psionics, rendering it virtually undetectable by magical or psychic means (such as See Aura). The prime purposes of this spell are disguise and to launch surprise attacks. ("I was just fighting this powerful wizard ... where did he go?" Or, "You don't look so tough to me!").

## Butter Fingers

**Range:** Any character up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 30 seconds (two melee actions) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Three

The affected character's hands become coated with some sort of grease. This grease is irremovable until the duration of the spell elapses. As a result, the character becomes extremely clumsy when working with his hands. Every time he grabs something, tries to use a tool, or work with his hands, he risks dropping it. The character has a 40% chance (+8% per level of experience of the spell caster) minus the affected character's P.P. to drop the item. This means a character with a P.P. attribute of 16 whom is affected by the spell from a third level Ludicrous Mage will have a 48% chance of dropping any item in his hands (40% + 24% - 16%). A successful roll means the character held on to the item, otherwise the dropped item will fall 2D4 feet away. Skills that require the use of tools or one's hands will suffer a -30%.

**Note:** Maximum percentage to determine if a character drops an item is 98% *minus* the affected character's P.P. attribute.

## Candy Smell

**Range:** 30 feet (9 m).

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The caster imbues his target with the sweet aroma of candy. As pleasant as that may be, it attracts flies, bugs, and maybe even a few uninvited animals (such as skunks or bears) in droves. The sweet odor also gives those tracking the scented character a +20% to tracking by smell and follow him easily.

## Color Blind

**Range:** Self or others up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, or two targets by touch.

**Duration:** 5 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The affected character will no longer be able to see in the visible spectrum as per normal, but just the different intensities. As

a result, the character sees in multiple shades of gray. Hence, he will become color blind. But on the plus side, he or she will be able to see, limitedly, in the night up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away. This is more of a night vision, needing dim sources of light (like the moon) to see. The character will be blind in complete darkness.

## Cotton Candy

**Range:** 60 feet (18 meters).

**Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience or until destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The victim of this spell is suddenly wrapped with cotton candy that otherwise behaves as a *Carpet of Adhesion!* The candy magically holds together, but dissolves when in contact with water (will disappear in one melee round if made wet). Note that a character can also *eat* himself free within 1D6+1 melee rounds, or may break free with a strength of 21 or greater (burns up 2 melee actions).

## Create Candy

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Instantaneous.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Five

When the caster touches a surface (table, ground, the palm of a hand, etc.), several pieces of candy appear (+1D6 per level of experience) when he lifts it back up. This candy may be wrapped or not. Anybody who eats more than 10 has a 01-40% chance of getting a craving to eat more (+5% per each additional 10 pieces of candy eaten), and will eat candy without stopping and bug the spell caster for more until he or she gets sick (P.E. attribute x10 is the amount of candy one must eat).

If a character is sick, he or she gets the following penalties due to stomachaches: -2 to strike, parry and dodge, loss of one melee action (-1 attack) and will feel sick in the stomach (-10% to physical skills) for a duration of 1D4 hours. Once a character becomes sick, he or she loses the craving.

## Diarrhea

**Range:** Self or others up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 30 seconds or two melee rounds.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, but sick characters have a -2 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Four, or six to affect those in power armor.

The affected character suddenly has a great need to go to the bathroom to... hmmm... relieve himself. The character has 30 seconds before he can no longer hold "it" in. After that period of time, that's it. It all comes out. Those in armor are easily affected; even those in power armor can also be affected by the spell (at the cost of more P.P.E.). If the affected character is unsuccessful in removing the armor or exiting the power armor, the equipment will find itself very messy and the most awful



smell a human (or humanoid) can ever be released will “live” in the armor, requiring at least a week of cleaning to fully remove the odor. A very disgusting spell when used right.

## Enhanced Self-Image

**Range:** Any character up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 1 minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Five

The affected character is convinced he is someone else or a creature of another race. For example, the character believes he is really a robot, or a dragon, or even Emperor Prosek. The new identity is up to the caster and the affected character will attempt to act, behave, and perform the powers or skills of his new identity. If the character thinks he’s a dragon, he might try to change his form. But since he isn’t one, he will come up with an excuse that “I have no need to change into my true form now” or “now isn’t the time to reveal my true nature.” If the character has no knowledge of the person or creature of the new identity, then the spell has no effect on the character. Otherwise, “I am Zeus, the god of gods...”

## Play/Replay Theme Song

**Range:** Self or others up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 4 minutes per level of experience upon creation.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Two P.P.E. to hear one’s own theme song, three P.P.E. to hear someone else’s.

This spell permits the caster to have his theme song played at any time he wishes. He may also play another character’s song, but must know that the target has one before being able to hear it.

For the duration of the spell, the character’s “tune” will automatically play when the main man enters a room, leaves a room, walks down a street, is about to enter a “combat” situation, does something interesting, or speaks for the first time. Just think of a movie where the hero’s theme song plays whenever the character does something interesting. Like in any action flick, when do you hear the “Hero’s theme”?

**Bonuses:** Those that know the character will automatically recognize the mage when hearing his theme song. Well respected mages will find himself attracting people who just want to get a look at the “hero.” The people’s spirit will rise and hope is found. Also, any foe hearing the tune will be worried, knowing that the mage is nearby (or basically annoyed that yahoo came back). When the character hears his theme song, he will be cocky, arrogant, and walk with a “yes, that’s *my* theme song playing” attitude. In combat, he will be more daring and impulsive, receiving a +2 to initiative and +1 to parry and dodge. Prowl is impossible while the theme song is playing.

**Note for others:** As described in the *Create Theme Song* spell, unless the Ludicrous Mage already knows the *Play/Replay Theme Song* spell, the enchanted character will “instinctually” know how to use it. But only characters that are in tune with

their own P.P.E. (i.e. magic O.C.C.s and creatures that can use magic) will know the *Play/Replay Theme Song* spell after receiving their own theme song. But, the “instinctive” version of the spell costs twice the normal P.P.E., with half the normal duration, and the mage won’t be able to play another character’s theme song.

## Water Flower

**Range:** 15 feet (4.6 m) +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** Water none, acid 4D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D.

**Duration:** Instantaneous, one shot, counts as one melee action.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge.

**P.P.E.:** Varies; 2, 3, 4 or 10.

Once cast, a flower magically appears on the right or left side of the caster’s chest. The flower will squirt water (2 P.P.E.), a yellow liquid with a slightly foul odor to it (3 P.P.E. and yes it looks like what you are thinking, but it is a harmless prank liquid), or acid (4 P.P.E. for S.D.C. acid, 10 for M.D.).

It squirts towards the desired target with a bonus of +2 to strike. Water or yellow solution will cause no damage but if the caster makes a “called shot,” the water will soak his eyes, blinding him for one melee action/lose one melee action. The water will cause 3D6 damage to a vampire’s Hit Points and does not require a called shot. The yellow liquid is a harmless, dyed water that leaves a slight stain on clothing that washes out with ordinary soap. Acid inflicts 4D6 S.D.C. or 1D6 M.D., but M.D. is possible only when in a Mega-Damage environment and does not require a called shot unless a specific item or area is targeted.

## Level Three

### Animal Characteristics (physical)

**Range:** Self or other by touch.

**Duration:** Five minutes (20 melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Six P.P.E. per each animal characteristic.

The spell caster can alter certain physical features to resemble those of an animal, such as bestowing donkey’s ears, a pig’s nose, a rabbit’s teeth, etc., to make a funny face. These animal characteristics are purely aesthetic and are designed to make the recipient look goofy (-4 to P.B.). While it is designed for entertainment purposes, it can also be used to embarrass an unwitting victim or distinctively mark a living target. **Note:** This spell does not add limbs nor can it bestow extra S.D.C. or M.D.C. upon the recipient of this magic. The victim does not gain any special animal abilities. Each animal feature counts as one magical Animal Characteristic and costs six P.P.E.

### Balloon Flight

**Range:** Self, or others by handing the balloon to them.

**Duration:** Four minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Six

Similar to the *Bubble Gum Bubble Flight* spell (found in **The Rifter #9½**, page 83) and the *Levitation* spell (found in the **Rifts® RPG**, page 170, **Rifts® Ultimate Ed.**, page 201, and the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, page 94), the *Balloon Flight* spell permits the caster to create a balloon that can carry the weight of a person or similar size object. The balloon magically takes form from the caster's hand. When the balloon is fully blown up (roughly 3 feet/0.9 m, in diameter), a string of 6 feet (1.8 m) long is available to hold on to or to attach an object onto it. The movement is limited to straight up or down, not horizontally, unless there is a wind, which will push the balloon at half the speed of the wind. The balloon will have an S.D.C. of 6 plus 1 per each level of experience, but will have 1 M.D.C. plus 1 M.D.C. per each *other* level of experience in a Mega-Damage environment. The maximum height is 60 feet (18.3 m) plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience. Maximum weight is 200 lbs (90 kg) plus 25 lbs (11.25 kg) per level of experience. The caster can add to the lifting power by having multiple balloons tied together to levitate a larger load. The second balloon will add 100 lbs (45 kg) plus 10 lbs (4.5 kg) per level of experience, a third balloon will add 50 lbs (22.5 kg) plus 5 lbs (2.25 kg) per level of experience, the fourth will add 25 lbs (11.25 kg) to the total load. Any additional balloons will only add 5 lbs (2.25 kg) to the total load. For example, a 5<sup>th</sup> level Ludicrous Mage will lift 300 lbs (135 kg) with one balloon; two balloons will lift 440 lbs (198 kg; 300 from the first plus 140 from the second); three balloons will lift 510 lbs/230 kg (300+140+70); four balloons will lift 535 lbs/241 kg (300+140+70+25); and a fifth will lift 540 lbs (243 kg).

## Bouncy Balls

**Range:** Contained in a 50x50x50 foot area (15x15x15 m).

**Damage:** 1D6 S.D.C./H.P. per each strike of the ball.

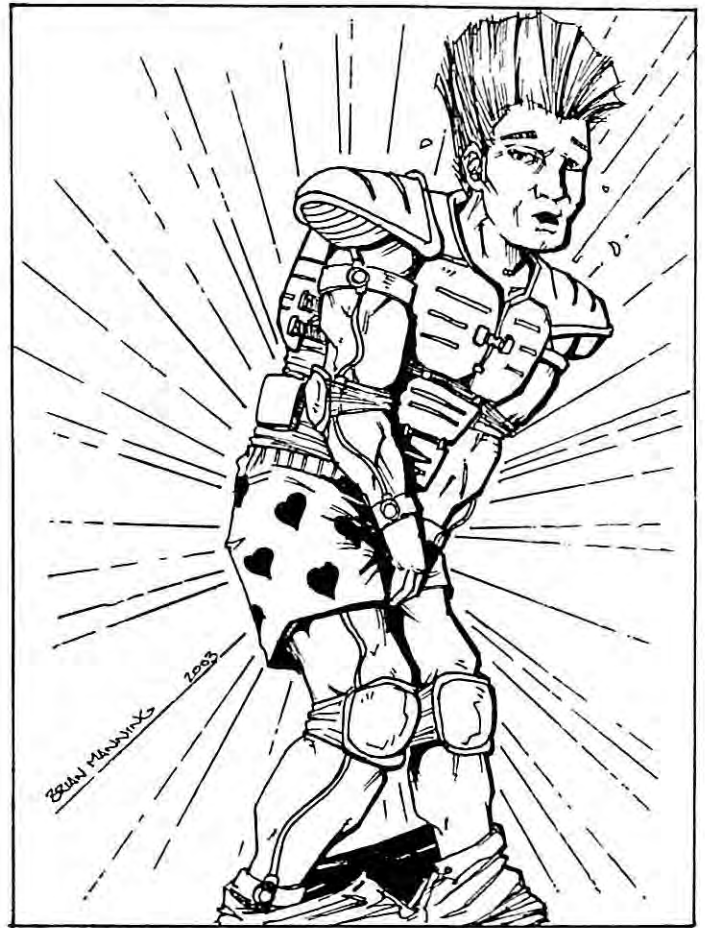
**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge only.

**P.P.E.:** Five per set of five balls.

The spell caster creates five bouncing balls which the mage can juggle without dropping. If one is purposely dropped or thrown, the ball will bounce around without stopping. They are magically contained in a 50x50x50 foot area (15x15x15 m) with the caster in the middle. Once they start to bounce, the balls continue to accelerate at speeds in excess of 200 mph (320 km) and causes 1D6 S.D.C. damage to anyone struck in the contained area (only the spell caster remains untouched).

An individual in the area will get struck once per melee round per set of bouncy balls (5 balls = 1 hit, 10 balls = 2 hits, 15 balls = 3 hits and so on). Furthermore, with 10 or more bouncing balls the characters are distracted and -1 on all combat maneuvers; double if there are 30 or more. **Note:** The area containing the bouncing balls remains fixed in place. Once this spell is cast, the area of effect can not be moved or adjusted. **M.D.C. Note:** On Mega-Damage worlds, for an additional expenditure of five P.P.E. per each set of five, the balls will inflict 1 M.D.C. each time they strike!



## Caught With Your Pants Down

**Range:** One target up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, +10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One melee round (15 seconds) per every other level of experience; or half a melee round (7.5 seconds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Four

The effect of this spell will cause the target's pants to fall to his ankles, revealing a pair of white boxer shorts with red dots or hearts. The pants will magically stay down at the ankles for the duration of the spell. A successful save means the spell will last for 1D4 melee actions only, but completely removing the pants will undo the spell. Affected characters will get a -4 to dodge, -1 to strike and parry, and speed attribute will be reduced to 4.

## Hold Breath

**Range:** One character up to 40 feet (12.2 m) away, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Varies.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The affected character will decide to hold his breath until he passes out. Typically, a person can hold one's breath a few minutes, but for game simplicity, we will assume that a person can hold his breath up to 1 minute plus 1D6 melee rounds (unless



otherwise mentioned in the character's description) or use the suggested rule explained in **The Rifter #17**, on page 16. After that period of time, the character will feel woozy, and then fall unconscious for 3D4+4 minutes. After waking up, the character will have a mild headache for the next half hour, suffering a -15% to all skills.

## I'm Too Sexy

**Range:** One target up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per every level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Five

The affected character suddenly believes himself to be the most gorgeous person on the face of the planet. The character will be arrogant, stuck up, and inconsiderate towards others. He will think everyone is attracted to him. Even his or her friends "want" him. In addition, the character will think that he is a model, and will walk around making random "poses" as if for a commercial shoot. "*Strike a pose!*"

## Long-Range Slap

**Range:** Onto one target up to 1,000 feet (304.8 m) away, +200 feet (61.0 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** One point of damage, period.

**Duration:** Instantaneous.

**Saving Throw:** None!

**P.P.E.:** Five

This spell was designed to anger one's enemy, or just to joke around. The caster can slap another person, or thing, from long distances. The slapped character will be embarrassed from being slapped and will be bitter towards the closest person around, thinking it was that person whom slapped him. The spell causes one point of S.D.C. damage, or one point of Mega-Damage against an M.D.C. creature!

## Lost for Words

**Range:** One target up to 45 feet (13.7 m) away, plus 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience, or two by touch.

**Duration:** 3 minutes per every level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The character will suffer a momentary loss of vocabulary. He'll forget the names of common objects (and places) and must describe them each time he's talking about it. When someone actually names the object, the character will agree to the name ("yes, that's it"), but will immediately forget the name of it. He will refer to everything as: "it," "the thing," "the thingy," etc.

*Example:* "So you've seen the robber. Can you describe him to me?" asks the policeman.

"Sure thing," replies the witness. "The guy came in wearing one of those things that covers your face, just like in hockey, but different. He was dressed like in that movie there... with the computer reality? The one where the guy has that cool coat

made out of cow skin or something. They entered the lobby... with the guards and the shooting and the jumping around... Ring any bells? Well, the guy was dressed like that. He also had this big thing that shoots out these projectiles that can kill people at a distance. You know what I mean. It's like the one you have, just a lot bigger. Yeah... that's what I saw officer."

The officer replies, "Thank you for wasting my time, Sir."

## Pies

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** Varies with the type of pie.

**Duration:** Until thrown.

**Saving Throw:** Special

**P.P.E.:** Varies with the type of pie.

The spell caster creates a pie that he can throw at his target with a bonus of +4 to strike. For each type of pie, the mage requires a different amount of P.P.E. All pies have the same shape, size and color (unless otherwise noted), but they all have a different effect.

**Cream Pie:** P.P.E.: 2. Damage: None. Saving Throw: Dodge only. This is a normal cream pie with a whipped cream topping. They are edible and can be of any flavor. A called shot with one of these can hit the target in the face, partially blinding him (-4 to strike, parry and dodge) for one melee round. Great for laughs.

**Banana Cream Pie:** P.P.E.: 4. Damage: None. Duration of Effect: 1D4+2 melee rounds. Saving Throw: Standard. Those hit by this pie will find themselves covered by whipped cream. This cream is very slippery and those struck have a 01-20% chance of losing their grip on one of their weapons (or other object in the hands) and a 01-30% chance of slipping and falling to the ground (lose initiative, two melee actions and suffer 1D6 S.D.C. damage from the fall). Roll at the beginning of each melee round. Great for laughs and combat.

**Blueberry Pie:** P.P.E.: 4. Damage: 1D4 S.D.C. (one M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and explodes in a blue spray upon impact, turning the character or item (no larger than a sports car) blue! Duration: The blue color lasts 1D6 minutes per level of the spell caster. Saving Throw: Dodge.

**Cement Pie:** P.P.E.: 6. Damage: 2D6 S.D.C. (or, on Mega-Damage worlds, 1D6 M.D.); it's like getting hit by a brick with whipped cream on top. Saving Throw: Dodge.

**Cherry Pie:** P.P.E.: 6. Damage: 1D6 S.D.C. (1D4 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and explodes in a red spray upon impact, turning the character or item (no larger than a sports car) red! The victim will definitely stand out in a crowd and also have a yummy cherry pie smell on him (+20% to track him). Duration: The color lasts 1D6+4 minutes per level of the spell caster. Saving Throw: Dodge.

**Exploding Pie:** P.P.E.: 12. Damage: 1D6 S.D.C. damage (1D6 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) per level of experience. Range: The blast pretty much affects only what the pie hits. These black pies blow up on contact, just like a hand grenade. Saving Throw: Dodge.

**Gas Pie:** P.P.E.: 8. Damage: These pies release a thick white gas cloud of 30x30x30 feet (9x9x9 m). Those inside will cough, eyes tear up and suffer a -4 to all combat maneuvers while in the

cloud. Moreover, visibility is bad, those in the cloud can't see outside of it, and those outside can't see in the cloud. The gas also has a sweet sugar smell and taste to it. **Duration:** One minute per level of experience. **Saving Throw:** Standard, but even those who save and suffer no penalty cannot see what is outside of the cloud.

**Homing Pie:** P.P.E.: 10. **Duration:** Special. **Saving Throw:** Dodge at -6. This is actually an enchantment that can be placed on any of the magical pies, *except* the Nuclear Bomb pie. The magical effect adds 200 feet (61 m) to the throwing range and it cannot miss unless the intended target makes a spectacular dodge (at -6 to do so). Pies that do less than 1D4 damage always hit living beings in the face.

**Lemon Meringue Pie:** P.P.E.: 20. **Damage:** 4D6 S.D.C. damage (4D6 M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) +2 points per level of experience from *acid* that will burn through anything. Upon impact, this pie splatters its target with a mega-acid. **Duration:** Two melee rounds. When thrown on body armor of any kind, the first melee round damage is done to the armor, the second round to the character underneath, unless the area of armor affected can be removed in 15 seconds. Typically the chest area is targeted, because it's the biggest target. **Saving Throw:** Dodge.

**Nuclear Bomb Pie:** P.P.E.: 120. **Damage:** 1D4x100+20 S.D.C. or 3D4x10 M.D. to a 10 foot (3 m) diameter; explodes on impact. **Saving Throw:** Leaping dodge (counts as two melee actions). This is the most dangerous pie. It glows with an intense green light strong enough to light up a room and unleashes a green mini-mushroom cloud upon impact.

## Red Nose

**Range:** Glow: 15x15x15 foot area (4.6 x 4.6 x 4.6 meter area); 60 feet (18.3 m) when removed and thrown.

**Damage:** Special: 3D6 when thrown like a grenade.

**Duration:** 10 minutes or until removed.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge

**P.P.E.:** Five

A large, round, bright red clown's nose the size of a plum appears on the nose of the spell caster or another by touch. The nose is so full of energy that it radiates the equivalent light of a lantern or torch. It can be worn and used like a lantern that radiates red light and/or be removed and put in one place for light or as a marker, or removed and thrown. Upon impact it will explode, doing 3D6 damage to whatever it hits. Vanishes after 10 minutes.

## Scaredy Cat

**Range:** One character up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; or an 8 foot (2.4 m) area up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away plus 3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Individual characters have a standard save at -2, while a group has a standard save.

**P.P.E.:** Seven

The affected character (or group of people) grows a yellow streak on his back, and becomes afraid of everything. All living

creatures possess a Horror Factor of 8 (especially children and kittens), while buildings, caverns, tunnels, etc., will have a Horror Factor of 6. Power armor and robot vehicles will have an H.F. of 10. All characters that currently have a Horror Factor will act as if its Horror Factor was worse (+3 to the current H.F.). The affected character must roll versus H.F. each time he encounters a new person, place, or whatever. He must make a saving throw versus H.F. at -4! The affected character has become a chicken sh... I mean a scaredy cat...

## Turn Water into Beer

**Range:** 15 feet (4.6 m).

**Duration:** Instant/permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Six, or ten for a specific type.

"Beer, the solution *and* cause of all the world's problems!"

This transformation spell permits the Ludicrous Mage to change ordinary fresh water into a refreshing, great, loving drink called beer! The caster can affect twenty gallons (75.7 liters) per level of experience. The beer can be of any generic type as per the caster's request (light, white, dark, etc.). But to create a particular type of beer (like Molson's Canadian, Blue, or other great Canadian beers), the caster must spend more P.P.E. and must have tasted the liquor within the last 8 hours (plus two hours per level of experience) to create it.

## Uncontrollable Laughter

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The affected person can not stop laughing hysterically. The eyes water and the character can barely catch his breath. Therefore, he or she will have the following penalties: reduce the number of attacks per melee to one plus a -5 to all physical actions (strike, parry and dodge), no initiative, and -25% penalty to skill performance.

## Water Dump

**Range:** 60 feet (18 meters).

**Duration:** Instantaneous.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge at -8. Vampires get a standard save.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The spell caster creates five gallons (19 liters) of water to fall from directly above the head of his target. The target *may* attempt to dodge the water, but does so at -8 (it happens so quick and magically that it is very difficult to dodge). The victim of this prank suffers no damage, but gets soaked and loses initiative from surprise.

Vampires hit by this spell take 1D6x10 damage; if they save vs magic, they take only half damage. Those in power armor or otherwise protected (force field, etc.) are not affected, but those protected by a normal helmet and armor that is not airtight will take full damage.



# Level Four

## Alter Physical Clothing

**Range:** Self or others up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, plus 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 3 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The caster can alter what a person is wearing by magically changing the entire ensemble to something completely different. This can vary from changing the basic colors to changing the actual clothes. For example, changing a character's traveling clothes into a business suit, a French maid's uniform, or even a pink tutu. The "new" clothes fit the character perfectly and he or she suffers no movement penalties, as per the original clothes. **Note:** This spell does not affect armor or M.D.C. clothing.

## Blissful Confusion

**Range:** 60 feet (18.3 m).

**Duration:** One melee round.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Seven

This spell will cause the mage's target(s) to giggle a bit, feel blissful, but be totally confused. The victim(s) forgets who he is or what he was doing for just a brief moment. This means he will not attack a known enemy or take any action unless attacked first or provoked to do something (otherwise just stands there trying to remember what to do). If attacked, these confused individuals lose initiative and one melee attack/action and are -2 to strike and -1 to parry and dodge; -15% to perform skills. The spell caster may affect one person per level of his experience.

## Bubble Gum Rope

**Range:** Self and carry up to 200 additional pounds (90 kg).

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**S.D.C./M.D.C. of Bubble:** Five points per level of experience.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The spell caster can chew ordinary bubble gum, remove it from his mouth and via this spell, stretch it into a long, super-strong, but lightweight length of cord; 12 feet (3.6 m) per level of experience. Has a tensile strength of 400 pounds (180 kg) +200 lbs (90 kg) per level of the spell caster's experience.

## Bubble Gum Stick-Um

**Range:** 90 feet (27.4 m).

**Duration:** Two minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge when applicable, but at -4 to do so.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

This spell has a few applications.

1: The spell caster either spits or throws a piece of gum from his mouth towards the feet or wheels of his target. If the target is hit, the gum will glue his feet or wheels to the ground, holding him in place! A combined P.S. of 40 is required to pull free (vehicles can't get traction; beings with superhuman or supernatural P.S. only need a strength of 22 to pull out).

2: The bubble gum stick-um can be taken out of the mouth and pulled and stretched by the spell caster up to the size of a large pizza pie or kept small and compact. In any case, it can be used like a powerful double-stick glue to stick any material to virtually any surface – including a humanoid to the butt of a giant robot or dragon.



## Crazy Look

**Range:** Self or others up to 20 feet (6.1 m) away.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The affected character will suddenly look like he's about to lose it! His appearance will alter to having his eyes wide open and bloodshot, his face will become pale, he'll get a tick on his neck, and he'll occasionally drool. The character's speech will sound like the guy is holding himself back, and he seems to be clattering his teeth. Anyone near the character will feel extremely uncomfortable and children will run away screaming. The affected character won't have any idea of what's going on.

## Create & Animate Balloons

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** 10 minutes (40 melee rounds) per level of experience or until destroyed. If one mile (1.6 km) from a ley line, the balloon creature will be “alive” until destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 10 for small, 15 for medium, 20 for large.

**Limitation:** This spell can make two small or one medium or large balloon animal.

This spell enables the spell caster to make an ordinary balloon animal or ordinary balloon and bring it to life! Although still just an ordinary balloon, the creature can be ridden or made to perform simple tasks such as guarding or carrying supplies, but can not communicate, use weapons or make intelligent decisions – these balloons are animated by P.P.E. and don't have any signs of intelligence whatsoever. The caster may replenish the balloon animal's S.D.C. or simply to keep them longer by adding another 10, 15 or 20 P.P.E. depending on size.

If one mile (1.6 km) from a ley line, the balloon animal may exist indefinitely by absorbing P.P.E. from the Ley Line (no, balloon animals can NOT absorb P.P.E. from other characters).

All balloon animals have three attacks per melee round and a bonus of +2 to dodge. They are magically charged, which explains why they have greater S.D.C. than normal. They also perform all the following skills at 80% proficiency: Dance, run, climbing, prowl, and swimming. They can understand simple commands from their creator and run/float/fly at about 20 mph/32 km (those that have wings can move at 30 mph/48 km); maximum altitude is 2000 feet (610 m).

**Small:** 7 S.D.C. Size: about 1 to 3 feet (0.3 to 0.9 m). Damage they can inflict: 1 point. Has a P.S. of 5.

**Medium:** 15 S.D.C. Size: Dog-size to four feet maximum (1.2 m), Damage they can inflict: 1D4 by hit/punch, ram, or bite. Has a P.S. of 9.

**Large:** 50 S.D.C. Size: as big as a horse to an eight foot maximum (2.4 m)! Damage they can inflict: 2D4 S.D.C. Has a P.S. of 14.

## Depth Perception

**Range:** Others up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away, plus 2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The affected character loses the ability to determine distances and depth. As a result, the character will not be able to tell how far an object or person is when it is further than 15 feet (4.6 m) away. This effectively causes the character to misjudge distances by a long shot, and makes aimed shots nearly impossible. The character suffers a -4 to aimed shots, -2 to burst and wild shots, -4 to strike with any thrown objects, and a -3 to dodge any projectile attacks.

## Disbelief

**Range:** Self or others up to 50 feet (15.2 m) away.

**Duration:** 15 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, but evil characters have a -2 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

A special mind effect spell that causes the affected character to absolutely believe in NOTHING that anybody tells him. Even if the proof is right in front of him, like an I.D. card, he will still not believe it.

## Drunken Master

**Range:** Self, or others up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** 3 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The affected character will become impaired or drunk. Penalties include a -4 to initiative, -2 to strike, parry and dodge, the speed attribute will be reduced by half, and all skills will be reduced by 12%. The drunken character will have difficulty walking (staggering everywhere) and has slurred speech (-25% to Language skills, and just to be able to speak properly). Since everyone acts differently while drunk, the character will have a particular side effect from his drunken state. Roll once under the *Effects of Alcoholism* table on pg. 21 of the *Rifts® RPG* or pg. 338 of *Rifts® Ultimate*. These side effects are in addition to the base penalties of the spell. In some cases, they will cancel out.

## Fool's Gold

**Range:** Up to 10 feet (3.0 m) away.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

As per the *Fool's Gold* spell described in the *Rifts® RPG*, pg. 172, *Rifts® Ultimate*, pg. 205, or the *Rifts Book of Magic*, page 101.

## Funny Glasses

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m).

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience, but the ability to See Aura will only last for the first minute.

**Saving Throw:** Instantaneous.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

-- A pair of oversized glasses will appear on the caster's face. The glasses will permit the caster to see another person's aura and the invisible just like the See Aura and See the Invisible spells in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 168 (or *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 199). It also enable him to see in total darkness (nightvision 500 feet/152 m) and 15 feet (4.6 m) in magical darkness.

## Imaginary Quartet

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.





**Saving Throw:** Special penalty of -5 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Nine

Basically the same as the *Multiple Image* spell in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 173 (or *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 206), except that the Ludicrous Mage can create four identical images of himself, each of which mimics his every movement. It provides the following bonuses to the Mage, whom attackers can not discern from the four false images: The Mage is +3 on initiative, +3 to dodge, +1 to strike. Some Ludicrous Mages are known to create entire chorus lines of themselves and perform can-can dances in the middle of combat!

## Itchy, Itchy, Scratchy

**Range:** Self or others up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One minute (4 melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The victim of this spell will feel the uncontrollable urge to scratch himself. This itchiness will prevent the character from concentrating on any skill that requires the focus of the mind. As a result, skills will suffer a -35%. Other penalties consist of losing 2 melee actions to scratch himself, suffers a -2 to all melee actions, and making aimed shots are nearly impossible (suffers a -4).

## Monolingual

**Range:** Affects a 40 foot (12.2 m) area.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

Everyone in the affected area will find himself speaking a language chosen by the spell caster, like French, German, Italian, etc. The person may not know the language, or understand those who speak it, just that whenever the person tries to say anything, it comes out in the chosen language. "*Pardon monsieur, je ne vous comprends pas! Qu'est-ce que vous voulez me dire?*"

## Moron I.Q.

**Range:** Touch with seltzer bottle spray; 5 foot (1.5 m) max. range.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

A magical seltzer or perfume bottle appears and sprays the intended victim. The affected character becomes an idiot because his I.Q. is temporarily reduced to 3. The character does not possess an animal intelligence, he just becomes extremely dumb! He has a hard time understanding what is going on and behaves like a complete imbecile, prone to saying mindless things for no apparent reason. ("Duh, which way did he go, George? Which way did he go?") However, he can not reveal secrets or important information because he can't remember them nor understand big words like "remember." The character performs any skill at the base level -20%. He or she loses initiative (does not understand what is going on), has no combat bonuses and only two melee actions per round. Likely to wander off or get into trouble (wander into a combat zone, etc.).

## Rail Thin

**Range:** Self, others by touch or up to three feet (0.9 m) away.

**Duration:** One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The victim of this spell will suddenly find him/herself to be extremely thin (to the bone almost). Reduce weight by two thirds! Side effects from being so thin are: The victim fatigues twice as quickly and his clothes/armor will be so baggy as to fall off his body or impair body movement. Reduce P.S., P.E., P.P. and Spd by 30%, attacks/actions per melee also by one third. However, this magic may help in effecting an escape by making an individual thin enough to slip his chains, handcuffs or even squeeze through the space between bars. It is also excellent for causing somebody's pants to fall down.

## Rapid Weed Growth – Minor

**Range:** Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Special.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The caster will cause multiple weeds to suddenly grow from the ground, the wall, the cement floor, the deck of a ship, or

anywhere he chooses. These weeds grow at a rate that seems instantaneous, but actually takes a second or two to fully grow. They will also cover an area of 20 square feet (1.85 meters square). The shape and size is at the discretion of the caster, but typically, a 4x5 foot (1.2x1.5 m) area, or even a 20x1 foot (6.1x0.3 m) area, but must be an equivalent to 20 square feet (1.85 meters square). The weeds appear to be a mixture of grass, vines, and actual weeds, with all being a dark green color. The weed patch also has colorful flowers. These flowers smell superb and are of bright and attractive colors. If a character attempts to walk through the patch of weeds, he will find himself entangled by them. A P.S. of 10 (plus one per level of experience of the caster) is necessary to free oneself from the weeds (using up 3 melee actions); otherwise, the character is caught for the duration of the spell. When the spell duration elapses, the weeds will disintegrate and disappear, leaving no marks or evidence of their existence behind.

**Note:** If using a knife or other bladed weapon, the character will free himself within 1D4 melee rounds.

## Trampoline

**Range:** Self or other; up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

**Duration:** Instantaneous (lasts approximately two seconds).

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Six

The spell caster creates a trampoline underneath himself or another character. In a single leap the magical trampoline will propel a character up to 20 feet (6 m) +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience into the air or half that height and distance lengthwise. The spell automatically adjusts to the size of the target, therefore, a bigger trampoline will appear for a giant (or power armored character) and a smaller one for a Dwarf.

## Water Balloon

**Range:** Throwing: 40 feet (12 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Until thrown.

**Damage:** Varies with the type of water balloon.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge at -3; some water balloons also have a special saving throw.

**P.P.E.:** Varies with the type of water balloon.

The spell caster creates a water balloon in his hand which he can throw at a target. Because of the non-aerodynamic form and its awkwardness, the range of the balloons are limited, but when they burst, they make an awful mess.

Balloons have different powers depending on their color, but they all have 2 S.D.C., affect a 6x6 foot area (1.8x1.8 meter area) when it bursts, and each are magically thrown, making them more difficult to dodge.

The spell caster may create one water balloon at level one, two at level four, three at level eight, and four at level twelve. Each type of water balloon requires a specific amount of P.P.E.

**Black:** P.P.E.: 8. **Damage:** None. **Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience. These water balloons are actually oil balloons. When they burst, they will cover the affected area with nonflammable (but very slippery) oil. Those in the

area affected will suffer from -3 to strike, parry and dodge, a 01-15% chance of having their weapon slip out of their hand (roll before each attack) and a 01-40% chance of falling down (lose initiative and one melee action) if they make a sudden movement (including swinging a weapon) or try to run, leap or dodge.

**Blue:** P.P.E.: 5. **Damage:** None, although a "called shot" to somebody's head will momentarily distract them and cause the victim to lose one melee action and initiative (4D6 H.P. damage to vampires). **Duration:** Instantaneous. These are normal water balloons filled with water. Fun at parties and effective against vampires.

**Red:** P.P.E.: 15. **Damage:** 5D6 to everything in area of effect. **Duration:** Instantaneous. The red colored water balloons are filled with liquid plasma (no, not the blood component, that stuff that burns!) that immediately bursts into flame when the balloon pops and it is exposed to air. Need I say more?

**Yellow:** P.P.E.: 8. **Damage:** None. **Duration:** One minute per level of experience. **Special Saving Throw:** As a standard spell. The yellow colored water balloon is the key to make someone "stand out". When these puppies burst, they cover all in their range with a magical yellow solution. This solution will stay on a person, thing or object for the duration of the spell (a successful save means the solution completely drips off a character after one full melee round). Those covered by the solution will find themselves shining or illuminated by yellow light (which is why they stand out). The yellow light can be seen as far as the eye can see. Those tracking the character will have a +10% to their tracking skill (+25% at night). If the affected character goes into battle, because he or she is so noticeable, they are likely to be targeted first even when in a crowd.

**White:** P.P.E.: 12. **Damage:** 3D6 plus everybody is "goosed" and loses initiative and one melee attack unless they save vs magic. **Duration:** Instantaneous. **Save:** Standard. The white colored water balloon mystically contains a burst of magic energy that, when released, will inflict damage to all those in its area and then goose them. To vampires, this acts like sunlight and therefore, they take half of the damage directly to their Hit Points.

## Level Five

### Animal Speech

**Range:** Self or others by touch or up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** 4 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Fifteen

This spell permits the caster to temporarily affect the voice box and vocal cords of another, preventing any "words" to be uttered but the sound of animals. Each time the character attempts to speak, a different animal sound comes out.



## Bounce

**Range:** Self, or others by touch.

**Duration:** 6 melee actions (1 minute and a half) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

The spell creates a field around the affected character that is very reactant to physical contact. This being said, with each step the character makes, he begins to bounce like a super ball. The character can bounce faster and faster, to a speed of 25 and to a maximum height of 25 feet (7.6 m), plus 3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience of the spell caster. The mage will have a 60% (+2% per level) chance to gain control of his movements, while another character will only have a 40% chance of getting the hang of it, and bounce in control. A failed roll means a character will bounce uncontrollably for 1D6+1 melee actions before *attempting* to gain control again (i.e. rolling again to gain control).

While bouncing, the character can direct his movement upon contact with a wall, ground, or obstacle (another person, a vehicle, a tree, etc.) in any direction. This is very strange, since he can direct his movement in a way that would defy physics. The act of bouncing makes him a difficult target. Characters attempting to shoot him suffer a -4 to their attack rolls, while physical attacks may only be done when the bouncing character is within melee combat, but the attacker will still suffer a -6 to his attack roll. The bouncing character can't attack accurately with a gun from the obvious constant movement, and will suffer a -10 (a wild shot with a -4 added to it). Physical attacks are nearly impossible (-6 and must be within melee combat range). But the character can perform a body hit or ram into other people. In this case, the character will have a +3 to hit plus the character's P.P. bonus.

If the character is hit by a physical attack or by a projectile (kinetic weapon, like a rail gun or a gun that fires slugs, a bullet, etc.) he will take the normal damage, but the attack will cause him to bounce uncontrollably, losing one melee attack to attempt to gain control of his movement (roll as per mentioned earlier). Typically, bouncing "away" involves flying backwards at a distance of 3 feet (0.9 m) per point of damage taken.

## Bubble Gum Bubble Flight

**Range:** Self and carry up to 200 additional pounds (90 kg).

**Duration:** Eight minutes per level of the spell caster's experience, after which the material falls apart and vanishes.

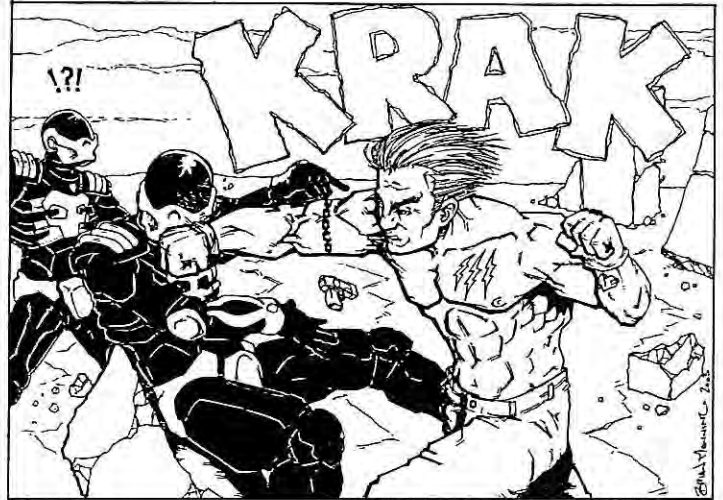
**Saving Throw:** Not applicable.

**S.D.C./M.D.C. of Bubble:** 15 points per level of experience.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

The spell caster can chew ordinary bubble gum and through the magic of this spell, blow a giant bubble from his mouth (roughly the size of his own body). Either still in his mouth or pinched off and held by one hand, the bubble will magically float up into the air and fly away in whatever direction the spell caster desires. Maximum speed without a slight wind or going against the wind is 30 mph (48 km) or as fast as the wind is blowing, but in the latter case the flyer must go in the direction the wind is blowing. Maximum altitude is 8,000 feet (2438 m).

**Note:** The Mage can create such a bubble gum balloon for other people, as long as he has enough bubble gum and he is the last to get one himself. All go in the same direction, but the spell caster can go in a different direction if he chooses. The magic makes holding the bubble by the mouth or hand easy and without pain or stiffness. The balloon lands when it reaches the destination desired by the Mage or when the spell caster desires to land. Likewise, the caster has complete control over the altitude, direction and speed.



## Descriptive Combat

**Range:** Can be cast up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; the spell affects a 30 foot (9.1 m) area +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

All those within the affected area will notice something very different in the way that everyone fights. Bubbles appear momentarily describing each attack with a word or saying like, "Whack!" "Ouuuf!" "Zap!" "Ka-plow!" etc. The bubbles appear in convenient angles so that everyone can see and read them. The words also magically appear in a person's mother tongue. This spell doesn't alter anything in a battle, except confusing some combatants. The spell seems very popular in arenas or rings to "add" to the entertainment of the crowd.

## Enhance Humor Factor

**Range:** Self or others by touch or 10 feet (3 m) away.

**Duration:** Four minutes (16 melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

This spell enhances one's own Humor Factor or another's by adding 1D4 to the existing Humor Factor. All must roll versus Humor Factor from the fresh new look of the comedian. **Note:** This does not change a Horror Factor into a Humor Factor, nor does it give a Humor Factor to a character. It is used to enhance an already existing Humor Factor.

## Fat Man In A Little Suit

**Range:** By touch or up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, -3 if by touch.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The targeted character's clothing suddenly shrinks till it becomes very tight and uncomfortable. The character's movements will be limited from the tightness and he or she will walk funny. The character will suffer the following penalties: -1 melee action, -2 to parry and strike, -3 to dodge, the speed attribute is reduced by 6 to a minimum of 3 (from the wedgy), and -30% to prowl. The character can rip his clothes off to end the spell quicker, or may "tough" it out. This spell only affects normal clothing and won't affect armor, but will affect the clothes underneath the armor...

## Feeble Voice

**Range:** Self or other by touch or cast up to 60 feet (18 m) away.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eight

This spell makes the voice of an individual person, animal or the scariest monster sound weak and feeble, and barely as loud as a whisper. This is good for disguises (+5%) and to prevent a victim from screaming for help, barking out commands to others or revealing a secret. Practitioners of magic can still cast spells.

## Gullible

**Range:** Up to 25 feet (7.6 m) away, or within "normal" talking distance.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Fifteen

*"You can't handle the truth!"*

The affected character becomes the most gullible person on the planet. Whatever he is told, he believes it. No matter how far-fetched it sounds, or unbelievable, he takes it as fact. If another character tries to correct him, this will only confuse him since everyone tells the truth.

## Heads-Up

**Range:** Any character up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away.

**Duration:** 1 minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

The affected character will inform his opponent (and anyone else nearby) of his next move, just before doing it, by yelling out a brief description of his intentions. The affected character does this without noticing it. In combat, this gives an opponent a bonus of +2 to parry and dodge. The character also informs whomever about the skills, task, or simple action he is doing.

This WILL get annoying, especially when the affected character goes behind the bushes to do his business.

## Mask of Deceit

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** 12 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Everyone who encounters the disguised character gets a save vs magic, but is -4 to succeed. A successful save means the true features are seen, not the mask. However, those who don't really pay attention or care who the character might be, are automatically fooled by the deception (no chance to save).

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

As per the *Mask of Deceit* spell described in the *Rifts® RPG*, pg. 176, *Rifts® Ultimate*, pg. 210, or the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 113, but the Ludicrous Mage can attempt to imitate a specific person's face at a mere 30% +5% chance per level of experience.

## They're all Gonna Laugh At You!

**Range:** One target up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away, plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 30 seconds per every level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The affected target will suddenly become convinced that everyone around him will start to laugh at him when he attempts to do anything. This includes making a speech, talking in front of a group, performing a skill in the presence of others, whatever. The character will be so caught up with the fear of being laughed at that he will suffer a -10% at performing skills, loses initiative, -3 to strike with a gun or other firearm, -1 to strike (hand to hand), parry and dodge. The character will also refuse to speak in front of a crowd or give orders. The effects of the spell will only take place when there are at least three people present, otherwise the spell does not work.

## Toy Guns

**Range:** Any firearm up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away, plus 5 (1.5 m) feet per level of experience.

**Duration:** 1 minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

This spell permits the caster to turn a normal gun into a toy! The weapon will no longer fire but will do one/some of the following: cool sound effects when the trigger is pressed, a flag with the word "BANG!" comes out of the barrel, a harmless multi-color laser beam is fired instead, paint balls, water, or simply nothing happens. The weapon will retain its S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) but will have a plastic toy look to it. The spell will also affect any firearm that is part of a power armor, 'Borg, robot or robot vehicle. It will affect the missile launcher, but won't affect the missile itself since the missile is a different component (the toy missile launcher just won't fire the missile).

**Note:** If the gun shoots water, it can cause 1D4 points of dam-



age to vampires or other similar creatures, but with the vampire's rapid regeneration, it will just make it angry.

## Trick Rings

**Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience, with a new set of rings appearing (if so desired) at the start of every new round.

**Damage:** 3D6+2 per ring.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge or parry (but parries are made at -3).

**P.P.E.:** Eight

The caster creates three golden or silver rings that he can spin around his arms, legs, neck or waist. He may create an extra ring every third level of experience (three at level one, four at level three, five at level six, and so on).

**Combat & Throwing Use:** Each ring can be thrown with amazing accuracy. If thrown to fall around an object or inside an opening, the mage is +6 to strike; no damage, good for gambling.

If thrown at a target like a frisbee with the intention of inflicting damage, they are +2 to strike and inflict 3D6 damage, +2 per level of experience (M.D. in Mega-Damage settings). Silver rings do double damage to supernatural creatures and those beings vulnerable to the metal. **Note:** The size of the rings can be manipulated to be as small as a CD or as large as a hula hoop. All do the same amount of damage regardless of size.

**Linking Rings:** The spell caster can also perform the trick of making the rings link together by clinking them together quickly. Only he can hook and unhook the rings. The mage can do another trick: Link two rings, have somebody put their hands in the two hoops (usually up to the wrist) and cause them to shrink, effectively turning them into snug handcuffs. A P.S. of 30 or higher is required to pull free or 20 points of damage must be inflicted to break them. The rings can also be used to help in climbing and hooking on to outcroppings.

## Turn Foods into Candy and Sweets

**Range:** 12 feet (3.7 m).

**Duration:** Instant/permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

This transformation spell permits the Ludicrous Mage to change ordinary foods into candy, dessert, and other sweets. He can affect fifteen pounds of food (6.8 kilograms) per level of experience. The sweets can be anything from cakes to pies, lollipops, chocolate bars, whatever the mage desires. **Note:** Overuse of the spell can cause characters to become a little more massive than originally created.

## Turn Water into Soda Pop

**Range:** 12 feet (3.7 m).

**Duration:** Instant/permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve, or fifteen for a specific type.

This transformation spell permits the Ludicrous Mage to change ordinary fresh water into soda pop. He can affect fifteen gallons (56.8 liters) per level of experience. The pop is of any type of flavor or type as per the caster's request (ginger ale, cola, cream soda, etc.). But to create a particular type of pop (like the popular Aunt Ginger's Strawberry Root Beer), the caster must spend more P.P.E. and must have tasted the pop within the last 6 hours (plus one hour per level of experience) to create it.

## Ugly Kid Joe

**Range:** Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away.

**Duration:** 4 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, but characters with a P.B. over 20 have a -3 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Ten

The affected character becomes basically... ugly! His or her P.B. is reduced to 1D4+2. This will shock people, since they were so beautiful not too long ago. Characters with a P.B. over 15 will be traumatized from the change, feeling useless and unwanted by anybody. *"I'm just too ugly!"* This spell has no effect on characters with a P.B. of 6 or lower.

**Note:** The god Backsmack once cast this spell on the Greek goddess of lust, Aphrodite, right before she met her blind date. I don't think I need to tell you what happened afterwards.

## Voice of Fear

**Range:** Other (never self) within 30 feet (9 meters).

**Duration:** One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twelve

This spell causes a normal character to have an extremely frightening voice. He will gain a +3 to his own Horror Factor or (if it doesn't have one) a 2D6+2 as a Horror Factor. Everyone must roll vs. H.F. The affected character also gains a +1 to strike.

## Level Six

### Animate Balloon Monster

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** 10 minutes or until destroyed; if one mile/1.6 km from a ley line, the balloon creature will be "alive" until destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 30 for small, 45 for a medium, 60 for large.

This spell permits the caster to make a monster out of balloons, animate them and turn them into a genuine, damage-inflicting balloon monster! Although still just an ordinary, albeit enchanted, balloon, the creature can perform simple tasks (same as the Animate Balloon Animal spell), but is far more powerful. Each Balloon Monster is animated by P.P.E. and it must be

given additional P.P.E. for it to exist longer than each 10 minute period (the same amount as needed to animate them). But, if within one mile/1.6 km from a ley line, the balloon creature can feed upon that P.P.E. and exist until destroyed.

All Balloon Monsters radiate a supernatural and magical aura. In combat, they have 4 attacks per melee round and +3 to strike, parry and dodge. Doubling the amount of P.P.E. at the moment of creation doubles the amount of damage they can sustain before being “popped,” and doubles the number of attacks per melee round. They can also perform the following skills at 80% proficiency: Dance, run, leap, climb, prowl and swim. They can understand any language, but are limited to moans, snarls and grunts themselves. They can run/float/fly at about 50 mph (80 km) and those that have wings can fly at 70 mph (112 km); maximum altitude is 5000 feet (1524 m).

**Small-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters:** Size: Cat to Dog size up to a maximum of four feet (1.2 m). Damage Capacity: 30+5 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 14. Only inflicts 1D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 4D6 S.D.C. on a full strength punch and 1D4 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two attacks).

**Medium-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters:** Size: Human to 12 feet (up to 3.6 m tall or long). Damage Capacity: 60+10 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 20. Inflicts 3D6+5 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, 2D6 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). Kicks do 1D6 M.D. and leap kicks 2D6 M.D.

**Large-Sized Balloon Animals/Monsters:** Size: As big as a house, typically 20-60 feet (6 to 18.3 m tall and/or long). Damage Capacity: 120+20 S.D.C. per level of the spell caster (M.D.C. in Mega-Damage worlds). Combat: Supernatural P.S. of 30. Inflicts 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 3D6 M.D. on a full strength punch, 6D6 M.D. on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). Kicks do 1D6 M.D. and leap kicks 2D6 M.D.

## Bigger Guns

**Range:** Self only; but the fear of the weapon will be felt by those within 50 feet (15.2 m), plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of the caster.

**Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience (30 seconds), plus one melee round (15 seconds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Special.

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

The ultimate spell in weapon combat! Well, at least in intimidation... But it's a cool illusion spell. This spell will permit the caster to “draw” a much larger weapon, or multiple weapons, to outgun his opponent. From the character's back, or pocket, or underneath his jacket, he or she will reveal a super large weapon that looks evil and threatening. The sight of the weapon will cause people to fear the wielder of the weapon. Anyone within 50 feet (15.2 m), plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level, must make a same versus a Horror Factor of 16 (plus 1 to H.F. at levels 3, 7, 11 and 14). With the caster's new armament, he will look like a living tank! Even Rambo would avoid the caster. The character can possess as many as 5 weapons, plus 3 weapons per level of

experience. They will be held with both hands, strapped on his back, or anywhere. The Ludicrous Mage will give the illusion of out-gunning ANYBODY!

## Candy Cane of Doom

**Range:** Hand to hand combat.

**Duration:** Two minutes (eight melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Parry or dodge.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-two

**Limitations:** If the spell caster loses his grip or no longer holds the cane, it will disappear after one melee round (15 seconds).

The caster temporarily creates a narrow, seven foot (2.1 m) tall, white candy cane with a red swirling stripe (like the old barber poles). It provides the following powers to the mage who summons it:

**Melee Weapon:** Used as an indestructible magic staff that does 3D6 damage (M.D. in a Mega-Damage setting) and is +1 to strike and parry. Also +3 to entangle/trip and disarm, but these apply only when the hooked end is used.

**Rapid-Fire Deadly Candy Canes:** By holding the Candy Cane like a rifle with the hooked end under the arm, the spell caster may fire small candy canes from the pointed end. **Bonuses:** +3 on an aimed shot firing one candy cane or a “burst” shot of four at a rate equal to his or her number of attacks per melee round. **Damage:** A single candy cane does 1D6 damage, a burst of four does 2D6. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

## Curse: Tourette Syndrome

**Range:** Others by touch only.

**Duration:** 15 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eighteen

The affected character suddenly suffers from Tourette Syndrome. He feels the need to express oneself with vulgar language. Basically, the character can't stop cursing or saying the worst possible insults. He can attempt to hold it back but for each attempt, he must make a standard saving throw and the longest period of time one can hold back is 1D4 melee rounds (and suffers a -5% to skills and -2 to actions since he is concentrating on not speaking). Failing means the character screams out his thoughts.

## Giant Circus Ball

**Range:** Up to 15 feet (4.6 m) away.

**Duration:** Four melee rounds +1 melee round per level of experience.

**Damage:** 1D4x10 M.D. if hit or ran over; projected ball does 4D6 M.D. +1 M.D. per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge only.

**P.P.E.:** Fifteen

A giant colorful ball of about 10 feet (3 m) in diameter appears underneath the spell caster. The ball has 80 damage points



(S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the setting) +10 per level of the caster's experience. The Mage can run on top of it to make it go and direct and control it with perfection. Running on the ball quadruples (increase x4) the spell caster's Spd attribute and enables him to safely travel over almost any type of surface and terrain – i.e. roll effortlessly across a swamp, river, rocks, debris field, fallen trees, etc. Going up steep inclines greater than a 45 degree angle is impossible and only the spell caster can ride the crazy thing. To navigate walls and giant boulders, the rider can slow the ball down by half and just before hitting the wall, make the Circus Ball *bounce* as high as 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience and up to 30 feet (9 m; total) lengthwise!

The mage can also run over people and animals, as long as they aren't giant-sized compared to humans. Thankfully the Giant Circus Ball is soft and light so damage is limited to 3D6 S.D.C. (in any setting), but double damage if "bounced" on, and in addition to damage, the victim is knocked flat and loses initiative and two melee actions! **Note:** Anybody other than the spell caster who tries to jump onto the ball will be thrown 2D4 yards/meters, lose one melee action, lose initiative and suffer from 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the fall. **Combat Note:** The rider of the giant ball is +2 to strike, +1 to dodge by weaving out of the way or +6 to dodge when using a bounce (but counts as two melee actions).



## Giant Protective Bubble

**Range:** Self or others.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience or until destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

The caster can create a giant soap bubble that will surround himself and up to three other characters or he can cast it around

someone else up to 30 feet (9 m) away. The maximum size of the bubble is 15 feet (4.6 m). The bubble works as a shield with 44 damage points (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on setting) +5 per level of experience. It serves as a protective force field that enables those from within to fire weapons or throw objects to strike those outside its circumference but can block incoming attacks until the bubble is destroyed. Anything can go out, but nothing comes in.

## Keel Over

**Range:** Touch.

**Damage:** 1D6 +1 per level of experience.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

This is one of the more frightening spells as it first causes hysterical laughter for one melee round (no actions are possible). It then shocks the victim's system, inflicting damage and causing him to "keel over," seemingly dead! Any character with paramedic, healer or doctor level of skill will immediately know the character is still alive, but in a coma (those with first aid aren't sure if he's dead or not). This condition can last for up to one melee round per level of the spell caster (or whatever length in between that the Mage desires). Repeated Keel Over touches inflict additional laughter and damage, but don't extend the coma's length unless it is done at the end of each duration. When used to lethal effect, this spell is sometimes referred to as the "gut buster." **Note:** Supernatural beings and creatures of magic suffer from the laughter for one minute and the damage, but do NOT keel over.

## Laughter of Weakness

**Range:** Other by touch or up to three feet (0.9 m) away; victim must be clearly visible. Only one victim is affected per spell.

**Duration:** 1D6 melee rounds.

**Saving Throw:** Standard -1 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Seventeen

The character will not be able to stop laughing for one melee round, during and after which time (for 1D6 melee rounds) he finds himself continuing to chuckle off and on and is too weak to do much of anything. Reduce P.S., P.P. and Spd by half! Also reduce all corresponding attribute bonuses, plus reduce all combat bonuses, saving throws and skill performance by half!

## Magical Boxing Gloves

**Range:** 15 feet (4.6 m).

**Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience.

**Damage:** 2D6 M.D. per punch and possible stun penalties.

**Saving Throw:** Parry or dodge at -3.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

Two red boxing gloves appear on the hands of the spell caster. When simulating a punch, a spring launches the glove at the intended target, then returns into place, ready for another strike. Each punch does 2D6 damage (M.D. on Mega-Damage worlds) and provides a bonus of +2 on initiative and +1 to



strike. Meanwhile, defenders are -1 on initiative and -3 to parry and dodge because the gloves strike so quickly.

Any critical strikes rolled by the spell caster while using the magic gloves will knock the opponent literally out of his shoes! Such a devastating punch does double damage, and the victim is knocked senseless! He loses his next 1D4+2 melee actions/attacks and all combat bonuses and Spd are half (leaving the victim vulnerable to further attack); performance of any skills other than instinctive combat is impossible while seeing stars. The senseless character does not regain his wits for 1D4 melee rounds (stunned). For the first melee round after a knockout, small stars, ringed planets, or twittering birds will circle the victim's head like a cartoon.

## Mystic Juggling

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of the spell caster.

**Damage:** Varies.

**Saving Throw:** Dodge.

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

The caster can magically juggle objects with or *without* using his hands! Up to 30 small objects (no bigger than a dinner plate or basketball, and no heavier than 10 lbs./4.5 kg) may be juggled at one time. The mage can use the juggled items to block attacks by having the swirling jumble in front of him or moving it from side to side or up and down with a simple hand gesture; +6 to parry hand to hand attacks, +1 to parry throwing items, including spears and arrows! Any small items thrown at the juggling mage are added to the objects already being juggled (and can be propelled at other targets if so desired). Any punch or kick type attack blocked by the magically juggled menagerie will also inflict 4D6 damage to the attacker whether the parry

was successful or not, because to hit the spell caster, the attacker gets clobbered by at least a half dozen to a dozen spinning objects in just a couple of seconds. Amazingly, although they hit the attacker, they are not knocked out of motion.

The juggled items may be propelled at intense speed towards an opponent with just a thought and hand gesture by the mage. They strike with a bonus of +3 to strike. Damage varies from single shots to bursts. One object does 1D6 S.D.C. damage, a burst of three objects does 2D6 S.D.C., a burst of 10 objects does 5D6 S.D.C., a burst of 20 does 1D6x10 S.D.C. and 30 or more does 2D4x10 damage (on M.D.C. worlds the damage is half these amounts but does Mega-Damage). All items hurled in this fashion are destroyed upon impact. Those that miss their target typically break apart when hitting something in the background.

## Paint Ball Gun

**Range:** One weapon up to 20 feet (6.1 m) away, or two by touch; range on the enchanted weapons varies by type.

**Duration:** The weapon enchantment will last one minute per level of experience, the paint ball will last 3 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None for enchanting the weapons; targets may dodge the paint balls.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

The caster can enchant any normal gun (including projectile weapons, energy weapons, military weapons, etc.). The enchantment will prevent the weapon from firing as per normal, but will shoot an alternative form of ammunition. The weapon will fire paint balls! Each paint ball pellet will pinch, causing some damage which will vary by weapon type. A target hit by a pellet will find himself covered by a highly reflective paint substance. Each paint ball covers a 5 foot (1.5 m) area, and can't be washed off by any means until the effects of the paint wears out (3 minutes per level of the caster). Colors vary from red, blue, or yellow, to other fluorescent colors.

### Pistols:

**Range:** 50 feet (15.2 m) +15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** One paint pellet causes 1 point of damage.

**Payload:** 4 shots +1 shot per level of experience.

### Rifles:

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +50 feet (15.2 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** One paint ball causes 1 point of damage, bursts of 5 causes 1D4 damage.

**Payload:** 15 shots +5 shots per level of experience.

### Machine-Guns:

**Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +25 feet (7.6 m) per level of experience.

**Damage:** One paint pellet causes 1 point of damage, bursts of 5 causes 1D4 damage, bursts of 10 causes 1D6+2 damage, and a burst of 20 causes 3D6 damage.

**Payload:** 20 shots +10 shots per level of experience.

**Note:** Bonuses to use the weapon remain unchanged; it's as per W.P. skill.



## Passive Resistance

**Range:** Any creature up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** 5 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, but demons and supernatural creatures have a -3 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

This spell was designed to make giant, ugly, mean creatures become cuddly monsters that won't harm a fly. Any character affected by this spell will not attack another person for any reason, but if in a battle, he will gain a +7 to parry and dodge. The character is most likely to talk, chitchat, or discuss the situation with his opponent, but never strike back

## Reduce Self (6 inches)

**Range:** Self only.

**Duration:** 15 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Eighteen

As per the *Reduce Self (6 inches)* spell described in the **Rifts® Ultimate Ed.**, pg. 210, or the **Rifts® Book of Magic**, pg. 113.

## Slip n' Slide

**Range:** 60 feet (18 m).

**Duration:** One minute (4 melee rounds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eighteen

The spell caster creates a slippery substance to cover the surface of the ground. All those on the surface will have a 01-50% chance of falling each time they try to move; 01-90% for those attempting to run, leap, dodge or make sudden moves. Vehicles will spin and power armor walking on the icy coating will have a 01-30% chance of falling. Anybody arriving on this surface with a running start will slide from one end to the other. The affected surface covers a 30x30 feet (9x9 meters) area +5 feet (1.5 meter) per level of experience.

## Spring Action Boots

**Range:** Self, or others up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** 30 seconds (two melee actions) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

Under the character's feet, a set of springs will appear. This will permit the character to leap higher, as well as to leap across obstacles. The character can leap a maximum height of 30 feet (9.1 m) plus 3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience, and a maximum distance of 60 feet (18.3 m) plus 5 feet (1.5 m) per level.

## Talk Back

**Range:** Mechanical or electronic equipment up to 10 feet (3.0 m) away per level of experience.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Seventeen

The caster can cause normal mechanical or electronic equipment to gain a mind of its own. The instrument becomes conscious, but very argumentative and uncooperative. It will refuse to give into the demands of the user, and it will not perform as requested. The spell affects computers, high-tech weapons that use electronic parts (such as lasers, energy guns, etc.), vehicles, power armor, and robot vehicles. It affects normal robots, but not those that have developed a "consciousness" such as ARCHIE 3 or his creations.

**Note:** Characters who can mentally link oneself with a computer or electrical equipment (as per the *Telemechanics* psionic or other similar abilities) will have difficulty maintaining control of the electronic equipment and therefore suffer a -30% to use it.

## Thinking Out Loud

**Range:** Self or others by touch or up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 4 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Sixteen

The affected character may no longer think in his mind. All inner monologue is said out loud and without holding back anything. The character may attempt to lower his volume to a murmur, but that requires concentration (-5% to skills and -2 to actions). Other magic users that require chanting to perform a spell will find this annoying and obnoxious since their incantation is said out loud.

# Level Seven

## Animal Behavior

**Range:** Other by touch or cast up to 3 feet (0.9 m).

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

The affected character will lose his humanity and will start behaving like an animal of the caster's choice. The equivalent animal I.Q. is equal to half of the character's current I.Q. If a predator, the character will be aggressive and quick to attack anybody, even friends, whom it/he feels threatened or startled by. See Palladium's **Monsters and Animals** sourcebook for specifics on basic animal behavior or one's own experience and knowledge. This spell does not affect other animals, primates, mutant animals, creatures of magic or supernatural beings, only mortal, "civilized" humans and D-Bees.

## Animate Clothing

**Range:** Up to 10 feet away (3 meters).

**Duration:** 5 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Five P.P.E. points per article of clothing.



The spell caster can give life to two pieces of clothing per level of experience. Once alive, they can join together to form a larger creature or do what the mage desires. Once a piece of clothing is magically charged, it CAN NOT be worn as normal clothing ("it's alive") until the duration of the spell ends. They function very much like Animated Balloon Animals or Monsters able to follow simple commands and tasks (requiring gloves or socks for hands and feet, a couple of balled up shirts or a cloak for the head, etc.). If the mage wishes, he may control the clothes by meditating and effectively directing their every move as if he were the pile of Animated Clothing, but he leaves his flesh and blood body open to attacks. When the caster is in meditation, he can control one creature of clothing, but can animate as many as he or she wants (all others are played by the G.M.).

When the damage capacity of the animated clothes is reduced to zero, the tattered clothes are reduced to rags and fall "dead" on the ground. This spell does not affect armor or power armor, only normal clothes. **Note:** In Mega-Damage environments, the P.P.E. used on the clothing gives it M.D.C. and a magical aura.

**Glove:** Combat: 3 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), and can also drag heavy items or carry light ones like a pencil, coin, or dagger. Damage Capacity: 1D6+6 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment); 1D6+10 if leather. P.S.: 7. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

**Sock, Mitten or Knit Cap:** Combat: 2 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment). Damage Capacity: 1D4+2 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 7. Speed: Can hop at a speed of 8.

**Shirt or Light Jacket:** Combat: 4 attacks per melee round. Damage: 1D4 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle and pin, or cause other forms of mischief. Damage Capacity: 1D6+6 (S.D.C. or M.D.C.

depending on the environment). P.S.: 9. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

**Heavy Jacket or Long Coat:** Combat: 3 attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D4 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle and pin, or cause other forms of mischief. Damage Capacity: 1D6+22 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 12. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 6.

**Pants/Trousers:** Combat: 2 attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), from kick attacks. Damage Capacity: 1D6+12 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 14. Speed: 12; can walk, jump and run.

**Cape, Cloak or Dress:** Combat: One attack per melee round. Damage: 1D6 points of damage (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), but can entangle, pin, and smother (i.e. cover a head and wrap it tight, etc.). Damage Capacity: 1D6+12 (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 12. Speed: Can crawl at a speed of 4, but can leap up to seven feet (2.1 m) high.

### Full Animated Body Made of Clothing:

Requires a minimum of eight articles of clothing. Typically two socks, two gloves, pants, shirt, and two balled up shirts for the head, for the following combined stats: Combat: Five attacks per melee round. Damage: 2D6 from punches and kicks (M.D.C. or S.D.C. depending on the environment), Damage Capacity: 1D6x10+11 per level of the spell caster (S.D.C. or M.D.C. depending on the environment). P.S.: 16. Speed: 16.

**Full Body Augmentation:** All bonuses are cumulative; layering and accessories are good.

Hat or Cap: +6 to Damage Capacity.

Shoes/Boots: +2D6 to speed.

Light Jacket or Sweater: +1 to P.S., +10 to Damage Capacity.

Heavy Coat or Long Coat: +3 to P.S., +20 to Damage Capacity, +1 attack per melee round.

Cape or Cloak: +1 to P.S., +24 to Damage Capacity.

Extra Pair of Gloves or Mittens: Worn over the first pair; +1 to P.S. and +8 to Damage Capacity.

Scarf: +2 to Damage Capacity.

### Cat Got Your Tongue

**Range:** Self or others by touch or up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** 4 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty

This spell permits the caster to temporarily remove the tongue of another, preventing any words to be pronounced. The character is incomprehensible, even though he may still utter sounds.



## Create Tar

**Range:** Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away; affects an area of 10 feet (3.0 m) in radius +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Special.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty

The ground will be coated with tar! The tar will be about two feet (0.6 m) deep (plus 3 inches/7.6 cm per level of experience), impairing all movement if anyone is in it. Reduce speed by  $\frac{3}{4}$  and  $-4$  to all actions involving movement (strike, parry and dodge, but not those using a firearm or energy weapon). If a character falls into the tar, it will take one full melee round to get back up. If someone sets fire onto the tar, it will burst into an S.D.C. flame causing 2D6 damage per melee round.

**Note:** Hover vehicles are unaffected; levitation spells and psionics can remove a character from the tar. Giants, robot vehicles, and other large characters of over 25 feet (7.6 m) tall suffer half the penalties. Smaller characters, less than 4 feet (1.2 m) tall, are fully impaired by the spell.

## Curse: Dirty Goat

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 30 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

The affected character will be cursed to be dirty and smelly for the duration of the spell. We aren't just talking about a bad smell here; this is *beyond* B.O. This is the worst odor one can ever smell or has ever smelled before. It's so strong you could almost taste it... There is no way to wash off the filth, nor can the character hide the smell with perfumes. Whatever clothes or armor or other article of clothing the character wears for more than 5 minutes, he will transmit the awful smell to it and it will also give off the smell for two days. Those within 10 feet (3.0 m) of the infected character must roll against their P.E. attribute to determine if they get sick. Saving successfully means they haven't thrown-up their lunch, but it's only a matter of time. Failing means the character loses control and it all comes out. No matter what, the affected character will be avoided at all cost!

## Healing Power of Laughter

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** One melee round.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

This spell causes the character to laugh uncontrollably for one full melee round (15 seconds), capable of doing nothing but guffawing loudly. Usually this is accompanied by rolling on the floor, holding one's sides, slapping one's knee or a table top, and producing copious amounts of tears. During that time, the character's body rejuvenates and recovers from injury and wounds. Gains back 1D6 Hit Points/S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) for every level of experience of the spell caster (i.e. 1D6 at level one, 2D6 at level two, 3D6 at level three, and so on). Furthermore,

while the character's stomach will hurt from laughing, he feels positive and in high spirits – raring to go despite any remaining aches and pains.

## Magnetic Personality

**Range:** One target up to 120 feet (36.6 m) away.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-two

The affected character will find himself surrounded by a strong magnetic force field. This field seems to be generated from the character's skin. As a result, any metallic item will be attracted to him. This means that any small item less than one pound/0.45 kg (such as glasses, utensils, paper clips, etc.) within 30 feet (9.1 m) from the character will be attracted towards the character to the point that the items will literally fly through the air to "connect" themselves onto the character. If the character touches any metallic item, he will be permanently connected to the object, until the spell duration elapses. The magnetic force is too strong to separate the two. The character can attempt it, but using too much force will harm him. It requires a combined P.S. of 50 to separate from the metallic object, plus the character will suffer 3D6 points of damage from having the items "ripped" off (not recommended). In addition, the magnetic field will attract metallic projectiles fired towards the character. This affects all metallic bullets, arrows, throwing knives, etc., but has no effect on lasers or accelerated particles. Any "shot" directed *at* the character will have a +4 to hit; although any shot directed to another target within 30 feet (9.1 m) of the magnetized character will suffer a  $-5$  to hit. This is because the projectile was deviated from its path by the "magnetic anomaly." There is a 20% chance that the shot will deviate enough to actually hit the affected character.

## Metamorphosis: Animal

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty

As per the *Metamorphosis: Animal* spell described in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 179, *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 213, or the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 117.

## Play It Again, Sam

**Range:** Up to 50 feet (15.2 m) away.

**Duration:** One song per every other level of experience; typically one song is between 2 to 5 minutes, but some are longer.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

At the caster's request, a band will appear to play a song chosen by the caster. This band is usually a small group of 3 to 8 individuals (1D6+2 members) that will play the requested song. The song is limited to the mage's knowledge, they will not play a song which the caster does not know or has never heard of.

The band will appear anywhere, coming from around a corner, an alleyway, come out of a nearby building, out of the top of a garbage bin, coming out of a taxi or bus, or even in a puff of smoke. They appear *anywhere*. The band will also follow the caster and stay at a distance limited by the spell (up to 50 feet/15.2 m away). The band members will be of any appearance chosen by the caster (you could have a group of Elvises performing). All band members are a magical incarnation, making them invulnerable to psionic attacks, strong versus spells (take half damage only), and they will seem to be protected by a force field surrounding them (75 S.D.C. or 50 M.D.C.). Once the field is down and the band members are hit (each member having 6 S.D.C.), they will disappear. The group won't leave until they've played all the requested songs. You just can't get rid of them! They will play one song for every other level of the caster, 1 song at level one, 2 songs at level three, 3 songs at level five, etc. Ludicrous Mages love this spell when they're performing or at a karaoke bar.

## Potato Head

**Range:** Self or other by touch.

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** 8 for small appendages like the ears and nose, 12 per each alteration larger than the hands, 15 to transform the head.

The spell caster can transform any limb or appendage, including the head, into a vegetable or vegetable-like appearance! Great for making fun of others and creating humorous effects (a squash for a nose, cauliflower or tulip ears, vines for fingers and hands, tree limbs for arms or legs, etc.). On the positive side, large plant appendages increase S.D.C. (or natural M.D.C.) by 10% per each limb (40% maximum for the arms and legs combined) and enjoy a damage bonus of +4.

The penalties should be obvious, hands without fingers can not hold or use a weapon or tool, nor climb or perform skills requiring human hands (vines will work fine), but can still punch. Vegetable feet or legs will see speed reduced by 20% and -20% to any acrobatic or gymnastic skills (another -20% for transformed arms unless the limbs are vines)!

## Summon Personalized Rain Storm

**Range:** Others up to 120 feet (36.6 m) away, plus 10 feet (3.0 m) per level of experience.

**Duration:** 2 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, at -2.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

The affected character will find that a thundercloud will hover between 4 to 12 feet (1.2 to 3.7 m) over his head. The cloud will send a cold rain pouring down onto the character and will follow him everywhere he goes (even indoors or inside a vehicle) and will make some thundering noise, but to a lower tone compared to the real thing. Whatever the character is wearing *will* be drenched and the character will look sad or depressed like if he just received the worst news anybody can ever receive. A successful save means the small cloud doesn't stay with the target and can easily be avoided by taking a step or two.

**Note:** This spell can be cast onto a vampire, but the Ludicrous Mage will have no enjoyment by doing so. If cast onto a vampire (or a similar creature), it will suffer 5D6 points of damage per melee round.

## Tied with Rope

**Range:** 30 feet (9 m).

**Duration:** Until destroyed or the character is untied.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

The victim of this magic attack is suddenly tied with 50 feet (15 m) of rope, from the feet to the neck. A P.S. of 44 or greater is needed to break through, and there are so many knots and weaves that it will take 2D6+10 minutes to *untie*. Cutting the tight weave of rope is comparatively quick, taking 1D4+3 minutes. Half that time if cutting recklessly, but 2D6 points of damage will be inflicted upon the tied up victim from 2D4 small cuts. Those with the Escape Artist skill can wriggle free, but at -20% and it will take at least 1D4 minutes.

## Turn Water into Liquor

**Range:** 12 feet (3.7 m).

**Duration:** Instant/permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 15, or 25 for a specific type.

This transformation spell permits the Ludicrous Mage to change ordinary fresh water into good old liquor. He can affect up to ten gallons (37.9 liters) per level of experience. The liquor can be of any generic type as per the caster's request (whiskey, gin, etc.). But to create a particular type of liquor (like Bob's Great Vodka), the caster must spend more P.P.E. and must have tasted the liquor within the last 3 hours (plus one hour per level of experience) to create it.

## Unlimited Ammo

**Range:** One weapon by touch.

**Duration:** Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard at -2, all shots are dodged as normal.

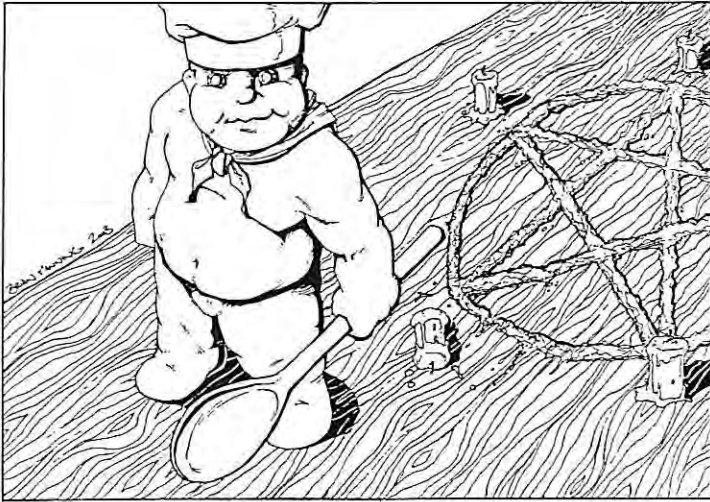
**P.P.E.:** Twenty-four

This fun illusion spell will permit the caster to turn his normal firearm or energy gun into a weapon with unlimited ammunition! The character will be able to fire the shots of the weapon faster to the point that he'll be able to fire the equivalent of an entire clip in one melee action. All shots are believed to be real and cause imaginary damage. Characters hit by these shots will believe to have been hit and will fall unconscious when they have taken enough damage. Those that save versus the illusion will know that the shots are false, but will still be weirded out by the heavy firing and explosions. The caster can fire one actual shot from the weapon, with a number of "fake" additional shots, which will confuse the hell of the guy that got hit by "imaginary" shots. The spell affects any firearm, energy gun, rail guns, bazookas, grenade launchers, and even mini-missile



launchers, but can't be used on larger missile launchers or bows and crossbows.

## Level Eight



### Create Dough-Boy Golem

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Two years per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 200

The spell caster can create a Dough-Boy Golem that will obey his every command. Similar to the Create Clown Golem, this spell technically isn't a ritual, but requires components. Thus, the Dough-Boy Golem has a limited life span rather than living until destroyed.

For the spell caster to have his own Dough-Boy creation, he must follow the following steps: First, the mage must draw a pentagram in whip cream. Secondly, he/she sculpts the golem's humanoid shape from 2 eggs, 4 cups of flour (white or brown), 3 tablespoons of sugar, 4 cups of water, one teaspoon of vanilla, a handful of sweets (can be any, like sprinkles, jujubes, M&M's, cookie crumbs, etc.). The whole must be well mixed either by hand, or with a mixer. Thirdly, he/she must place two small gems for eyes (the gems must have a minimum value of 100 credits or more). Fourth, the caster must place the heart into the "body." The heart is a silver teaspoon about 3 inches (7.6 cm) long, and with a value of 75 credits or more. Finally, the mage casts the spell to bring his creation to life! The Dough-Boy Golem will obey the Ludicrous Mage's every command. It will also be a loud talker and will find philosophical debates interesting and gratifying.

#### Dough-Boy Golem Stats:

**Humor Factor:** 8, it's cute, walks funny, and is made out of dough!

**Height:** Between 6 inches and one foot (15 to 30 cm).

**Weight:** Roughly one pound (0.45 kg).

**Attributes:** I.Q.: equal to the mage's attribute, M.E. 9, M.A. 6, P.S. 4, P.P. 20, P.E. 8, P.B. 9, Spd 4, but can reach a top speed of 12 for 10 minutes.

**S.D.C.:** 15+2 per level of its maker (it can't become M.D.C., it's made out of dough!).

**P.P.E.:** 30 (but the golem can't use it.)

**Skills and Special Abilities:** Knows all languages at 80%, literate in all at 68%, can also write in all at 45%, Interrogation Techniques (45%), Intelligence (42%), Escape Artist (60%), Lore: Religion 45%, Mythology (45%), Art (50%), History (45%), and it can cook, gourmet style, at 97% (including multiple exotic meals). The Dough-Boy Golem does not need to breathe nor does it require nourishment. It is also very agile for its size.

**Combat:** Three attacks per melee round. Physical damage does 1 S.D.C. of damage, but can use forks, knives, and other utensils as spears or lances. Very quick and agile, +5 to dodge (this includes P.P. bonus) and +4 to initiative.

**Vulnerabilities:** Takes double damage from fire (unless it was cooked first, then it will take ½ damage from fire and double damage from cold)! Also, it loves to talk. It doesn't shut up! If challenged in philosophical debates, it will go on forever. Even if it means it must ignore its current duties...

### Create Mini-Me (or Mini-You)

**Range:** Up to 20 feet (6.1 m) away, but must touch the person if making miniatures of another.

**Duration:** 12 hours per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Fifty

The caster can create a replica (or a magical clone) of himself or of another person. The miniature will have every resemblance, every power, and all abilities of the original, but only one third the size and strength. The miniature will also be at one third the level of the character, and will have every skill, magic and power at 1/3 the level. The mini version will also have 1/3 the Hit Points, S.D.C., P.P.E., I.S.P., or M.D.C. if in a Mega-Damage environment. Often, the miniature is mistaken for the mage's child, or younger brother.

### Curse: Forget About It

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** 24 hours per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

The character remembers everything, but when asked a question or when he has to perform a skill, he forgets the appropriate response. This can really anger a person because the character remembers how to do a task or a certain piece of information, and can do it reacting to a situation, but when asked to explain, describe or perform it (show me please), he just can't remember how to do it or find the words to explain it or even say what it was. Furthermore, when under scrutiny or a high stress situation, the cursed character will no longer be able to perform ANY skills except to speak his native language and fight (not that he could explain or describe his actions). He will lose all information about himself – name, place of birth, goals, reasons for his actions, etc. – and will simply stutter, and hem and haw.

“Um ... uh ... well ... um ... you see ... I ... uh, don’t know.”

**Note:** Even magic spells, psionic powers and other uses of natural abilities will be forgotten.

## Funny Monster

**Range:** By touch or cast up to 60 feet (18 m) away.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-five

This spell makes even the most horrible monster or dangerous nonhuman adversary seem NOT SCARY. The creature’s Horror Factor is completely nullified and anybody attacking the vile thing will see it as a Funny Monster so they feel unafraid, bold and confident in battling it (“Defeating that silly thing will be easy!”). Those attacking the Funny Monster automatically get initiative and are +1 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge and +1 to save from the monster’s magic and other forms of special attack. Such is the power of confidence and mind over matter.

On the downside, the characters may not realize the danger they are really in, and may take foolish risks or fight when they should be retreating to regroup or fight another day.

## Look Cool Factor

**Range:** Self or other up to 90 feet (27.4 m) away.

**Duration:** One melee “action” per each three levels of experience and the caster can hold his LCF action up to one melee round per level of experience. Thus, a 3<sup>rd</sup> level Ludicrous Mage can perform 2 LCF actions anytime during the next 3 melee rounds. A 7<sup>th</sup> level mage can perform 3 LCF actions within the next 7 melee rounds. Each LCF action is used in conjunction with a strike, parry, dodge, or other action.

**Saving Throw:** Standard to those seeing the LCF action.

**P.P.E.:** Twenty-two

The LCF spell permits the caster, or another character, to perform an LCF action. This “Look Cool Factor” action is a gesture that causes everyone who sees it to stop for a second to admire the feat by saying, “cool!” or “amazing!” This action can be an impressive strike, a slick parry, a fabulous dodge, or any other action that just looks cool. All characters within 15 feet (4.6 m) of the caster, friend or foe, must make a save versus magic roll, and failure means the character stopped to admire the stunning feat, losing his next melee action. A successful save means the feat just wasn’t impressive enough.

**Note:** The player must declare that his next “action” is an LCF action. He then performs it as usual, with no modifications to bonuses. Only if the action was successful will the LCF go into effect, otherwise, the character uses up one LCF action for nothing.

## Metamorphosis: Human

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Forty-five

As per the *Metamorphosis: Human* spell described in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 180, *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 216, or the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 122.

## Metamorphosis: Insect

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Fifty

As per the *Metamorphosis: Insect* spell described in the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 129.

## Metamorphosis: Pink, Fluffy Bunny

**Range:** Self, or others by touch.

**Duration:** 30 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard save at –3.

**P.P.E.:** Forty

The Ludicrous Mage can turn himself or others into a pink, fluffy bunny. The transformed character will retain all Hit Points and S.D.C. (M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage creature), powers, skills, and abilities. Even movement, speech, and psionics are retained. But **any** physical damage cause by the character will be S.D.C. as per a P.S. of 6 (even for M.D. creatures). This, on the other hand, does not affect the lifting capabilities of the character, only physical damage. All equipment, clothes, and armor the character originally had on him will still retain their properties, but will have a toy-like appearance. Once the items are removed from the character or dropped, they will instantly be turned back to normal. The affected character will look completely harmless, since he’s now a pink fluffy bunny. (Note: I don’t believe an actual physical description is needed to describe a pink fluffy bunny, just look in your youngest sister’s or daughter’s room for a more visual description.)

On the bad side, performing skills that require the use of one’s hands is done at a –20% penalty, since the character’s hands no longer have functional fingers (just look at any bunny, tell me if you were turned into one of them you’d be able to easily use a keyboard!). This being said, the character will suffer a –2 to use ancient weapons and a –4 for modern weapons. Once the character is transformed, children will be attracted to this big toy just so they can play with it. Roll the following to find out how many children rush to play with the transformed character: 1D6 if in a village, 3D6 if in a town, 1D4x10 if in a city. G.M.s are free to augment or lower the amount of children as needed. This spell doesn’t affect characters in power armor and robot vehicles, nor will it affect robots.

## Miniaturize Weapon

**Range:** One weapon by touch only.

**Duration:** One minute per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Forty

This powerful enchantment will reduce the size of any weapon! The final miniaturized size will be useful for any 6- to





8-inch (15 to 20 cm) characters (like some Faeries or used in conjunction with the *Reduce Self* spell). The enchanted weapon will retain all of its abilities and powers, but damage and range will be affected. Reduce the weapon's range by a factor of 10. This means a gun that fires up to 300 feet (91.4 m) away will now have a range of 30 feet (9.1 m). The same is true with rune or magic weapons that cast spells. Damage is a bit different. In an S.D.C. world, or with S.D.C. weapons, damage is reduced by a factor of 20! This means that some weapons will not cause any damage to some structures. For example, a rifle that causes 4D6 damage will do a mere 4D6/20 (or 2D6/10). Thus, to cause at least one point of damage, the character must roll a 20 and above (round downwards in the case of fractions). In an M.D.C. environment or with M.D. weapons, the weapon will cause the same damage, but in S.D.C. The high energy will still be lethal, but at a smaller scale. For example, an M.D. rifle that causes 4D6 M.D. damage will only cause 4D6 S.D.C. damage.

## Obsess Much?

**Range:** Touch or 10 feet away (3 m).

**Duration:** 5 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty-two

This spell causes a person to become obsessed with a particular person or thing (for example: a tree, a rock, an enemy, etc.). While the character is obsessed, he or she will do everything in his or her power to please, protect, or even just to be with the person or object of his obsession. Even if it costs the character his life! While this can be very funny to watch, it can also be tragic.

## Quick Teleportation

**Range:** 25 feet (7.5 meters) per level of experience; touch.

**Duration:** Almost instantaneous (3 seconds).

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Fifty

Basically the same as the *Teleport: Lesser* spell found in the *Rifts® RPG* on page 177 (or *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 211), but is much faster. The caster can escape tight situations or quickly hide objects. However, since it takes a short amount of time to cast this spell, the range is limited and the spell caster can only teleport himself and any objects up to 50 pounds (22

kg). Because of the short time required, it is easy to confuse the mage and send things to the wrong place. **Success Ratio:** 70% +2% per level of experience and the location of where he is teleporting (or sending the objects) must be known by him. A failed roll means he teleports safely to someplace embarrassing, like a lady's bedroom, the middle of a wedding or funeral, a pig's trough, fountain, nearby rooftop or flag pole, and similar.

## Shrink Body Parts

**Range:** Touch or three feet (0.9 m) away.

**Duration:** One minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Eight for small appendages like the nose and ears, 15 per each limb or large body part (hands, feet and bigger).

This spell permits the caster to shrink a body part till it's well out of proportion. He may shrink the nose, ears, lips, hands, arms, feet, legs, or other appendages (tail, wing, etc.). This is often used for humorous effect, to create a disguise or to ridicule somebody, including an opponent. The penalties should be obvious, tiny hands the size of squirrel's are too small to hold or use a weapon or tool, nor can the character throw punches, climb or perform skills requiring human-sized hands. Tiny feet or legs (with big feet) will reduce speed to a crawl (Spd reduced by 60%), while a tiny nose looks funny or odd (reduce P.B. by 40%) and similar. Having both of one's arms or feet or legs shrunken to action figure size causes the victim to be unnerved and unbalanced and therefore suffer from clumsiness and an additional -10% lost to speed and -70% to any acrobatic or gymnastic skills! On the other hand, tiny hands and arms might be able to operate tiny, action-figure sized weapons or devices (yeah, like that would happen very often).

## Tied with Chains

**Range:** 10 feet (3 m).

**Duration:** One melee round per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty-five

The victim of this magic attack is suddenly wrapped up in 50 feet (15 m) of chain, from the feet to the neck, and weighs about 500 pounds (225 kg). Movement, other than a little squirming, is impossible. A supernatural P.S. of 45 or greater is needed to break out, and it will take 1D6+12 minutes to *untie*. Cutting the chain will take forever (the spell will end long before then). Those with the escape artist skill can wriggle free, but at -30% and it will take at least 1D4+1 melee rounds to escape. Shrinking and slipping out is an option, but the character will suffer 2D6 S.D.C. damage from the heavy chains.

# Level Nine

## Balloon Flight (Superior)

**Range:** Up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration:** Five minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 40, 60 for double the duration.

Similar to the *Balloon Flight* spell, this more powerful version will permit the caster to create a giant hot-air balloon. The balloon is magically formed up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away, and will hover 3 feet (0.9 m) above the ground before lift-off. The caster can mentally direct it as he sees fit, but must be on the balloon, otherwise, it's all up to the wind. The maximum speed without a slight wind or going against the wind is 40 mph (64 km/h) or as fast as the wind is blowing, but in the latter case the flyer must go in the direction the wind is blowing. Maximum altitude is 9,000 feet (2,743 m). The hot-air balloon will have an S.D.C. of 35 plus 3 S.D.C. per level of experience, or 14 M.D.C. plus 2 M.D.C. per level of experience, and a maximum lift of 400 lbs (180 kg) plus 50 lbs (22.5 kg) per level of experience.

**Note:** The caster will instinctively know when the duration will elapse. As a result, he can re-cast the spell to prolong the hot-air balloon's flight time and this technique will repair any damage done to the balloon.

## Blubber Boy

**Range:** Touch or 10 feet away (3 meters).

**Duration:** Four minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty-two

This spell causes the character to become extremely fat. Not just overweight, I mean impossibly FAT! Double the character's current weight and add 50 lbs (22.5 kg) per experience level of the caster. Because of this new weight, the character will gain 50 S.D.C. (15 M.D.C. in a Mega-Damage setting) per extra 100 lbs (45 kg) of the new weight. **Penalties:** Reduced Spd attribute to 1D4 and lose half of his attacks per melee with a -5 to strike, parry and dodge. Flying and riding a horse are impossible. Those in body armor (or power armor) will have to shed it or literally pop at the seams and take 3D6 damage themselves while the armor loses 1D4x10% of its S.D.C. (or M.D.C.) as a result. Those inside a vehicle (stagecoach, wagon, car, etc.) are likely to get stuck inside, and possibly pin fellow occupants within as well. Likewise, the character will not be able to fit through normal doorways (better pray for double doors).

## Clacking Teeth

**Range:** Up to three feet (0.9 m).

**Duration:** Until destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Forty-five

After casting this spell, 1D6 small creatures per level of experience will appear either by coming out of the spell caster's pockets or by digging their way out of the ground. These little

creatures resemble a pair of mechanical clacking teeth with tiny legs to make them move. These teeth are extremely aggressive and can cause serious damage (M.D. in Mega-Damage settings).

**Clacking Teeth Stats:** Size: 8 inches (20 cm). Weight: 5 lbs (2.3 kg) M.D.C.: 10/S.D.C.: 15. Attacks per melee: 3. Damage: 1D6 S.D.C. from a nip or restrained bite or 4D6 from a full strength bite. (On M.D.C. worlds: 4D6 S.D.C. from a restrained bite, 1D6 M.D. from a normal bite, 2D6+2 M.D. from a crunching chomp (counts as 2 attacks), and 3D6 M.D. per melee round by a rapid bite attack (the clacking teeth chew thorough material like a clattering buzz saw; the teeth use up all melee attacks that round). If three clacking teeth do a rapid bite attack on a character in body armor, the armor will take 3D6 M.D.x3 per melee round! Bonuses: +1 to strike and +4 to dodge. Speed: 20 by clattering along. Abilities: Can leap 5 feet (1.5 meters) high; can drag 30 lbs (13 kg). Limitation: Can't speak, but can clack its teeth to simulate Morse Code or by clicking once for yes, two for no.

## Curse of Laughter

**Range:** Touch or within 10 feet (3 meters).

**Duration:** 24 hours per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Thirty

The spell caster inflicts a curse of laughter onto any living being. The affected character will seem overwhelmed with joy and want to laugh at everything. This may cause problems, especially when one is hunted or part of an ambush. The character will giggle on and off without reason or control (reduce prowl by -20%), giving away his position and alerting those nearby that he is coming. Even worse, the cursed character's laughter is likely to get him into trouble by making him laugh at the most inopportune moments. The character is likely to laugh at threats, strong, aggressive and/or authoritative statements, clothing, drunks, accidents (especially slips and falls), embarrassing situations, beautiful women, and other inappropriate times. All times and actions will get people's attention, make them angry or offended and is likely to provoke harsh words, challenges, threats, brawls, duels (to defend one's honor or that of a woman, king, country, god or belief), get the character (and friends) attacked, thrown into jail, cheated, tarred and feathered and all kinds of trouble. Statements like, "What are you laughing at?" "Do you think I'm funny?" "Are you laughing at Lord So-and-so?" "Be silent or suffer my wrath (or prepare to defend yourself or die)" are all *guaranteed* to get a huge laugh by somebody afflicted by this curse.

**Penalties:** Since everything strikes the character as funny, he or she is less focused (-20% on skill performance), less alert (-1 to strike, parry and dodge) and slow to react (-3 on initiative, -1 melee attack/action and reduce speed by 10%). **Note:** Part of the curse is that the victim will not admit he has been cursed with laughter, denies it, and can not speak about the curse or how he got it.

**Laugh Attack:** Once every few hours, the affected character will have a "laugh attack." Something, often for no apparent reason, tickles one's funny bone to the point of complete loss of control and riotous laughter with all of one's might (lasting 1D4+1 melee rounds). During this time, the character normally



can't act, but if he must, he can defend himself, and even force himself to make a maximum of two melee actions. However, he has no initiative, is -8 to strike, -5 to parry and dodge, damage is half (can't muster the strength because he's laughing so hard) and skill performance is -70% (too funny to concentrate). Roll for another attack 1D6 hours after the last one (roll for the first attack 1D6 hours after getting the curse).

## Curse: Theme Song

**Range:** Others by touch only.

**Duration:** 24 hours per level of experience upon creation.

**Saving Throw:** Standard, but evil characters have a -2 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Fifty

Very similar to the *Create Theme Song* spell, but the cursed version has a more deviant application. An affected character suffers from hearing a theme song play all the time. Each time the character enters a room, leaves a room, walks down a street, is about to enter a "combat" situation, does something interesting, speaks for the first time, or at the beginning of any action sequence, the theme song will begin to play. The theme song itself is very similar to the *Create Theme Song* spell, but has been imposed by the caster to do the following: to make the person stand out. Anyone hearing this dark and treacherous music will immediately doubt, distrust, and dislike the affected character. The common reaction is: "Listen to the music... He's *evil!*"

## Metamorphosis: Doll/Puppet

**Range:** Self, or other by touch (must touch bare flesh).

**Duration:** 30 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Unwilling victims are +2 to save.

**P.P.E.:** Sixty

The spell caster temporarily transforms into a doll or puppet of about one or two feet (0.3 to 0.6 m) tall and weighs about 10 lbs (4.5 kg). The doll's appearance will be an exact replica of the original character as a toy. The doll will have a magical aura making it seem to be a magic item even though no signs of life can be found in it. While in doll form, the character still retains his full amount of physical Hit Points and S.D.C. (or M.D.C.), as well as those from any armor he was wearing and which was turned into "doll clothes."

The doll can attack others, but damage is reduced due to the creature's diminutive size. Divide the damage caused by the doll by 10. For example, if a character would normally inflict 22 S.D.C. damage (or M.D.C.), in doll form he will only do 2 S.D.C. (or M.D.C. as the case may be). In case of fractions, round down the damage; attacks causing 1 to 9 points of damage will cause *none* in doll form, 10-19 will do one. The character in doll form may still interact with its surroundings, but is greatly limited (he's/she's only one or two feet/0.3-0.6 m tall, after all); reduce Spd. by 50%, use of normal-sized weapons is -3 to strike, and skill performance is -10% (-30% if operating a machine/device or vehicle, all of which will be oversized for the doll-like character).

When the spell time elapses, the mage may revert to his normal self, or stay in doll form for an additional 30 minutes per each of his P.E. attribute points in hours (others automatically

return to normal at the spell's end). After that time, the character reverts to his proper form. This spell will not affect those completely clad in body armor, power armor or inside a protective force field or vehicle. The mage must touch the bare skin of a potential victim to transform another character.

## Metamorphosis: Opposite Sex

**Range:** Self, or other by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Forty-five

The character can transform himself or another by touching bare skin, into the opposite sex.

If the character was a male: He will lose 20% of his original weight and S.D.C., but enjoys the following bonuses: +3 P.B., +1 I.Q., +2 P.E., and +1 P.P. His physical appearance will now resemble a female version of himself (including genitalia).

If the character was a female: Increase her weight by 20% (mostly muscle and bulk), and is +3 P.S., +2 P.E., +1D4+1 to Spd. and +12 S.D.C. (M.D.C. if a Mega-Damage creature).

**Limitations:** This spell does not affect creatures with no gender, or asexual beings. This spell will not grant special powers to the races which the gender determines what powers they have (i.e. Simvan Monster Riders); all skill knowledge and original natural abilities remain intact. **Note:** Those who get their gender changed CAN NOT impregnate another nor can they get impregnated. Nor are males likely to find men attractive, or females find ladies attractive, unless they were predisposed to such in the first place.

This spell will not affect those completely clad in body armor, power armor or inside a protective force field or vehicle. The mage must touch the bare skin of a potential victim to transform another character.

## Metamorphosis: Pig/Boar

**Range:** Self, or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Fifty

The caster can turn himself, or another person, into a huge pig or boar. The pig or boar is a magical creature which is larger than the normal pig or boar. While the character is in this form, he/she retains the ability to speak, cast spells (but at twice the normal P.P.E. Cost) and use psionic attacks, but can also squeal and grunt (loudly) like a pig and usually runs around and attacks squealing like a maniac. The character is unable to use any weapons, pilot a vehicle or use skills that require hands.

**Mystic Pig/Boar Stats:** Size: 3 feet (0.9 m) tall at the shoulders, 4-5 feet (1.2 to 1.5 m) long. Weight: 300 to 450 lbs (135 to 203 kg). Hit Points: 60 +5 per level of experience of the mage (or 40 M.D.C. +5 per level of experience). Attacks per Melee: Five. Damage: Boar Tusks do 2D6+4 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. as the case may be); Pig or Boar: Head butt does 1D6 damage, bite does 1D6, and trample does 3D6 (M.D. or S.D.C. depending on setting). Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, and +2 to

dodge. Speed: 24, but can reach speeds of 44 (30 mph/48 km) in bursts lasting 3D6 minutes. Abilities of Note: Nightvision 40 feet (12 m), prowl 45%, track by smell 50%, swim 50%. Limitations: Can still speak, but its speech is corrupted by grunts and oinks. Language and communication skills are reduced by -20%, and other skills, weapons, tools and devices requiring the dexterity of fingers and hands are impossible to do/use.

## Rapid Weed Growth – Superior

**Range**: Up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

**Duration**: 3 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw**: None.

**P.P.E.**: Forty-five

Similar to the *Rapid Weed Growth – Minor* spell, only a more powerful version of the spell. In this case, the caster creates one giant weed, or beanstalk, of immense size. The caster may only cast this spell onto the actual ground; cement, rock, or desert sands will not permit the spell to work. Moments after the Ludicrous Mage casts the spell, the weed will begin to grow. It will take two melee rounds, plus one melee round per each level of experience, before it reaches “full maturity.” Its maximum height is 60 feet (18.3 m) plus 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience. The giant weed also possesses multiple leaves that make it fairly simple to climb it, granting those with the Climbing skill a +20% (and those without the skill can climb the weed at 40%). The stem is rather resilient, possessing 100 S.D.C. plus 20 S.D.C. per level of experience; or 75 M.D.C., plus 15 M.D.C. per level of experience. The stem is also strong enough to support the weight of power armor and robot vehicles, but will snap when the weed is supporting a total weight of 2,500 pounds (1,125 kg), plus 300 pounds (135 kg) per level of experience.

## Remove Theme Song

**Range**: Self or others by touch.

**Duration**: Permanent.

**Saving Throw**: Standard to those not willing to lose their theme song.

**P.P.E.**: Forty

This spell permits the character to remove any traces of a theme song from a person affected by the *Create Theme Song* spell. If the caster is removing a theme song which he has put onto a target, this spell will automatically remove it. To remove a theme song implanted by another Ludicrous Mage, this spell will have a success ratio of 60% +2% per level of the spell caster. A failed roll means the theme song was not removed and no second attempt can be performed for the next 12 hours.

This spell can also remove the effects of the *Curse: Theme Song* spell at a success ratio of 30% +3% per level of the spell caster -1% per level of the curse spell. For example, a 5<sup>th</sup> level Ludicrous Mage attempts to remove the theme song spell put on his comrade by a 7<sup>th</sup> level mage. The success ratio is 35%; 30% +12% (4x3%) -7% (7x1%). A failed roll means that the theme song is not removed and no second attempt can be performed for the next 24 hours. In addition, the curse is extended by five days!

# Level Ten

## Create Theme Song

**Range**: Self or others by touch.

**Duration**: The theme song will permanently be part of the character, as if it was injected as part of his or her genes.

**Saving Throw**: None, the targeted character **must** be willing to receive the theme song or else the spell will have no effect.

**P.P.E.**: 80, 32 to alter an existing theme song.

This is the most wanted spell among Ludicrous Mages. For a small price, the spell permits its caster to create a theme song unto a target (self or another) that will follow him around wherever the mage goes. The targeted character must be willing to receive a theme song, otherwise the spell won't work. To impose a theme song onto someone, see the *Curse: Theme Song* spell. The song is magically played so that everyone can enjoy it. The volume is the equivalent of a hand radio (stereo surround sound), which can be clearly heard up to 200 feet (61 m) away (outside) or the immediate room next to the one the enchanted character is in. The typical length of the song is at least 5 seconds long, but can range up to 45 seconds to two minutes. Popular theme songs are taken from old TV shows (like the original “Batman”) or others from the 70's or 80's (like “The A-Team,” or even “Shaft”). Generally, the theme songs are TV or movie oriented (like the “Alfred Hitchcock Theme”). Ultimately, the style or particular song will be up to the caster to decide, which can range from comical to uplifting, dark to evil, fast paced to action oriented, mysterious to tense, catchy to *you can't get it out of your mind* kind of deal.

As mentioned before, the theme song comes with a price. The targeted character will lose a small amount of P.P.E., which is believed to be the cause of why the theme song is “permanently” part of the character. Ludicrous Mages will temporarily lose 3 P.P.E. per theme song while non-Ludicrous Mages will lose 4 P.P.E. per theme song. This amount of P.P.E. is put aside and the character has no access to. But, when the theme song is removed by the *Remove Theme Song* spell, the character will gain access to his lost P.P.E.

When the spell is cast, the mage will select the appropriate song for himself or another. The song will now become a permanent part of that person. The spell leaves a magical trace or signature (some say it's an addition to the character's genes) that permits him or others to play the theme song. See the spell *Play/Replay Theme Song* for a description on how to hear one's song.

If the caster so wishes, the mage can alter or change the theme song by re-casting the spell but the P.P.E. cost is almost half. It is harder to first create a theme song than to change or edit it. A mage can always have multiple theme songs to fit the appropriate situation, like a roaming theme, a combat theme, or a victory theme. In these situations, the caster will need to cast the spell at full P.P.E. cost to “add” new theme songs and most sacrifice additional P.P.E.

**Note**: To fully remove a theme song from a target, see the *Remove Theme Song* spell description. Also, see the *Play/Replay Theme Song* spell for a list on when, how and bonuses a character gets from hearing his (or other) theme songs. In addi-



tion, any character intoned with his own P.P.E. (i.e. magic O.C.C.'s and creatures that can use magic) will "instinctually" know how to use the *Play/Replay Theme Song* spell until he/she loses their theme song (see spell for description).

## Laughter That Can Cure Phobias

**Range:** Touch

**Duration:** Varies.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Seventy

**Limitation:** The caster can only attempt this spell on the same person for the same phobia once a year.

The Ludicrous Mage casts a spell on the suffering character and then does an hour long routine that makes the enchanted individual laugh riotously at everything he says and does. At some point in the act, the cause of the phobia (may be a facsimile) is introduced and humorously beaten up or destroyed. At the end of the hour, the phobia *may*, with any luck, be gone. **Note:** Spectators can also watch the show, but are not likely to find it as side-splitting funny as the enchanted individual. This spell can be used to attempt to cure Phobia Curses and the actual insanity.

Roll percentile dice for the result:

**1-10%:** Nothing happened. The character still has the insanity, but enjoyed the show.

**11-30%:** Poor result. The character will be freed from the phobia for 1D4 weeks only.

**31-50%:** Not so bad. The character feels better, but will only be free from the phobia for 1D6+2 months. However, further treatment has an excellent chance for a successful cure (+20%).

**51-70%:** Practically healed. The character is a bit nervous about, and dislikes the subject/source of his phobia but can now control the fear and not run away or become a whimpering wreck (**Note:** -1 on initiative when forced to deal with the phobia, and would prefer to avoid the frightening thing when he can). Most would still consider this a successful cure!

**71-100%:** Good-bye, phobia! The character is completely cured!

## Metamorphosis: Animation

**Range:** Self, or others by touch at a higher P.P.E. cost.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 60 (85 to affect others)

The character will be transformed from flesh and blood to a cartoon version of himself. This can be confusing when others see the transformed character, since it isn't a common occurrence to see a "live" animated character in front of your eyes. The transformed character can interact as normal, but might not know he has been transformed. If you need a better idea of how the result of the spell looks like, think of the movie "*Who framed Roger Rabbit?*" or "*Space Jam.*" All weapons, armor and equipment being held or worn by the character will also become a cartoon version of itself. This is a rare metamorphosis spell since it can still affect those who possess innate transfor-

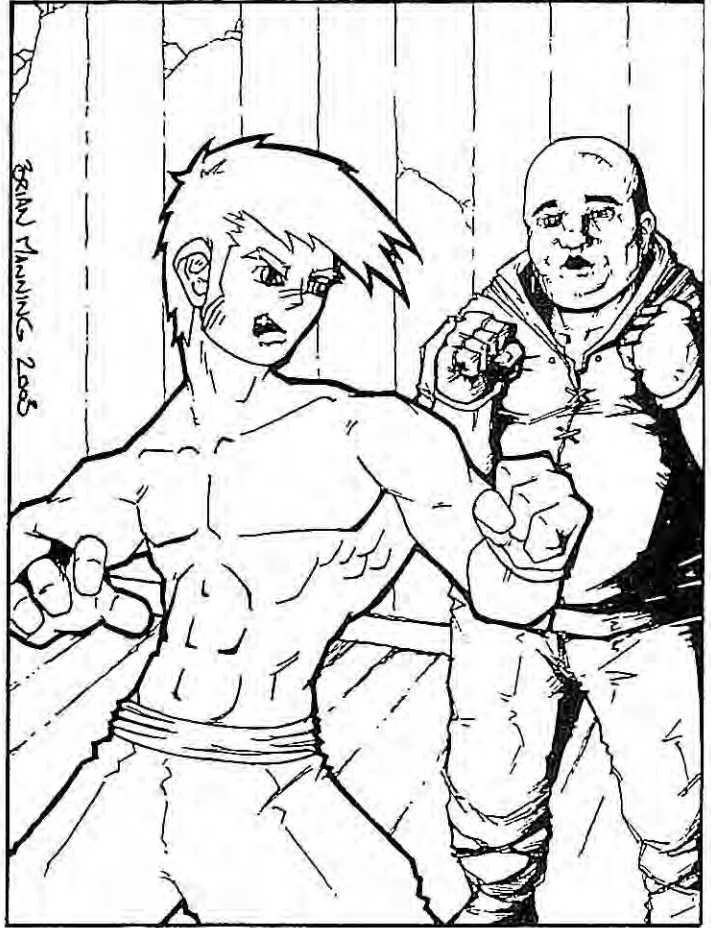
mation abilities (dragons, vampires, etc.) who are normally unaffected by metamorphosis spells. The transformed character retains ALL of his innate powers and skills, and the only difference is that he looks like a cartoon character. The animated style is left to the discretion of the spell caster, but here are some ideas:

**Basic Animation:** The character only looks like an animation, but all features are drawn to the exact detail.

**Black and White:** The character has no colors, except different shades of grays.

**Bright Colors:** The character is made out of vibrant colors that really stand out.

**Toony:** The animation exaggerates the character's features, i.e. large head, hands, feet, small body, etc.



**Japanimation:** Basically the animation makes the character look like he has long legs and a slightly larger head. Female characters will have exaggerated... upper body muscles (yes... that sounds about right!).

**Note:** This spell doesn't affect characters in power armor, robots and robot vehicles.

## Metamorphosis: Clown

**Range:** Self or other by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Seventy

The character will instantly transform into your typical circus clown with white face, big red nose, funny make-up, the big feet, the oversized clothes, etc. He will have the same basic skill abilities and O.C.C. skills as those of the Ludicrous Mage with the exception of other skills or spell casting abilities to use Ludicrous Magic. Furthermore, he will be compelled to act silly, make jokes and puns, and perform like a clown for others, especially children. The character may still have his or her own agenda, skills and memories, but suffers from this uncontrollable urge to “clown around” and make people laugh. This may lead him to pause to do a 1D4 melee round long skit or trick for a child or group of people rather than make good on an escape or the opportunity to strike at his target. Likewise the character skips rather than runs (-10% on Spd.), likes to do a somersault/roll when prowling or rushing to attack, dance when making an exit, and similar clown behavior. Obviously, unlike most metamorphosis spells, this one can be used against one’s enemies to great effect by slowing them down, causing delays and creating confusion and discord among his teammates’ group.

## Metamorphosis: Monster

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Ninety

Similar to the *Metamorphosis: Superior* spell described in the *Rifts® RPG*, page 183, *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, page 219, or the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 135, but has some differences. First, the spell enables the caster to transform himself into any real (or imagined), living monster, D-Bee, supernatural creature or demon. The mage does not possess any of its powers or abilities (other than Horror Factor) and only retains his own normal human abilities (I.Q., memory, attributes, Hit Points, S.D.C., skills, etc.). A character other than the practitioner of magic can be transformed, but will remain as a monstrosity until the spell’s duration elapses or the mage who invoked it cancels it.

## Level Eleven

### Metamorphosis: Giant

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 20 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 100

The spell is similar to the *Giant* spell described in *Rifts® Ultimate Edition*, page 219, or the *Rifts® Book of Magic*, page 133, but has multiple differences. The character becomes a larger version of himself, increasing his size till he’s 25 feet (7.6 m) tall! All of the character’s normal clothing also grows to fit his new build, but armor, equipment and weapons will remain the same. The character’s strength will increase from the size change, but he will become slower from being bigger. The Ludicrous Mage will use the spell to make himself or others really stand out, or just want to make a point. When the spell time elapses, the character is returned to his normal size, and suffers from dizziness for 2D4 minutes.

**Note:** The spell *only* affects humanoids that are naturally less than 10 feet (3.0 m) in height. It has no effect on giants, supernatural creatures, demons, and characters in full body or heavy armor (or environmental armor).

Bonuses:

- Hit Points and S.D.C. are increased by x3 (x2 and becomes M.D.C. in a Mega-Damage environment; or add 50% if already an M.D.C. creature).
- P.S. is increased by 50%! But remains normal (does not become supernatural) and the P.P. is reduced by 25% and Spd. by 20%.
- Attacks per melee round are reduced by two since the character is much larger and slower then before.
- +1 to strike and +3 to parry.
- Add 2000 pounds (900 kg) to weight.
- -2 to dodge, and opponents have a +1 to strike due to character’s the huge size.

### Metamorphosis: Toad/Frog

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** One hour per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** Sixty

The caster can turn him/herself, or another person, into a large toad or frog (about the size of a small toaster). Any clothing and possessions fall away from the amphibian.

In faerie tales, these “enchanted” toads and frogs are known to return to their normal human form (or a princess as the faerie tale goes) if a person kisses it smack on the lips. If a character is turned into the mystic toad or frog, only a kiss from a person of the opposite sex or a loved one (including either parent, sibling and even a friend of the same sex) will immediately cancel the spell before its normal duration. The only difference between the two is that the toad is brown with dry lumpy skin (the so-called “warts” on its back) and a frog is a nice green color but with a slimy feeling. **G.M. Note:** Stats of a toad/frog are as found in the *Monsters and Animals™* sourcebook.

### Multiplicity

**Range:** Up to 40 feet (12 m) +5 feet (1.5 meters per level of experience.

**Duration:** Two melee rounds per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 150

The spell caster creates one replica of himself for every three levels of experience (thus, one at 3rd level, two at 6th level, three at 9th level, etc.). These replicas work like an extension or an essence fragment of the spell caster. Because of this, they will have the same stats, skills, abilities, magic, and powers as the original, but all at three levels lower. However, any P.P.E. used by the duplicate will use up the P.P.E. of the original. They will all talk at the same time, or each will say a part of a sentence. (“Why did the?” “Chicken cross?” “The road?” “To throw a pie!” “At Emperor Prosek!”) All try to work together and will obey the real mage.



**Limitation:** The spell caster controls every one of his multiples, but they can only be a certain distance away. If the mage is stunned or becomes unconscious, all multiples of himself vanish. In addition, the multiples can be recognized by their eyes, which appear black and lifeless.

## Level Twelve

### Create Clown Golem

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** One year per level of the spell caster.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 500

The spell caster can create a Clown Golem that will obey his/her every command. The mage must first draw a pentagram in fish guts. Second, he/she sculpts the golem's humanoid shape from hay, weeds, branches, and mud. Third, he/she must place two acorns for eyes, and a large red gem for a nose (the gem must have a value of 1,500 credits or more). Fourth, the caster must cover the golem with white face, clown makeup and with colorful clothing. Fifth, he must place the heart into the "body." The heart is a small brass horn with a rubber hand pump like those used on a bicycle. Finally, the mage pins a fake flower on the chest or lapel and casts the spell to bring the monstrosity to life. **Note:** Technically this is not a ritual, but a spell that requires components, which is why the Clown Golem has a limited life span rather than living until destroyed and why it only costs 500 P.P.E.

#### Clown Golem Stats:

**Horror Factor:** 14

**Height:** 10 feet to 18 feet (3 to 5 m).

**Weight:** 800 to 2000 pounds (360 to 900 kg).

**Attributes:** I.Q. 7, P.S. 25, P.P. 17, Spd 15 (30 if rolling); all others are standard.

**S.D.C.:** 100 +1D6 per level of its maker (or 50 M.D.C. +1D6 per).

**P.P.E.:** 80

**Skills:** Imitation (gestures), gymnastics, play musical instruments (saxophone, piano, trumpet and violin), and pilot car, truck and boat. All are at 80%.

**Special abilities:** The Clown Golem communicates with "honks" which only the creator can understand. Can completely regenerate within 24 hours, unless its heart is removed, and is impervious to most psionic and magic attacks other than those that inflict physical damage.

**Combat:** Four attacks per melee round. Punch attacks do 2D6 damage, head butt, elbow and stomp attacks do 1D6 damage, while kick attacks will cause 2D6 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting); +10 for P.S. attribute bonus. Has no bonus to parry or dodge, or on initiative.

**Magical Abilities:** The Clown Golem can cast each of the following Ludicrous Magic spells at half the spell strength level of his creator (i.e. if the mage was 6th level, the Golem's magic is 3rd level): Hand Buzzer, Water Flower and Giant Clown Ball.

**Vulnerability:** Magic Pies do double damage!

### Create Marshmallow Golem

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Six months per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 700

The spell caster can create a Marshmallow Golem that will obey his every command. Similar to the Create Clown Golem, this spell technically isn't a ritual, but requires components. Thus, the Marshmallow Golem has a limited life span rather than living until destroyed.

For the spell caster to have his own Marshmallow creation, he must follow the following steps: First, the mage must draw a pentagram in white icing sugar. Secondly, he sculpts the golem's humanoid shape from 50 pounds (22.5 kg) of marshmallows. Thirdly, he must place two gems for eyes (the gems must have a minimum value of 1,000 credits or more). Fourth, the caster must give the golem an article of clothing. This could be a scarf, a jacket, pair of pants, something that will make the golem stand out (it's not like a giant marshmallow creature doesn't already stand out). Fifthly, he must place the heart into the "body." The heart is basically a stick. Any stick. Just like the ones used to cook marshmallows on top of a fire. But the stick must be decorated with necklaces and pearls. These decorations must have a value of no less than 1,000 credits. Finally, the mage casts the spell to bring his creation to life.

After the caster has finished casting the spell, the enchantment will cause the small marshmallow sculpture to grow until reaching its appropriate size. The sculpture grows because the magic energizes the marshmallows which suddenly mutate and double till the marshmallow sculpture becomes a giant. Once the golem is fully formed, it will fist burp, or cry (like every newborn), then call for his mother, the Ludicrous Mage that created it. The golem will then stand and is now a new giant pet ready to play and explore the world, as per the caster's request. **Note:** Only one Ludicrous Mage may be identified as "mother," even if multiple mages participated in the spell.

#### Marshmallow Golem Stats:

**Humor Factor:** 16 (consider this a Horror Factor if the golem is approaching a character in anger, or perhaps just approaching).

**Height:** Anywhere between 18 feet (5.5 m) and a maximum of 20 feet (6.1 m), plus 3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience, but most casters always maximize the size. It's more fun that way!

**Note:** If the golem's heart (that decorated stick) has a value of 56,000 credits or more, add 18 feet (5.5 m) to the creature's height.

**Weight:** 2 to 12 tons. Now that's a lot of marshmallows!

**Attributes:** I.Q. 5, P.S. 30, P.P. 6, P.E. 13, Spd 16 (it can't run, but has large strides); all others are standard.

**S.D.C.:** 150 +18 per level of its maker (or 70 M.D.C. +10 per level of experience). If the golem's heart (that decorated stick) has a value of 38,000 credits or more, double the creature's normal S.D.C./M.D.C.

**P.P.E.:** 85 (but the golem can't use it).

**Skills and Special Abilities:** None whatsoever! It basically walks around with a smile on its face. It doesn't really know why people run away when he's walking into the streets. It

doesn't talk, other than calling his creator "mommy," but does giggle, laughs and burps from time to time. Although you could say that not needing to breathe or nourishment is an ability.

**Combat:** Four attacks per melee round. Physical damage as per supernatural P.S. damage, but a stomp attack does 1D4x10 S.D.C. (or 4D6 M.D.). Sitting on someone is futile for any S.D.C. or minor M.D.C. creature, and I don't care who it is!!

**Vulnerabilities:** Takes double damage from fire! In addition, due to its huge size, attackers will have a +1 to strike while using a firearm (gun, laser, etc.). Also, when all S.D.C. or M.D.C. have been depleted, the Marshmallow golem explodes, sending marshmallow debris everywhere. All within a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius will be covered by marshmallow (a good 6 inches/15 cm of the stuff)!

**Note:** The god Backsmack can create the Marshmallow Golem at twice the normal spell's height (76 feet/23.2 m tall), S.D.C./M.D.C. (516 S.D.C./260 M.D.C.) and three times the splattering radius (150 feet/45.7 m) when the golem is destroyed! Backsmack is described in *The Rifter*® #9½, on page 62.

## Metamorphosis: Mist

**Range:** Self or others by touch.

**Duration:** 25 minutes per level of experience.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 200

As per the *Metamorphosis: Mist* spell described in the *Rifts*® *Book of Magic*, page 145.

## Spells of Legend

### Call Upon Backsmack

**Range:** Anywhere.

**Duration:** Instantaneously.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 246

This special spell will permit any Ludicrous Mage to send a message to Backsmack, inviting him to the caster's world. In essence, it will summon the god for a visit. (**Note:** Backsmack is described in *The Rifter*® #9½, on page 62.)

To perform the spell, the caster must be within 50 feet (15.2 m) from a nexus. The message is magically sent through the nexus and across the Megaverse directly to Backsmack. Within 1D6x10+10 minutes, the god will come through the nexus to visit the caster. The god will generally stay a few minutes to a few hours, or he won't even bother to leave. All depends on his mood and the fun he has on his visit.

Backsmack will always visit the Ludicrous Mage who summons him. Hey, if the character was able to learn this summoning spell, the mage *must* be important. If the caster wastes the god's time, or ditches the god, or attempts to harm the god, the caster will be added to the IGNORE LIST, which means the god will not come by the next time the caster attempts to summon him.

There are only a few ways to learn this spell. The first is from Backsmack himself. The god will give the spell to fellow Ludicrous Mages who are worthy of it. Multiple scrolls have been left around the Megaverse. These scrolls have "false" titles just as a joke. Nothing appeals to the god more than when a group of power-hungry mages thinks they are summoning a being of great power and Backsmack arrives to pull a few pranks. The look on their faces is priceless!



### Create Carnies

**Range:** 10 feet (3.0 m) away, but the carnies must stay within one mile (1.6 km) of the spell caster.

**Duration:** Exists for 24 hours per level of experience, or until destroyed. If the carnie is created within one mille from a ley line, it will exist twice the normal spell duration (48 hours). If the carnie is created within one mile of a nexus point, it will exist 3 times the normal spell duration (72 hours). If the carnie is created at a nexus point, it will exist 5 times the normal spell duration (120 hours/5 days).

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 150 per carnie.

The caster can create carnival minions called carnies. These are bizarre creatures of magic that appear like common (or abnormal) circus people. To create them, the Ludicrous Mage requires one hour of intense meditation and concentration. After that time, the carnies will begin to form by themselves. It takes about an additional 20 minutes for them to form. Once formed, they will obey the creator to the letter. A mage can control one carnie per level of experience, but may only create up to three of one kind at any time. The carnies will cease to exist when the duration of the spell expires, out of the range of their master, or when they are destroyed. In either case, the carnie will disintegrate.

**Common Features:** All carnies have a limited vocabulary. They can say simple phrases and sentences, but anything complex will confuse and anger them. They are all creatures of magic; therefore, depending on the type of carnie, they will radiate a high level of P.P.E. or a supernatural aura. Without the presence or the "leadership" of their creator, it will result in their death. Types of Carnies: The Ludicrous Mage can select from a variety of carnie types, including *Animal Tamers*, *Krazy*



*Klowns, the Fat Lady, the Genius, the Idiot, the Jack in the Box, and the Strongman.*

## Animal Tamers

Attributes: M.A. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 40 (or M.D.C.: 20).

Size: Human size, typically 6 feet (1.8 m) tall.

Appearance: Looks like a wild man clad in a little, furry leopard skin loincloth or shorts; cape optional.

Abilities and Powers: Animal Tamers can summon and control animals at will. They can call any animal of choice within a 3 mile (4.8 km) radius. They can call 50 small rodents or birds, 25 dogs or dog-sized animals, and 10 buffalo or deer-sized animals. The animals will obey all simple commands without objections.

Combat: 3 attacks per melee round; punches and kicks do normal human damage.

Bonuses: Takes no damage from fire or cold.

## The British Explorer

Attributes: P.E. 16, all others average.

S.D.C.: 18+2D6 (or M.D.C.: 12+2D4)

Size: Either a tall lad of about 6 feet and a half (2.0 m), or a short stocky fellow of five feet (1.5 m) nothing.

Appearance: A male or female with a thick British accent. The character wears beige jungle gear which includes the short sleeve shirt, the shorts, the hiking boots with the wool socks that reach the knees, and a utility belt that includes 20 feet (6.1 m) of rope, a small hammer, and some archaeologist equipment.

Abilities and Powers: An expert archaeologist (90%), knows many myths and legends (at 65%), and knows jungle/wilderness survival at 70%. He is also very curious of new people and creatures.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round. Musket Pistol: Damage: 1D6, Range: 30 feet (9.1 m); Musket Rifle: Damage: 3D6, Range: 150 feet (45.7 m). But requires one melee action to reload after firing. The explorer also has a sabre that does 2D4 points of damage.

Bonuses: +2 to fire with the pistol, +3 with the rifle, and +2 to strike, parry, and dodge with the sabre.

## Krazy Klowns

Attributes: P.P. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 30+1D6 (or M.D.C.: 20+1D6).

Size: 5 feet (1.5 m)

Horror Factor: 12

Appearance: "Look, a clown!" Size varies from fat to skinny, from having big shoes to a large nose. Basically, your typical clown. The only feature that's strange is that they don't look happy and have pointed teeth. These are used as your grunt or infantry soldiers. They are actually combat clowns.

Abilities and Powers: Combat oriented with W.P. Sword, W.P. Knife, W.P. Staff, W.P. Energy Pistol and W.P. Blunt, each at 3rd level proficiency, gymnastics and climbing.

Combat: Five attacks per melee round and possess all normal

human fighting abilities equal to 3rd level Expert Hand to Hand. Bonuses: +3 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge; takes double damage from silver and silver covered weapons; impervious to Ludicrous Magic!

## The Fat Lady

Attributes: P.S. 21, P.E. 18, Spd. 5, all others average.

S.D.C.: 75 (or M.D.C.: 50).

Size: 6 feet (1.8 m) tall, and about 5 feet (1.5 m) wide. ("You're not fat! You're just a whole lot of woman.")

Horror Factor: 12; look means and is violent, rude and crude.

Appearance: This monstrosity resembles something like a walking basketball with pudgy arms and legs protruding from mounds of undulating fat.

Abilities and Powers:

Normal Physical Attacks Do Half Damage: Including punches, falls, sword swipes, bullets, rail gun rounds and energy blasts.

Roll Attack: Can roll up to a speed of 40, but must stop after 4D6 minutes or it will get too dizzy and become sick.

Toxic Fumes: Once per minute, this thing can release a toxic gas that will impair anyone without environmental body armor. The gas causes a -3 penalty to all attacks. Duration: 4 minutes. The gas affects a radius of 30 feet (10 meters).

Combat: Three attacks per melee round. Roll attack does 6D6 damage and will knock opponents off their feet (lose initiative and one melee action), punch or body bump does 2D6+6 damage (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting). The Fat Lady can hurl herself up into the air and fall onto a character, but this may only be attempted once per minute, counts as three melee attacks and does 1D6x10 damage.

Bonuses: +2 to strike.

Note: When the Fat Lady is killed (Damage Capacity reduced to zero or less), she begins to sing, and then vanishes.

## Fire Eater

Attributes: I.Q. 8, M.A. 4, P.S. 18, all others average.

S.D.C.: 30 (or M.D.C.: 28)

Size: Humanoid, between 5 and 7 feet (1.5 and 2.1 m) tall.

Appearance: A dark skinned humanoid with tattoos covering his or her body, wearing only a pair of used shorts and sandals.

Abilities and Powers: Takes no damage from fire and heat, but takes double damage from cold and ice. Can eat any type of fire! He possesses two sticks that are three feet (1 meter) long and have a flame at the end. By placing the two fire-sticks in front of him and blowing a volatile gas between them, the carnie can spit a small fireball the size of a spitball or create a giant fireball.

Combat: Four attacks per melee round. Fire sticks do 2D6 points of damage; a fire spit does 1D4 with a range of 15 feet (4.6 m); a fireball does 4D4 with a range of 60 feet (18.3 m) (counts as two attacks); or by hand to hand as per supernatural P.S.

Bonuses: +2 to strike, -1 to dodge.

## Flower Power

Attributes: All attributes are 2 points below average.

S.D.C.: 10 S.D.C. (or M.D.C.: 6)

Size: Human sized.

Appearance: Basically a hippie. This includes the long hair (braided or in a ponytail), the colored shirt with brown leather jacket, bell-bottomed pants, and a baseball cap or one of those handkerchief thingies. The hippie will have a glazed look with bloodshot eyes and will have great difficulty at paying attention to whatever is going on.

Abilities and Powers: The Flower Power *thinks* it has the ability to communicate with the animals and the Earth, but is right only 49% of the time. They have a sweet smell and if eaten by a monster or creature, the creature will be drugged as per the *Drugging Flower* for the next 15+2D6 minutes. They do have a slingshot that fires flowers that can do one of the following effects:

- *Bad Flower:* A flower with thorns that causes 1D4 points of damage.
- *Drugging Flower:* Saving throw of 13. A failed roll means the character is drugged, baked, high, or whatever term you want to call it. The character can't perform any skills and combat bonuses and melee attacks are reduced by half. Monsters and creatures that eat the hippie will also suffer these effects for 15+2D6 minutes without any saving throws.
- *Peace Flower:* Saving throw of 12. The affected character will feel at peace with himself and those around him. All anger will be lifted from his spirit. The character will only attack once per melee round, but the remaining melee actions can be used to perform non-combat actions.
- *Sleeping Flower:* Saving throw of 13. The affected character will fall asleep for 2D4 minutes and can't be wakened (unless actual damage has been implemented).

Combat: Two attacks per melee. Can attack with slingshot or by hand to hand, but hand to hand is more of a slapping style of combat than actually punching. Each slap does 1 point of damage.

Bonuses: +3 to fire with slingshot and +5 to save versus mind control and possession.

## French Cook

Attributes: P.P. 12 (18 when cooking), all others average.

S.D.C.: 20 (or M.D.C.: 12)

Size: Human size, typically 5 and a half feet (1.7 m) tall.

Appearance: A French cook, very French to the point that he can't speak or understand any other languages, but makes one hell of a meal. He wears a pair of white pants and shirt with an apron. He never goes anywhere without his large cook's hat.

Abilities and Powers: Can cook any type of meal at 95%! He will naturally know *all* recipes but will never share them with anyone. Having two or more French Cooks in one kitchen at the same time will result in them arguing or even fighting about how to prepare the meal.

Combat: Three attacks per melee round. Normally he doesn't enter combat, but will if insulted about his meal. Knives do 1D6, and other cooking utensils (like forks and pans) do 1D4.

Bonuses: The French Cook will have a +4 to strike using cooking utensils, +3 to strike while using a knife.

## Genius

Attributes: I.Q. 21, Spd. 7, all others average.

S.D.C.: 25 (or M.D.C.: 15).

Size: 4 feet (1.2 m) tall.

Appearance: A midget with an oversized head (twice the normal size). They act very unsociable and lack people skills.

Abilities and Powers: Knows all skills in one skill category at 80% (G.M.'s choice), except the Physical category.

Combat Two attacks per melee; normal human damage.

Bonuses: +4 to save vs psionic attacks.

## Idiot

Attributes: I.Q. 2, all others average.

S.D.C.: 20+1D6 (or M.D.C.: 10+1D6)

Size: 7 feet tall (2 m) and slim.

Appearance: Looks like a tall peasant who hasn't got a clue. They wear trousers or work pants and are useless except for biting the heads off of chickens and plucking them.

Abilities and Powers: None, they are complete idiots!

Combat: Two attacks per melee round, but only attack when attacked, threatened, or called a *moron*, *retard* or *geek*. Uses one of the following magic weapons: rake does 2D6 damage, shovel does 3D6, and pitchfork does 3D6 (S.D.C. or M.D. depending on the setting).

Bonuses: +6 vs psionic and magical attacks (they are too dumb to know what's going on), and +3 to parry. Can drink an unlimited amount of alcohol and not suffer any obvious penalties.

## Jack in the Box

Attributes: I.Q. 10, Spd. 10, all others average.

M.D.C.: 50

Size: A giant box 6x6x6 feet (1.8x1.8x1.8 m). Total height is 12 feet (3.6 m) when the head pops out.

Appearance: A giant colorful box with a knob on the side. When the knob turns, a Joker's head pops out, attached to a spring.

Abilities and Powers: Movement is done by hopping. The Jack in the Box can move at a speed of 10. It can also hop at a height of 20 ft/6 m up and 15 ft/4.6 m across.

Combat: 3 attacks per melee round: Bite does 2D4 damage, body check does 3D6, head butt does 2D6, spring loaded head butt does 5D6 (counts as two attacks; S.D.C. or M.D. depending on setting).

Bonuses: Takes half damage from normal attacks, impervious to mind control, but full damage from magic.

## Knife Thrower

Attributes: P.S. 8, P.P. 16, Spd. 20, P.B. 16, all others average.

S.D.C.: 25 (or M.D.C.: 15)

Size: Around 6 feet (1.8 m) tall.

Appearance: A good-looking male or female that wears a black ensemble with a red shirt and a black jacket.

Abilities and Powers: An expert at throwing knives, throwing axes, and other small, hand-sized stabbing weapons.



**Combat:** Two attacks per melee round, or five when using knives and other small, hand-sized stabbing weapons. Throwing knives and throwing axes do 1D6 points of damage, ninja star and similar small stabbing weapons do 1D4 points of damage, and needles (and others) do 1 point of damage.

**Bonuses:** When throwing any stabbing weapon (like knives and small axes), the character has a +8 to hit a non-living target (the apple on top of the assistant's head) or a +3 to hit a living target (the assistant).

## Muscle Man

**Attributes:** P.S. 32 (supernatural), P.E. 18, all others average.

**S.D.C.:** 90 (or M.D.C.: 50)

**Size:** 8 feet (2.4 m) tall, about 4 feet (1.2 m) wide.

**Appearance:** A tall humanoid with an unbelievable amount of muscles. Picture Arnold Schwarzenegger cubed.

**Abilities and Powers:** Supernatural strength of 32; will take half damage from non-magical attacks, but twice from magic attacks.

**Combat:** 4 attacks per melee round; club does 3D6 M.D.; a restrained punch does 5D6+17 S.D.C.; a full strength punch does 4D6 M.D.; a power punch does 1D4x10 M.D. (Counts as two attacks).

**Bonuses:** +2 to strike, +4 to save against poison and toxins.

## The Mutant

**Attributes:** P.E. 16, P.P. 12, all others average.

**S.D.C.:** 30 (or M.D.C.: 26)

**Size:** Normal human size, but may be between 5 and 6½ feet (1.5 and 2.0 m).

**Appearance:** The so-called mutant looks like a person in an animal costume (and a strange one when it comes down to it). The mutant will act like the animal it's supposed to be, but will still seem to be very human.

**Abilities and Powers:** Imitate animals (badly though). Can run, leap, and prance around similar to the animal it's supposed to be. It can talk, but does it with a great attempt to sound animalistic by adding growls, snorts, or whatever. The strange thing is that the animals are completely convinced they are genuine members of their race. They will even communicate and understand each other. The mutant will also be affected by any summoning spell or animal related spells.

**Combat:** Three attacks per melee round. Damage from claws (1D4), bite (1 point of damage), punch (1D6), pounding (2D4), or other similar animal attacks.

**Bonuses:** +2 to strike.

## The Role-Player

**Attributes:** I.Q. 18, M.A. 16, M.E. 15, all others average.

**S.D.C.:** 12 (or M.C.D.: 8)

**Size:** 5 feet, 8 inches tall (1.6 m).

**Appearance:** A young lad between his early teens to late 30's (may be older). Majority males (65%), they wear glasses, a t-shirt, old pair of jeans with joggers and non-matching socks. Also carries a bag that holds all of their role-playing accessories.

Or, may have a *similar* appearance as your G.M. (G.M.s are free to alter their appearance as they see fit.)

**Abilities and Powers:** A fantastic storyteller. Anyone who hears the Role-Player tell a story must make a saving throw against magic (of 13). A failed roll means the character is caught up in the story and can't get enough of it. The Role-Player also has an excellent memory (can use the *Total Recall* psionic power without any cost) and possesses an amazing imagination. He can imitate any voice, accent, and personality at extreme precision (79%). The Role Player also carries a bag that holds all his role-playing accessories.

**Combat:** Two attacks per melee round, and has no combat experience.

**Bonuses:** +4 to save versus magic and psionics. The Role-Player is also immune to intimidation and Horror Factor.

## Tumblers

**Attributes:** P.S. 15, P.P. 20, P.E. 15, Spd. 18, all others average.

**S.D.C.:** 18 +2D4 (or M.D.C.: 12 +1D6).

**Size:** Normal human size.

**Appearance:** A humanoid in shiny skintight tights. The ensemble is always colorful, may have reflecting material (sparkles) on it or may even be fluorescent. Some have a mask or decorations on the arms and legs that make their stunts seem more stunning.

**Abilities and Powers:** As their name suggests, they are excellent tumblers and acrobats. They can perform impressive stunts, flips, jumps, etc. They can jump up to 20 feet (6.1 m) high, and 15 feet (4.6 m) in length. They can perform the following skills: acrobatics (85%), gymnastics (90%), prowl (68%). They are also extremely flexible and double jointed, able to fit into a small 2.5x2.5 foot (0.76x0.76 m) box!

**Combat:** Three attacks per melee round, and fights as if they were martial artists. Punch does 1D6 points of damage while a kick does 2D4. They can perform most martial arts as a fifth level martial artist master (plus one level per each other level of experience of the caster)!

**Bonuses:** +8 to fall/roll with impact, +6 to dodge, and +4 to initiative, plus bonuses from *Hand to Hand: Martial Arts*.

## Enhance Carnie

**Range:** One carnie by touch.

**Duration:** Until the carnie is destroyed.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** Seventy-five

This spell of legend was created by a powerful Ludicrous Mage who specialized in the creation and manipulation of carnival minions conjured by the *Create Carnie* spell. The Mage was able to create a spell that will enhance a carnie in different ways. The caster may add one enhancement to one carnie only! Attempting to give a second enhancement will cancel the spell and destroy the carnival minion. The caster can choose one of the following:

- **Longevity:** The carnie will remain intact for the equivalent of five times the normal duration of the *Create Carnie* spell, not

including the duration modification from the proximity of a ley line and/or a nexus point.

- **Toughness:** The carnie will have twice its normal S.D.C./M.D.C. plus an additional +2 S.D.C. (+1 M.D.C.) per level of experience of the spell caster.
- **Quickness:** The carnie will be faster and more agile, gaining a +1 melee action, +2 on initiative, a +3 to P.P. and a +6 to Spd.
- **Aggressiveness:** The carnie is violent and hot tempered. It will gain a +3 to strike, -1 to parry and dodge, and a +5 S.D.C. (+3 M.D.C.).
- **Gifted:** The carnie will be gifted to use three (3) Ludicrous Spells from levels one to five. The caster will intuitively “insert” the knowledge, and the carnie can cast each spell two times (plus one additional time per every second level of experience) in a 24-hour period.

## Laugh of Exorcism

**Range:** By touch only.

**Duration:** The spell lasts 5 minutes, results last 6 months or longer.

**Saving Throw:** Standard.

**P.P.E.:** 200

The caster can perform an exorcism as per the *Exorcism* spell described on pg. 180 of the *Rifts® RPG*, pg. 214 of *Rifts® Ultimate Ed.*, or on pg. 119 of the *Rifts® Book of Magic*. Since this spell is outside the expertise of the Ludicrous Mage, the spell cost is much greater than the normal invocation. The spells application is slightly different too. The caster will first cast the spoken words of the spell, and then start tickling the possessed victim. The demon or spirit will be *laughed out!* The effects on the demon are the same as the original spell, as are the bonuses against being possessed. (See the original spell for more on the exorcism.)

## Laugh of Resurrection

**Range:** Touch.

**Duration:** Permanent.

**Saving Throw:** None.

**P.P.E.:** 500

The spell caster can bring the dead back to life. The process consists of putting the dead in a circus ring with a radius of 7 feet (2.1 m). The mage will then tickle the corpse until it is brought back to life. The ritual takes 15 minutes to awaken the dead. The only limitations are that the character may only have died no longer than 32 hours ago, the body must be intact and only ONE attempt may be done on ONE specific character. If successful, the deceased comes to life with 2D6 Hit Points (or 1D4 M.D. if a Mega-Damage being) and all other wounds/injuries are healed. If the mage does not succeed, a different mage may try but never the same one (ever). **Success Ratio:** 40% +1% per level of experience.

# Where's Wayne?

## A Heroes Unlimited™ adventure

By Paulie Ferkelberger

First Appeared in *The Rifter®* #9½

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

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

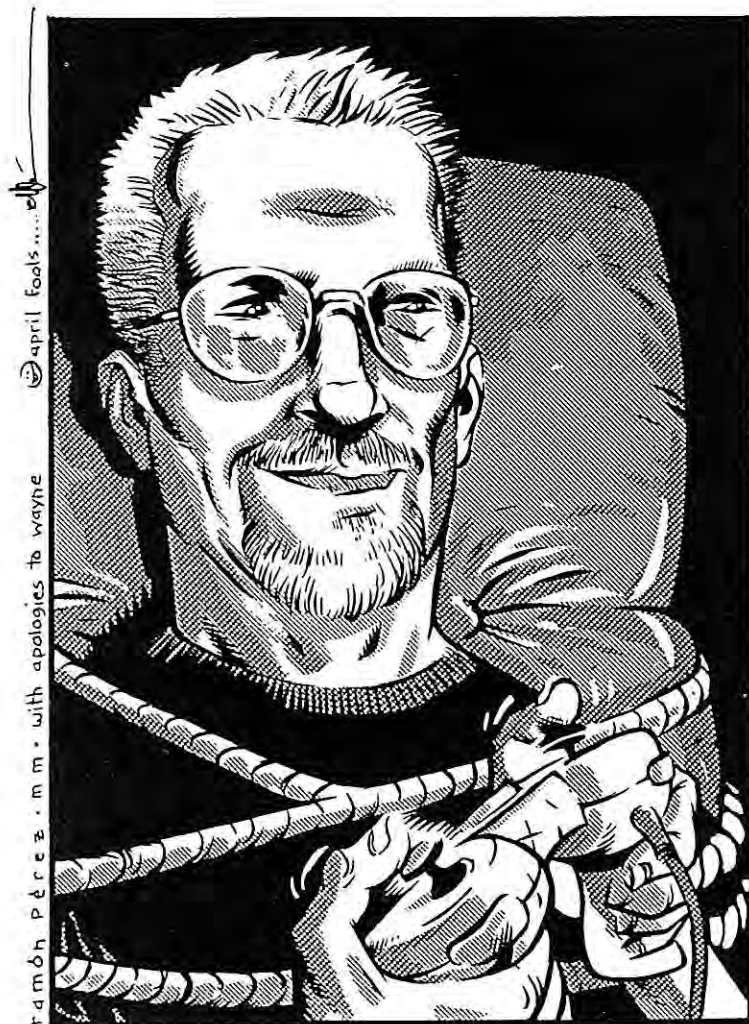
As it turns out, the Motown Maniacs have indeed kidnapped Wayne Smith. They so love playing *Rifts®* and other Palladium games, that they decided it would be cool to get Wayne as their own personal Game Master and “gaming guru.” (guess they don't know him very well, do they?)

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

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

Wayne has been treated so well that he hasn't even had a chance to miss home yet. As time goes on, the gang will con-





RAMÓN PÉREZ • M.M. • with apologies to Wayne © April fools... etc.

tinue to spoil their pet and make Wayne as comfortable as possible. After a week or two, however, Wayne will start to get homesick and begin to wonder what will happen to him when they tire of him. In the meantime, Wayne can do no wrong as long as: 1) he does not try to escape, or 2) let anyone know his whereabouts. At least one person is with Wayne at all times and he is not allowed to use the telephone or the Internet unsupervised.

## The gang's hideout

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

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

everything Wayne uses is stolen goods. The gang has been planning to kidnap Wayne for some time, so they had plenty of time to prepare his "perfect" living area.

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

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

## Wayne Smith

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

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

**Alignment:** Scrupulous.

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

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

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

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

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

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



## Motown Maniacs

1. **Bungee:** 22 year old male, Physical Training (especially loves rock climbing, bungee jumping, rappelling).
2. **Crashley:** 19 year old female, Hardware: Computer Hacking.
3. **Headcase:** 21 year old male, Master Psionic, gang leader.
4. **Burnout:** 18 year old male, Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Fire – twin brother of Dusty.
5. **Dusty:** 18 year old female, Mutant: Control Elemental Force: Earth, and twin sister of Burnout.
6. **Wizzer:** 20 year old male, Hardware: Mechanical Genius.

## Bungee

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

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

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

**Real Name:** Enrico Rodriguez

**Aliases:** Bungee and Stunter.

**Alignment:** Aberrant.

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

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

**Age:** 22

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

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

**Experience Level:** 5th

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

**Attacks per melee:** 7

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

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



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

**Special Abilities:**

1. Power Punch: double damage, counts as two melee actions.
2. Power Kick: double damage, counts as two melee actions.
3. Force of Will: ability to function even when all hit points and S.D.C. are depleted, see page 189 of HU2™.
4. Strength is equivalent to the Minor ability of Extraordinary Physical Strength.

**Education Level:** High School.

**Scholastic Bonus:** +5%

**Skills of Note:** Climbing 95%/rappelling 85%, Prowl 75%, Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Swimming 80%, Running, Safecracking 55%, Pick Locks 75%, Find Contraband 61%, Cardsharp 63%, Pilot: Automobile 75%, Basic Math 75%, General Maintenance/Repair 65%, Computer Operation 70%, Art 65%, Writing 55%.

**Secondary Skills:** Pilot: Motorcycle 80%, Horsemanship 70%, Streetwise 40%, Pick Pockets 50%, Palming 45%, Basic Mechanics 55%, Auto Mechanics 50%, Concealment 40%, W.P. Sword, W.P. Whip.

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

**Occupation:** Member of the Motown Maniacs.

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

groups. She has the means to disappear or flee the country at a moment's notice.

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

**Real Name:** Ann Common

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

**Alignment:** Anarchist.

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

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

**Age:** 19

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

**Disposition:** Kind of bossy and controlling. Serves as sort of a surrogate "mom" to the rest of the gang. She is tomboyish, loves to argue and won't back down from anyone. She is also an animal-lover with very strong pro-environmentalist beliefs.

**Experience Level:** 6th

**Combat Skills:** Basic Hand to Hand combat skill (taught to her by Daddy), and has the following Weapon Proficiencies: Revolver, Auto-Pistol, Bolt Action Rifle, Auto Rifle and Shotgun.



**Attacks per melee:** Four

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

**Super Power Category:** Hardware: Electrical Genius.

**Education Level:** One year of college.

**Scholastic Bonus:** +10%

**Skills of Note:** Hot Wiring 101%, Computer Hacking 93%, Electronic Construction 99%, Electrical Engineer 85%, Read Sensory Instruments 85%, Surveillance Systems 85%, Optic Systems 85%, Computer Operation 105%, Computer Programming 85%, Radio: Basic 100%, Basic Mechanics 85%, Basic Math 100%, Advanced Math 100%, Pilot Auto 75%, Languages: German 95%, French 95%, Spanish 95%, Japanese 95%, Basic Electronics 85%, Radio Scramblers 80%, Television/Video 64%, and Cryptography 70%.

**Secondary Skills:** Cook 70%, Sew 75%, Research 85% plus her Weapon Proficiencies noted above.

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

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

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

**Vehicle:** Pickup truck.

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

## Headcase

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

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

Headcase's only goal in life is to have a good time. He sees life as something that you live day-to-day. "No sense in worrying about tomorrow" is his motto. He spends money almost as fast as he gets it, and that's thousands of dollars a week. He is reckless and unpredictable, but also cunning, a good strategist and thinks quick on his feet.

**Real Name:** Bob Jones

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

**Alignment:** Anarchist.

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

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

**Age:** 21

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

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

**Experience Level:** 4th.

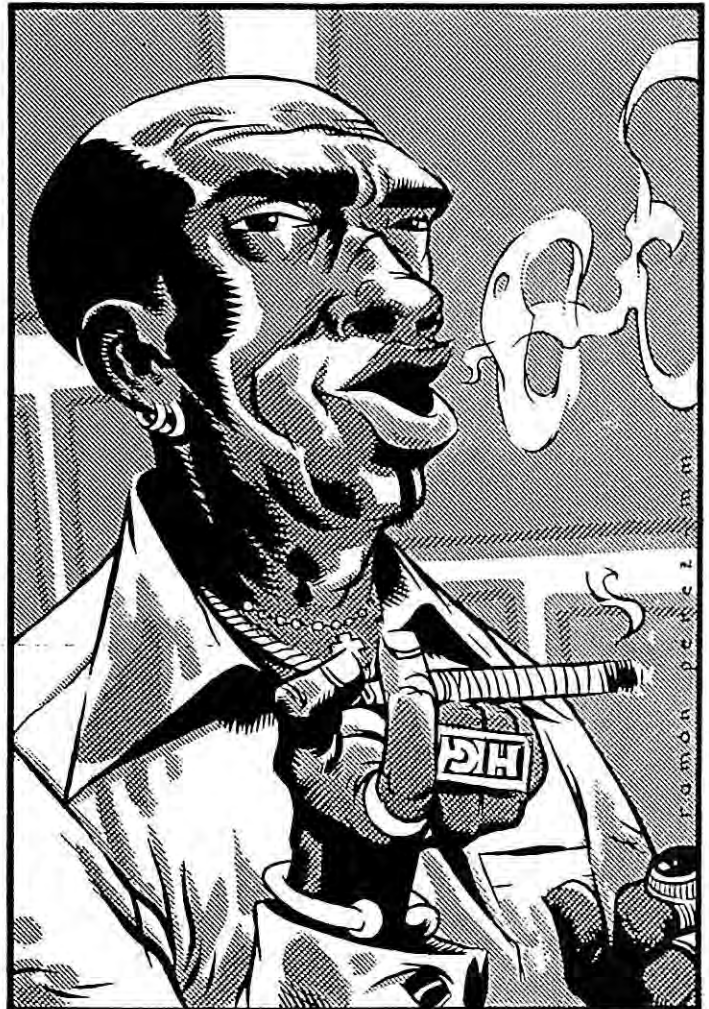
**Combat Skills:** Karate style kick does 2D4 damage, snap kick does 1D6 damage.

**Attacks per melee:** 5

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

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

**Super Power Category:** Natural Psionic.





**Psionic Powers:** 154 I.S.P.

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

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

**Psionic Attacks Per Melee:** 5

**Education Level:** High School

**Scholastic Bonus:** +5%

**Skills of Note:** Art 60%, Photography 60%, Research 75%, General Repair 60%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Running, Athletics, Swimming 75%, Pilot Automobile 73%, and Basic Math 70%.

**Secondary Skills:** Pilot: Race Car 67%, Pilot: Boat/Motor-types 75%, First Aid 65%, Computer Operation 60%, W.P. Auto-Pistol, W.P. Knife, Streetwise 36%, Prowl 45%, Pick Pockets 45%, Pick Locks 50%.

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

**Occupation:** Founding member and leader of the Motown Maniacs.

**Favorite Weapons:** Gold-plated auto-pistol.

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

**Money:** Earns about 2D4x\$1,000 a week and always has \$3,000 in savings hidden under his mattress. The rest he spends on cars, women, jewelry and just having a good time. Live fast and die hard is his motto.

## Burnout and Dusty

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

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

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



## Burnout

**Real Name:** Robert McDougall

**Aliases:** Burnout, Robby and Mac.

**Alignment:** Aberrant.

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

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

**Age:** 18

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

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

**Experience Level:** 4th

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

**Attacks per melee:** 5

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

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

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

**Education Level:** Street-schooled.

**Skills of Note:** Streetwise 50%, Prowl 50%, W.P. Knife, Concealment 36%, Pick Pockets 45%, Cook 55%, Sew 60%, General Repair 55%, Literacy 50%, Basic Math 65%, and Pilot Automobile 68%.

**Secondary Skills:** Hand to Hand: Basic, Running, Swimming 70%, Climbing 60%/rappelling 50%, General Athletics, Land Navigation 52%, W.P. Revolver, and W.P. Auto Pistol.

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

**Occupation:** Member of the Motown Maniacs.

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

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

**Money:** 3D6x\$100.

## Dusty

**Real Name:** Elizabeth McDougall

**Aliases:** Dusty, Liz, and Libby.

**Alignment:** Aberrant

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

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

**Age:** 18

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

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

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

**Experience Level:** 4th

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

**Attacks per melee:** 5

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

**Other Bonuses:** 50% charm/impress.

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

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

**Education Level:** Street-schooled.

**Skills of Note:** Streetwise 50%, Prowl 50%, W.P. Knife, Seduction 35%, Pick Pockets 45%, Palming 40%, Sing 55%, Dance 50%, Art 55%, Literacy 50%, Basic Math 65%, and Pilot Automobile 68%.

**Secondary Skills:** Hand to Hand: Basic, Running, Swimming 70%, Climbing 60%/rappelling 50%, Cardsharp 44%, Concealment 36%, Pick Locks 50%, and Land Navigation 52%.

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

**Occupation:** Member of the Motown Maniacs.

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

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

**Money:** 4D6x\$100.

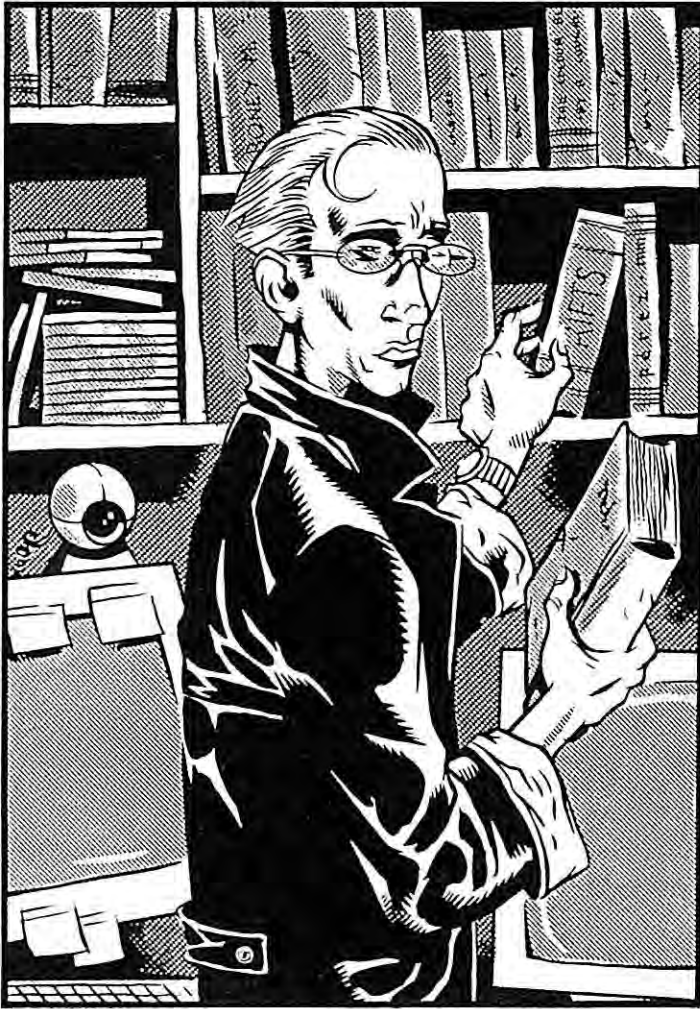
## Wizzer

Wizzer comes from a wealthy family; both of his parents are attorneys. He was raised in the best educational environment possible, but left home because his parents were too overbearing. One day he just snapped, dropped out of college and moved out on his own. His parents are unaware of his criminal activities and would be horrified to learn the truth. Moreover, they would go to great lengths to cover it up.

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

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





**Real Name:** Terrence Williams

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

**Alignment:** Anarchist

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

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

**Age:** 20

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

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

**Experience Level:** 4

**Combat Skills:** Just Weapon Proficiencies in Revolver and Auto-Pistol.

**Attacks per melee:** Three.

**Bonuses:** +10% on all skills.

**Super Power Category:** Hardware: Mechanical Genius.

**Education Level:** Two years of college.

**Scholastic Bonus:** +15%

**Skills of Note:** Hot Wiring 98%, Building Super Vehicles 102%, Recognize Vehicle Quality 80%, Basic Mechanics 90%, Weapons Engineer 85%, Aircraft Engineer 85%, Mechanical Engineer 85%, Auto Mechanics 80%, Robot Mechanics 75%, Locksmith 75%, Read Sensory Equipment 85%, Basic Electronics 70%, Advanced Math 101%, Pilot Automobile 98%, Pilot: Race Car 97%, Pilot: Airplane 96%, Basic Math: 101%, Computer Operation 85%, Research 95%, Surveillance Systems 75%, Writing 70%, Chemistry 75%, Astronomy 70%, Astrophysics 70%, and Analytical Chemistry 70%.

**Secondary Skills:** W.P. Auto-Pistol, W.P. Revolver, Cook 65%, Sew 70%, First Aid 75%, Holistic Medicine 50%, Radio: Basic 75%, Television/Video 51%, and Language: French 80%.

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

**Occupation:** Member of the Motown Maniacs.

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

**Vehicle:** Small sports car.

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

# Into the Shadows

## Palladium Fantasy RPG®

By Jon Thompson

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #12

*"...and mighty Osiris fell to the ground,  
His body limp and broken.  
Over him loomed the treacherous Set,  
Once brother to the fallen god.  
Mighty Set grinned with the teeth of the Hyena,  
And in his hand, dripping with blood,  
He held a blade.  
Behold... it was the assassin's blade!"*  
—Third Canticle, *The Tale of the Wanderer*.

It is the oldest crime and the oldest profession. Murder and assassination. Among every civilized culture they have long been banned as illegal, and the consequences for performing such actions are grave indeed. Those caught seldom escape with their lives. But that obstacle has not stopped the assassin. It never has, and never will.

Assassins are a special breed of warrior. They have sacrificed their skills of open and varied combat for those specializing in strictly close quarters and death. The blade of the assassin is regarded universally as the deadliest blade of all. They are killers in the purest, most base form, and they are killers for hire, willing to do the job that no one else will perform. All for a price.

The skills that an assassin must learn are a special and arcane art. They have been passed down from assassin to assassin for centuries. Rarely are these abilities seen by anyone else in the world, and when they are, those who witness them usually don't live to tell about it. Speed, subterfuge, and power. Every assassin lives by them, and to complement them, the assassin has his own brand of special skills and equipment.

Detailed here is just a sampling of the assassin's many surprises, as well as a few considerations for those who might bear assassination in mind as a future occupation. But, as just stated, this is only a sample. The art of the assassin is a mysterious one, and even among assassins those secrets are guarded vigilantly.

## The Assassin's Code

One of the most interesting things about assassins is the bizarre code of personal honor that a great many of them adhere to. This is no code like that which knights and palladins call chivalry, nor is it any code of justice that ordinary citizens may abide by. The code of the assassin is unique. The simple fact that professionals who perform an act so vile could hold to any sort of code is amazing, yet it is done.

## Optional Source Material for Assassins in the Palladium Fantasy RPG®

In many senses this code is necessary. When you're in a profession so risky, there need to be certain ground rules. These rules do a lot of things. They give the assassins' clientele a sense of security that makes business possible. The code also helps to keep things under control. Murder can be a messy business, and without limitations, the assassins would quickly find local governments clamping down and stomping them out. The code also helps to keep assassins from actively competing against each other. Without limitations, competition in this business would get quite messy.

In short, murder is a tricky business, and without an unspoken set of limitations things would simply get out of hand. The code of the assassin thus becomes not a thing of choice, like the code of chivalry taken by knights, but of necessity. The assassin is a predator in a dangerous world, and his honor is all he truly has to protect himself.

The aspect of this code being unspoken is very important to mention. In no part of the world is this code openly talked of or even acknowledged. Like the assassin himself, the code is never seen nor heard. It is simply obeyed.

Of course, enforcing a code that is never acknowledged or spoken of becomes something of a mysterious business. Simply put, a professional assassin knows how to carry himself. Those assassins who trot about violating the code excessively tend to disappear. What exactly happens to them, no one knows.

This being as it is, there is still a lot of variance as to how this code is carried out. It varies upon the specific type of assassin. Military, court, and religious assassins will all have their own special additions to the code that must be followed. Regional variances occur a great deal as well, as taboos vary from place to place and culture to culture. And, of course, a lot of it will depend on the individual assassin. Those of Aberrant alignment might follow a very intricate and elaborate code, while Anarchist characters might follow little code whatsoever.

Below is a general list of provisions commonly covered by an assassin's code.

### The Killer

Never reveal your identity.

Never reveal the identity of another assassin.

Never turn in a fellow assassin.

Never attack a fellow assassin, unless he is a contracted target (many won't even do this).





### The Client

- Never reveal who you work for.
- Never reveal anything about who you work for.
- Never ask why.
- Clients who fail to pay their dues will be killed, tortured, or worse.

### The Mark

- Show no mercy.
- Never take a bribe. (I.e. once a mark has been contracted, no amount of payment or negotiation can withhold his death. Only the client can cancel the contract.)
- Never take a mark that is beyond your ability.

### The Kill

- Never get caught.
- Exercise discretion at all times.
- Never harm bystanders.
- Leave no incriminating evidence.
- Never do that beyond which your client pays you to do.

### Payment

Assassins are renowned for working on credit. The simple reason for this is because they can. If their client later decides that he doesn't want to pay, then he'll be killed. It's that simple, and the clients know it. This credit can be cashed in at anytime and in any fashion. Sometimes it may mean fronting the full payment for a kill at the drop of a hat, or it might mean harboring a person or an item for a night, lending the assassin an important item, or bestowing a simple favor.

Although assassins in this position have the ability to extort quite a bit from their clients, they never do. A professional assassin will never abuse his credit. In fact, most favors and odd payments taken by assassins will seem deceptively cheap. A foolish client will think he is getting a great deal, while a wise one will realize that his simple action has most likely played an important part in a much grander scheme.

## Types of Assassins

Presented below are a series of five sub-classes or specializations available to the Assassin O.C.C. Each has its own strengths and weakness and will gain bonuses and penalties accordingly.

### Court

Although it is never acknowledged openly, most notable politicians, rulers, and persons of power keep assassins in their permanent employ. These individuals find themselves manipulating powerful forces on a daily basis, and they frequently run into powerful problems. One of the ways to fix those problems is through murder. Most often, the targets of these assassins are less notable individuals than might normally be imagined. World leaders don't often assassinate each other, but they do assassinate each other's hirelings and other lesser folk foolish enough to stand in their way.

Even with such a workload, these types of assassins usually find themselves less busy than most others. For that reason, their duties are sometimes extended to include things such as kidnapping, robbery, spying, and other dark, shady types of duties, which gives the court assassin a much more rounded-out base of abilities. In addition, due to the usually large budgets of their employers, court assassins tend to sport very fine equipment.

**Bonuses:** +1 O.C.C. Skill at levels one, five and ten. +1 Secondary Skill at levels two, six, eight and twelve.

**Penalties:** Must be loyal to and always answer to a specific lord. +200 experience required to gain a level at levels one through five, +1000 at levels six through ten, and +5,000 at levels eleven through fifteen. Slow advancement is due to lack of activity.

## Freelance

In most places of the world, freelance assassins are the most common. These assassins are those bold enough to strike out on their own, selling their services to the highest bidder. The going is usually a lot rougher for a freelance assassin, but the payoffs can be much higher. They have no permanent employers to answer to or guilds to pay tithes to. Being that they are usually less tied down, freelance assassins make the best type for player characters. Their motives for murder are as varied as their techniques of killing.

**Bonuses:** They are free to do as they please. Answer to no one.

**Penalties:** Don't necessarily have steady work, resources, or anyone to back them up when things get rough.

## Military

Assassins are employed by armies all over the world. In some areas these soldiers are regarded with high honor, while in others they are shunned and kept secret. During peacetime their duties are rather limited, and most will usually have another profession or function that they perform. During wartime, however, the military assassin always has his hands full. These assassins are often times deployed as special forces fighters (like modern day SEALs or Army Rangers). Their duties may vary from time to time, but their primary function is always the same – murder. These assassins also tend to be equipped with very good weaponry.

**Bonuses:** +3 Weapon Proficiencies, plus any 2 Physical O.C.C. Skills, plus any 1 Military O.C.C. Skill. +1 to strike, parry, dodge, and damage.

**Penalties:** Domestic Skills: none. Communications: Cryptography and Sign Language only (+10%). Note that Language and Literacy are still available under Scholar/Technical. Player is restricted to Aberrant alignment only. Must be loyal to their army and commanders. Dissension is regarded as highly suspicious and is absolutely NOT tolerated.

## Guild

Assassins' guilds are not your typical type of guild. For one, they tend to be very small. The reasoning behind this is very simple. If the guild were large, then they would constantly need to be finding things for their members to do, and by that we mean people to kill. In a brutal world, murder is common, but not that common. Just as a predatory animal's population will be determined by the population of its prey, so will the size of an assassins' guild be determined by the size of the city it inhabits.

In practice these tend to be more like professional alliances than guilds. In a given city there will usually be two or three top

assassins. These assassins and their apprentices might gather together and operate for each other's betterment under a formal agreement. The advantages of joining an assassins' guild can be great. The member has instant access to the resources of the guild as well as the experience of his superiors, which is not to mention the steady stream of work that the guild fetches. The negatives are that the member must now answer to the guild for everything. He will get paid for everything he does, but he must also pay his dues. In addition, most assassins' guilds don't have an open door policy on leaving the guild. Like the Mafia, there's only one way out of a guild.

**Bonuses:** -200 total experience required to gain a level, at levels one through five, -1000 at levels six through ten, -5000 at levels eleven through fifteen. Fast advancement is due to intimate training directly under experienced masters.

**Penalties:** They are absolutely loyal to the guild, and when we say absolutely, we mean *absolutely*. They must answer to the guild for all of their actions, without exception. The penalty for transgressing against the guild's laws (no matter how slight) is a very slow and very painful death (and if anyone in the world can make good on this threat it's these guys). Note that this restriction can make this class variation very difficult for players to play.

## Religious

In a world where there's a god for nearly every occasion, it's no surprise that there's a god for assassination. Of course, the next logical step will be that this world will also have individuals who worship not only the god of assassination, but assassination itself as well. Religious assassins are renowned as the most deadly in the world. They do not kill for profit or personal gain. They kill because they believe in killing. These assassins will always be willing to lay everything down to score the kill, and absolutely nothing will stop them short of death (and sometimes not even that). And of course that's not to mention the fact that most of these killers will have the blessing of a god on their side.

These sorts of assassins vary a great deal, even within individual religions. Among those notable are members of the Church of Darkness, the Cult of Set, worshipers of Panath, worshipers of Tark, and the Cult of Rabdos the Strangler. Individual assassins may be lone killers, acting out by themselves for the will of their god, or they might be a member of a church or cult. Many of these individuals and organizations sell their services out for hire, while others kill strictly for religious purposes. Most do a bit of both.

**Bonuses:** When performing an assassination they gain all of the bonuses of a Prayer of Strength of the Damned. That's +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +2 on ALL other saving throws, +10% on turn dead (if they already have the ability), +1 to spell strength (if they can cast), +4 to damage, +1 to parry and dodge, and +8% to summon minions of darkness (if they already have the ability). For assassins with a dual O.C.C. that already grants them the prayer ability, this bonus doubles (that's right, doubles) the effects of it. In order to gain the doubled bonus, though, the priest must first use the prayer successfully as a priest ability. Otherwise, the bonus is as normal. **Note:** These bonuses apply on an intended assassination, not just any old strike from behind or similar attack.



**Penalties:** The assassin must perform sacrifice and penance as per the Priest of Darkness O.C.C. In addition, the assassin is a complete fanatic, and will stop at absolutely nothing to kill a targeted opponent. **Note:** This also applies only to opponents directly targeted for assassination.



## Skills and Equipment

One of the most fascinating things about the world of the assassin is the mysterious and deadly array of weapons, skills, and items that they use to kill their targets. The skills and items presented here are deadly and powerful, but to most of the world these things remain completely unknown. The only person an assassin shares his secrets with is his mark, and they seldom live to tell of them. However, the items presented here are only a small sampling of the vast armory that assassins around the world use to complete their tasks.

It is very important to note that this equipment is not normally available to non-assassins. An assassin will NEVER sell or give away his equipment, and he will furthermore never reveal where he got it. The only way a normal person could ever hope to get their hands on some of this stuff would be to kill the assassin and take it, a task much easier said than done.

The same goes for the assassin's skills. The world's assassins have not spent hundreds of years keeping this knowledge secret just to pass it off to any old player character that comes along. These skills are simply never taught to non-assassins.

## New Skills

**Fast Talking:** The fine art of deception. Simply put, this is the skill of getting people to buy into things that aren't true. As it would be used by other classes, this would involve tricking the victim into a scam that will part him with some of his cash or other hard earned valuables. The assassin, however, uses this skill in its rawest sense – deception. The assassin often times finds himself in positions where he must come up with a story quick or his cover will be blown. Most often, it goes hand in hand with the assassin's mental affinity and skill in acting. **Base Skill:** 20% +4% per level of experience.

**Blind Fighting:** A very important skill for the assassin, it allows him to fight enemies in complete darkness (or completely blinded). For the assassin this is essential. More often than not, he must fight his opponents in dark and/or crowded spaces. This skill removes all negatives received by being blinded or fighting in darkness. This skill only applies when the assassin is fighting an opponent or opponents in his immediate vicinity (within five feet/1.5 m radius). The assassin receives full negatives against all opponents beyond the five foot (1.5 m) radius. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. A failed skill roll means all negatives are in full effect. The assassin receives a penalty of -30% when fighting alien or unfamiliar opponents.

**Listening and Awareness:** Sharp ears are important features for an assassin to have. These killers operate in total silence, and doing so gives them an incredibly heightened sense of hearing and awareness. This skill allows them to hear and sense things that other characters cannot. In most instances the assassin must actively use this ability to gain its bonuses, but characters will find that sometimes (like when prowling) they find themselves kicking this ability in almost subconsciously. **Base Skill:** 16% +4% per level of experience.

**Security Systems:** This skill has a very modern ring to it, but its applications in a fantasy realm are very real. Every castle and medieval keep has some form of security. This skill gives the character a strong sense of the layout and design of such security systems. The assassin will have a better understanding of how traps are laid out, what magical enchantments may be in effect, and how to gain proper entry into a perimeter. **Note:** Though this skill may cross over into the territory of runes and magical wards, it does not give the character the ability to read or interpret them. He only gains a general idea of their purpose and their function as a part of the security system as a whole. This skill also does not give the character the ability to detect traps. He must find them first with the appropriate skill. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

**Backstab:** Astute G.M.s will notice that assassins no longer receive the big bonuses to backstab that they used to in the First Edition. As a matter of fact, assassins no longer receive a backstab at all. The reason for this being taken out is quite obvious: game balance. Assassins with big backstabs can tear other characters and NPCs apart. However, some G.M.s may still want this aspect kept in their game (after all, isn't that what assassins DO?). Thus, it is presented here as an optional skill available to assassins only.

Certain conditions must be met for a backstab to take place. First of all, it must take place from behind, and only behind. Only one backstab may be performed per round, and the enemy

must be unaware of the assassin's presence or current location. A successful Prowl skill must be performed for the backstab to be successful. If the Prowl fails, then the attack is considered a normal one. Note that more often than not, an assassin will only be able to use a backstab on any given target once per battle, as the enemy usually becomes quite aware of the assassin's presence after the first attack. A backstab may only be used once on prone opponents.

It is important to make the distinction that a backstab is not just a strike into someone's unprotected rear vital points. This sort of attack is covered by W.P. Vital Points (see below). The backstab is a combination of a critical strike and a surprise attack, which is what gives it such power.

Note again that this skill is ONLY to be used with the G.M.'s permission. **Bonus:** Assassins gain an additional critical attack modifier of x1 to damage at levels three, seven, twelve and fifteen. So, a third level assassin would have a backstab modifier of x2, a seventh level assassin would have a modifier of x3, etc. This modifier applies only on a backstab and is factored in after all other damage has been calculated.

**W.P. Vital Points:** This deadly skill is restricted to assassins only. It gives the assassin knowledge of all appropriate vital areas of his opponents. The assassin can use this ability to maim, cripple, or kill his opponents in countless ways. **Bonuses:** +4 to strike on a called strike, knockout/stun on an unmodified roll of 15-20, OR critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18-20. The assassin gains only one of the bonuses listed and must call which type of bonus before he strikes. Please note that the assassin must have the appropriate ability before he can gain a bonus to it (e.g. he must have a critical strike before he can lower his critical strike). **Penalties:** Every time the assassin uses this ability it costs him an extra attack. This skill requires careful analysis, which soaks up extra time.

## The Assassin's Arsenal

### Poisons

Of all people, assassins are the most knowledgeable of and the most deadly with poison. For them it is a natural means to an end. Being that they use it so widely, the assassin has access to a wider variety of poisons than the common individual. The following poisons display a varied array of effects for the assassin's varied needs. It must be noted that these are poisons for assassins only. Individuals without proper contacts and credentials have absolutely no access to these substances.

**Ingestive poison: Somnibus:** This poison causes victims to fall into a deep slumber from which they cannot be woken. The sleep lasts 4D6+6 minutes, but victims are groggy for another 1D4 hours afterwards. While groggy, they suffer 1/2 normal melee actions per round, -8 to initiative, -6 to strike, parry, and dodge, and -50% on all skills requiring meticulous actions or deep concentration. This poison is also available in a blood derivative, but is less effective as so. Victims of a blood injected dose are at +3 to save. **Cost:** 1000 gold per application. 1200 gold per application for blood derivative.

**Ingestive poison: Twister:** This poison causes intense nausea and diarrhea in its victims. The vomiting lasts for 1D4x10

minutes, while the diarrhea lasts for 1D4 hours. After all fluids have been expelled, these symptoms turn into dry heaves and false alarms, but penalties are not diminished. At this point, however, the victim is in danger of suffering from dehydration and may suffer penalties as extreme as death if they do not drink fresh liquids. While sick, victims are -5 on initiative, and -2 to strike, parry, and dodge. Vomiting is so intense that while vomiting, victims are all but incapacitated. Victims vomit at fairly regular intervals, averaging 1D4 minutes apart. **Cost:** 500 gold per dose.

**Blood poison: Vertigo:** This poison is a tranquilizer. Those who fail their saving throw are knocked completely unconscious for 1D4 hours. Those who do save are woozy for 1D4 minutes and suffer -2 to initiative and -1 to strike, parry, and dodge. This poison is more effective on animals, giving humanoid creatures a +2 to save versus it. Supernatural creatures are immune to its effects. **Cost:** 5000 gold per dose; extremely rare.

**Blood poison: XX:** This poison is by far and wide the deadliest in the world. It is rumored that only two alchemists in all of Palladium know how to produce it, and only a handful of assassins have ever used it. Those unfortunate enough to be injected with it must save versus poison or die. Those who pass their save are completely unaffected. All victims are -4 to save. **Cost:** This poison is so rare that it is typically not purchased with mere gold. Its estimated value per dose would be in the hundreds of thousands.

**Blood poison: Greaser:** Greaser is an additive that is used in conjunction with other poisons. If used properly it raises the effectiveness of any given blood poison, making victims even more susceptible to its effects. The assassin must make a successful Use Poison skill check to see if he can mix it properly, and even then there is a chance that the Greaser will be incompatible with the poison. Compatibility is based on percentage and poison strength. Weak poisons have 80% compatibility, moderate strength poisons have 50% compatibility, and deadly poisons have only a 20% compatibility. When used effectively, the substance's effect is to lower the saving throw of the victim by -3. **Cost:** 800 per dose.

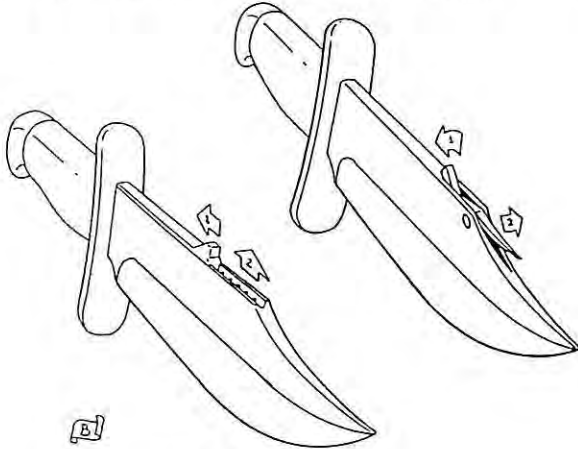
**Ingestive poison: Pauser:** This is a poison very similar to Greaser. It is used in conjunction with ingested poisons to delay the onset of their effects. It can delay the effects of the poison from 1 to 8 hours (in increments of a half hour) from the time of ingestion. Success is determined by a Use Poison skill check. The longer the assassin attempts to delay the poison, the more difficult it becomes. Characters suffer a skill penalty of -10% for every hour of delay over four. Like Greaser, the success of Pauser is also based partly on compatibility. All weak poisons are completely compatible, mid-strength poisons are 70% compatible, and deadly poisons are 50% compatible. **Cost:** 1000 gold per dose; rare.

**Note:** When using Greaser or Pauser, the assassin mixing the poisons has no idea of his success or failure until he tests the drug on a living target. Also note that Greaser and Pauser are completely incompatible. When mixed together, the two additives essentially cancel each other out, and end up diluting and therefore reducing the effectiveness of the poison.



## Items

A quick note on the items listed here. Most of these items are extremely powerful (at least in the right hands), and they are not listed for common public use. These are assassins' items, and most of them are only ever available to assassins. Even among assassins, most of these items are only available to those at the top of the chain. No G.M. should allow this stuff to proliferate in his campaign. When a player character sees these items, he shouldn't be sizing them up and speculating on how well they might match his wardrobe. He should be running and figuring out how he will survive the next twenty-four hours.



1. Trigger pushed so blade enters target.
2. Poison enters wound by free flow or injection
3. Trigger is reset as blade leaves wound.

**Venom Dagger:** These sort of daggers are available in a wide variety of styles and forms, yet the basic function remains the same. They are daggers which carry a secret store of venom somewhere within the blade that is injected into anyone stabbed by it. They are an excellent means of poisoning a target. Many are magical and contain small magical compartments which open up upon entering a wound to spill their contents, but there are also a wide array of non-magical models. These vary from daggers with a simple groove (like a blood-groove) that will hold a sappy poison, to those that actually contain a loaded syringe imbedded inside the dagger.

**Abilities:** On a successful attack (i.e. one that draws blood) the victim must save versus poison or fall victim to whatever poison is contained within the knife.

**Damage:** Varies per the individual knife. Usually standard damage.

**Cost:** Can vary from 3,000 to 10,000 gold for mechanical types. Usually 15,000 to 20,000 gold for magical varieties. Both are rare.

**Poison Ring:** This is a magical item very similar to a Venom Dagger, except it is not used to poison wounded victims. It is used to stealthily drop poison into an open receptacle, and it can be used by assassins to drop lethal doses of poison into an unsuspecting person's drink or food. These rings come in three prime varieties. The first is a simple mechanical ring, which has a small container with a top that flips open (manually) to deliver it. The second is the same as the first one, except that it is magically enchanted so that the top flips open upon a mental command. The third is a powerful version of the same ring that doesn't even need to flip open. It is able to teleport the contents

of the ring into a nearby container. The only catch is that the ring must be physically touched to the container for it to work. All varieties carry only one dose of poison.

**Cost:** The simple mechanical version runs about 3,000 gold, while the magically enhanced mechanical one goes for about 40,000 gold. Both are difficult to find. The third version is extremely rare (only a few are believed to exist), and would only ever be available to someone of great power. The estimated cost would be around 1,000,000 to 1,500,000 gold.

**Grenades:** Grenades are very useful items for assassins. With them the assassin can accomplish all manner of powerful subterfuge tactics, all with a simple one-shot, disposable device. All grenades listed below are magical creations. They are designed to be thrown to the ground and activated upon impact. As such, they can be very sensitive devices, going off if the carrier suffers any large impacts. Some grenades have failsafe devices to prevent this, whereby they are activated by a spoken key word and then detonated by impact, but most assassins prefer the former type. Calling out magical key words can get one into a lot of trouble when trying to be stealthy. Note that the user of the grenade is in no way immune to its effects. There are five types available.

**Smoke:** As per the spell Cloud of Smoke, 10th level spell strength. **Area of effect:** 30 foot (9.1 m) area. **Duration:** 40 melees. **Cost:** 500 gold per grenade; uncommon.

**Stun:** All within the radius must save versus spell or be stunned. **Area of effect:** 6 foot (1.8 m) radius. **Duration:** 2D4 melees. Those who save are unaffected. **Cost:** 1200 per grenade; uncommon.

**Silence:** As per the spell Globe of Silence, 10th level spell strength. **Area of effect:** 15 foot (4.6 m) diameter. **Duration:** 60 melees. **Cost:** 800 gold per grenade; uncommon.

**Blinding Flash:** As per the spell Blinding Flash, 10th level spell strength. **Area of effect:** Immediate area. **Duration:** 2D4 melees. **Cost:** 800 gold per grenade; uncommon.

**Stasis Field:** A large, invisible globe with all of the effects of the spell Immobilize, 10th level spell strength. **Area of effect:** 15 foot (4.6 m) diameter. **Duration:** 20 melees. **Cost:** 8,000 gold per grenade; rare.

## Other Items

**Blinding Flash Amulet:** This is a small gem that is usually mounted into either a necklace or a ring. It is able to cast Blinding Flash five times daily. The effects are as per the wizard spell at eighth level proficiency. **Cost:** 20,000 gold; uncommon.

**Darkness Ring:** This is a small, black ring that is able to cast a Globe of Darkness about the wearer with a 6 foot (1.8 m) radius. The user can move about freely in this darkness, but may not leave it without deactivating the ring. The darkness cannot be penetrated by any means of vision. The user's vision is impeded, but only as if by normal darkness (i.e. that which one would encounter at night). The assassin receives a +30% bonus to Prowl in heavy darkness, a +15% bonus in normal shadows, and no bonus in absolute daylight. The user is at +3 to strike, and all who attempt to strike the assassin are at -6 to do so, unless striking with weapons or spells that affect a large area. There is no saving throw versus the darkness, but it may be dispelled by normal means. It saves with a spell strength of +2. Du-

ration: A total of 60 minutes of use per day. May be turned on and off at will. Cost: 80,000 gold; rare.

**Ring of Silent Stalking:** This is an item very similar to the Darkness Ring. It is cast in silver with a thin band of black opal running about it. It casts a Globe of Silence in a six foot (1.8 m) diameter about the user, and it comes in two versions. The first version has an effect identical to the wizard spell Globe of Silence. The second variety is identical to the first, except that sounds emitted from outside the globe may pass through and be heard by the user within. Only sounds created directly within the sphere are silenced. The user of either ring receives a +15% to Prowl. There is no saving throw versus either type, but if detected, the globe may be dispelled normally. Both save at +2 spell strength. Duration: A total of 60 minutes of use per day. May be turned on and off at will. Cost: The first variety costs about 50,000 gold and is rare. The second runs for about 250,000 gold and is extremely rare.



**Boots and Gloves of Climbing:** These items are available in two varieties: magical and non-magical. The non-magical sorts are simply boots and gloves with spikes on them that assist a great deal in climbing. They afford a bonus of +5% to Climb/Scale Walls per item worn, to a maximum of +20%. However, wearing spiked boots while walking reduces speed by half, and trying to perform any actions that require full use of the hands while wearing hand spikes reduces the appropriate effectiveness of those actions by 50%. It should be noted, though, that these items are usually tailored to allow quick and easy removal. The magical variety is identical to the first variety, except that the claws are retractable. In the boots the claws retract into the sole, while in the gloves the spikes retract down into the "sleeve" of the glove (along the inner wrist of the wearer). The magical variety may only ever be worn in their respective pairs (two gloves or two boots, not one), but gloves and boots may be worn together for a cumulative bonus for the two pairs. The bonus received is +15% to Climb/Scale Walls per set worn. Cost: The non-magical type cost around 1000 gold per pair (high cost due

to difficult craftsmanship and the fact that they are suspicious items) and are uncommon. The magical variety cost about 20,000 gold per pair (gloves or boots) and are rare.

**Cloak of Cold Shadows:** This cloak is a variation on a normal Cloak of Shadows. The user receives the normal bonus of +20% to Prowl, but the cloak has the additional effect of hiding any and all heat that emanates from the wearer's body, making him completely invisible to all forms of infra-vision. Cost: 36,000; rare.

**Poison Caps:** Poison caps are capsules filled with poison that are magically implanted in an assassin's body. They contain a lethal poison that can be released at any time at the assassin's will. The effect is a quick and painless death. These are last resort items, used only by captured assassins who fear the worst. The poison is magical and cannot be stopped or prevented by any means, nor can it be triggered by anyone else or against the assassin's will. Neither can the assassin be forced to use them on himself (i.e. via mind control, possession or similar means). The caps can be placed anywhere in the body, but are typically placed near the heart. These items cannot be inserted into supernatural creatures or creatures with heavy regenerating abilities. Cost: The cost for an independent assassin having these implanted would be quite expensive, usually around 300,000 gold, most of which covers the complicated surgery. However, this is only ever rarely performed, and when it is, it is usually at the order of a powerful guild or similar organization.

## The Good Stuff

All of the items that follow are rare to the point of being unique or nearly unique. These extremely powerful tools are things of legend and should be used sparingly and carefully. Some, like the Senshut, are even strictly NPC items. Any one of these could easily be the centerpiece of an epic campaign.

### The Daggers of Panath

There are a lot of Daggers of Panath in the world. Some of these items are the real thing, some are fakes, and some are just funny pet names. The title "Dagger of Panath" has been applied to so many weapons, it would seem pointless to try and sort through them. They are starting to become such a nuisance that the phrase, "By the daggers of Panath," has become a common expression in many parts of the world (second only to "By the wits of Thoth"). What is listed here is a version of these weapons that are given to and used by high priests and powerful assassins of Panath. They are considered greater holy weapons.

The appearance of these weapons varies a great deal, to the point where each one is all but unique. However, all bear the holy symbol of Panath somewhere on the hilt.

Abilities: All daggers act as normal daggers, except when in the hands of an assassin or follower of Panath. Under all forms of scrutiny, magical and non, they appear as normal weapons even when in use. A person capable of using it knows what it is by intuition upon picking it up. Each dagger also has the following abilities:

+3 to strike on a backstab.

Critical Strike (triple damage) from behind or an additional x2 to the modifier of any user who already has a backstab.

Critical Strike on a 19-20.



Raise the M.A. of the wielder to 24.

**Damage:** These daggers do between 3D6 and 6D6 S.D.C.

**Cost:** Anyone who tries to sell you one of these daggers is selling a fake. They are only ever given to the faithful of Panath and are useless to most others.

## Shadow Blades

These dangerous, mystical weapons are swords forged from absolute darkness. They are icons of evil and a bane to all creatures of light. Thus, they have become favored weapons among the wicked, the vile, and the wholly corrupted. No one knows where these terrible weapons came from or how they are made. The prevailing theory is that they were constructed during the Age of a Thousand Magicks by forces of powerful evil long since dead. Today they are quite rare, and only gods, demigods, and other extremely powerful beings of evil have been known to use them.

The blade appears as a deep, black, sword-shaped shadow from which darkness itself seems to ooze, enshrouding the blade when it rests and arcing behind it as it strikes. The blades may only be wielded by evil characters. Good characters who attempt to touch one take 4D6 S.D.C. straight to Hit Points and find that their hands pass straight through the blade. Selfish characters who touch one take no damage, but receive a vicious chill and find that their hands pass through it as well.

### Abilities:

Completely invisible in darkness and hard to see in light.

Wielder is +5 to strike in darkness, +3 in deep shadow, and +2 in light shadow.

Eternally sharp and indestructible.

+5 damage to all good creatures. Double damage to all angels and supernatural creatures of light.

Damage ranges from 4D6 S.D.C. to 1D6x10 S.D.C. depending on blade type and individual power.

**Cost:** Would be in the millions or tens of millions. These items are rare beyond rare and are more likely to be the prizes of epic quests.

## Shadow Armor

The Shadow Armor is a powerful item made by means similar to the Shadow Blade. It is a dark, shimmering suit of mail, forged completely of shadow. Like the Shadow Blade, those who look upon it find it difficult to see, as it is constantly oozing shadow from all parts. When visible, the make of the armor may vary from chain mail to plate, and it may cover the torso only or torso, legs, and arms. All suits have a "helmet," so to speak, though the make of this varies as well. All suits magically adjust to fit any wearer.

Also like the Shadow Blade, the origin of this item is unknown, though it is believed (and is most likely correct) that their histories are intertwined.

### Abilities:

**Shadow Meld:** Each suit has the unique ability to allow the wearer to both turn into and travel through shadows. The wearer can turn himself and everything on his person into a single

shadow. The shadow bears a mild resemblance to the original self of the wearer, but now seems twisted and distorted in horrid ways. In this form the wearer retains all of his senses, but can perform no actions whatsoever (other than moving about). On the other hand, virtually nothing can affect him. He is impervious to everything (from weapons, to magic, to psionics) except sunlight. Sunlight inflicts 4D6 S.D.C. per round directly to Hit Points. Individuals killed in this state will become trapped in it permanently. The armor itself vanishes into the plane of shadow, where it will drift about until it reappears in the physical world, usually at a random and very distant place.

**Shadow Pass:** The wearer also has the ability to travel between shadows while in this form as if through a Mystic Portal (similar to the "Teleportation" aspect of the spell). The wearer may travel between all shadows within a 2,000 foot (610 m) radius unimpeded. Beyond that radius, the wearer may travel to any shadowed location within 15 miles (24 km) which he is personally familiar with. This power may be used three times per day.

Each suit of Shadow Armor also has all of the following abilities:

Wearer is completely invisible in darkness. While in darkness, he is impervious to all forms of magical detection.

Turn into shadow (see above).

Travel through shadows (see above).

Wearer can see perfectly in total darkness.

+30% to Prowl.

The effects for good and selfish characters touching the armor are identical to touching a Shadow Blade.

**A.R.:** 16, plus attackers are -5 to strike the wearer in darkness.

**S.D.C.:** 400, but the armor is indestructible. When all S.D.C. is depleted all abilities become inert, and it turns into a normal shadow (still worn by and not removable by the character). After eight hours it regenerates all S.D.C. and returns to normal.

**Cost:** These items are even more rare than the Shadow Blades. They can't be bought with mere gold.

## The Hangman's Noose

This weapon finds its origins in an ancient tribe of Ogres, called the Bilyaga. The Bilyaga were an aberrant band of Ogres who had established a safe and orderly tribe in which to live. The law of the tribe was clear and simple, and the penalty for breaking the law was even simpler. All transgressors of tribal law were strangled by the Hangman's Noose. For decades, this tribe had been praised as a hallmark of civilized progression among the Ogre people. They had risen above the chaos and violence that has forever plagued their race. The Hangman's Noose and the law it enforced were what made this short-lived society possible. Unfortunately, the Bilyaga were swept up and destroyed, like so many other innocents, in the events of the Elf-Dwarf War. The only thing that has survived to mark the passage of these people is the Hangman's Noose.

Unfortunately, these days the Hangman's Noose has fallen to a far less noble purpose. It has become a legendary choice weapon among assassins. The noose still bears the same appearance it did so long ago. It looks like a common noose, made of normal rope with about three and a half feet (1 m) of slack ex-

tending off of it. The only distinguishing mark it bears is the tribal logo of the Bilyaga, inscribed upon the coil of the noose.

**Abilities:** The noose's effects are very simple and very powerful. The noose strangles anyone whose neck it wraps itself about. There is no saving throw, and the only way it may be stopped is to kill or seriously wound the attacker, a task much easier said than done. The noose will magically widen or shorten to fit any neck, and it will never constrict about any other body part. All attacks made by victims are at a -9 penalty, and spell casting is impossible. The attacker must maintain his hold on the noose for the entire duration of the strangulation. However, the noose magically bonds to the attacker, so the attacker may not be shaken off, though he may let go intentionally. The noose will release itself once the victim dies, and it cannot be fooled by victims who attempt to play dead. The rope itself is completely indestructible.

**Damage:** Victims will suffer 3D6 points of damage per round for the first four rounds, 6D6 per round after the fourth, and 1D4x10 per round after the eighth round. All damage goes straight to Hit Points.

**Cost:** This item has an uncanny knack for finding its way onto the black market. When its function is known, the weapon will usually sell for several million dollars, however the rope has been bought and sold several times in the past as a normal noose. It is a unique item.

## Cloak of Impersonation

The Cloak of Impersonation is an artifact of legend. It is believed by most that it is an ancient item forged from the skin of thirteen Changelings by a skilled assassin and mage during the climax of the Changeling Inquisition. When not in use, it looks like a normal blue cloak of typical construction. Under absolutely all forms of detection it appears as a normal garment whether in use or not.

**Abilities:** It has one special and unique ability. It allows the user to transform himself into the last person who wore the cloak. The visible transformation is flawless, and the wearer is able to impersonate the victim absolutely perfectly. This is done even to the extent that the wearer finds himself knowing all pertinent details of the impersonated person's life, mentioning and using them without even being aware of it. The cloak will transform every detail of the body and can shape itself into any suit of clothing necessary. Thus, the impersonation is absolutely seamless.

There is only one catch. The person impersonated by the wearer cannot be killed or harmed by the wearer in any way. In fact, the wearer finds himself completely incapable of taking any action against the impersonated (aside from acting in self defense if necessary). If the impersonated is killed, then the cloak immediately returns to normal, and the jig is up.

While the cloak is active, the impersonated individual suffers from complete amnesia. In addition, the person impersonated is completely immune to the cloak's effects of disguise. This means that he's the only person who can see through the illusion. His amnesia will keep him from understanding the situation, but upon seeing the impersonator, the impersonated will immediately know that something is wrong with that individual and that everyone else is oblivious to it.

The enchantment ends when either the wearer of the cloak wills it or when one of the two individuals dies. The wearer of the cloak will remember absolutely nothing of the impersonated individual's life after the spell is over (the knowledge the cloak had instilled is gone).

The cloak is completely indestructible, yet offers no protection as armor. All damage done to it mends itself within one hour.

**Cost:** This item is unique and simply can't be bought.



## Danz, the Mesmerizer

This ancient weapon is believed to have been first created by Braxis, a Syvan assassin and mage during the Elf-Dwarf Wars. Braxis is renowned throughout history as one of the greatest assassins of all time, so great that some believe him only to be an incarnation of Panath. This, however, is most likely not true. Braxis was a key figure in the Elf-Dwarf War, playing both sides for what they were worth and leaving a massive trail of bloody victims behind him. It is believed that he created this weapon for his personal use during the war, however this cannot be confirmed. In fact, some believe that the weapon may have been created as early as the latter portion of the Age of a Thousand Magicks, as Braxis is known to have lived for a great span of time. There are numerous passages in ancient texts, the Tristine Chronicles included, that cite Braxis' involvement in events that occurred as much as thousands of years apart. The Syvan's final death and disappearance are a complete mystery. In fact, he may still be alive today.

The weapon appears as a grey short sword covered in runes. Its hilt is nondescript except for a set of three black gems embedded within it that appear similar to onyx. The style of the blade is simple yet strange, apparently of a unique or alien design. When the blade is used in battle it becomes shimmering and translucent, dancing about the wielder like a shadow.

Unlike most rune weapons, Danz does not have an overtly manifested personality. As a matter of fact, no one who has ever used it has seen its personality fully manifested. By the same token, no one has ever been able to bond with the sword for a substantial amount of time. The blade becomes fickle before too long with most hosts and finds a way to have itself removed from its master.

**Abilities:**

**The Taint of Deception:** The only definite thing that wielders of the blade find themselves feeling is an irresistible urge towards deception. After more than a week, they will find themselves lying, cheating, and using underhanded tactics in all that they do. Those individuals who have already steeped themselves in deception will find their lies and scams spinning well beyond their own control. These effects manifest themselves slowly and gradually, with the wielder seldom being aware of them happening.

This effectively causes a shift in alignment of all wielders. Characters of Principled alignment find their alignment shifted to Scrupulous, characters of Unscrupulous alignment shift towards Anarchist, while Aberrant and Miscreant characters shift



towards Diabolic. This change is not as permanent as Braeknaer's (see below). Most victims find themselves cured after several months of separation, however some are never cured. This ability affects all wielders of the blade, whether they bond with it or not, though those who are successful in bonding with it are far more strongly affected.

**Mesmerism:** Anyone who attacks the wielder of the blade must save versus magic or become dumbstruck with mesmerism. Victims of the mesmerism are completely helpless and will stand motionless, taking absolutely no actions to do anything, not even to defend themselves. All victims may make one additional save each round to break free from the mesmerism. Creatures who are normally immune to the effects of mesmerism or similar enchantments still suffer the full effects of this ability. Note: This only applies to those who openly attack the wielder or actively counterattack one of the wielder's attacks. Those who flee or who strictly defend themselves are not susceptible.

**Spells:** Danz can cast all of the following: Charismatic Aura, Charm, Domination, Compulsion, Words of Truth, Wisps of Confusion, Havoc, and Fear.

**Communication:** As with all rune weapons, Danz may communicate at will via limited telepathy, but it chooses to communicate solely through Empathetic Transmission, as per the psionic ability. It may do so at will.

**A note on abilities:** Being that Danz has never fully manifested his personality to any wielder, all of the sword's abilities are used by the sword independently. The wielder will rarely be aware of any of these abilities, and even if he is, they can only be used at the sword's discretion.

P.P.E.: 1102. Regenerates 1D6x10 P.P.E. per hour.

Damage: 1D4x10 S.D.C.

Combat Bonuses: +2 to initiative, +4 to strike and parry, plus one attack per round, +3 to save versus psionics and mind affecting spells and abilities.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Bonds With: Danz can only fully bond with other selfish characters, although good and evil characters who attempt to wield the blade do not take damage and suffer no penalties other than being unable to use the sword's abilities. Oddly enough, it is believed that Danz does not like bonding with selfish characters and often times attempts to bond with good or evil characters, yet never successfully.

Cost: This item is unique and cannot be purchased.

## Braeknaer, the Corruptor

Braeknaer is the companion sword to Danz. It was made by Braxis, probably around the same time that he made the first sword. Its make is identical, except that the blade is a deep, faint maroon color. The gems in its hilt are deep red bloodstones. Braeknaer performs no visual illusions while in battle.

Whereas Danz chooses to mesmerize its opponents and fool its wielders into lives of deception, Braeknaer chooses to fully corrupt its wielders into evil, malicious beings. The sword is able to bond with both good and selfish characters, though it prefers good ones. Like Danz, Braeknaer is subtle and crafty, but Braeknaer is in no way fickle. It will choose a victim, bond with him, and slowly corrupt his entire being. This corruption is

extremely subtle and well planned out, often times taking years and years to fully unwind. In fact, the longer it takes, and the more complicated the scheme, the more Braeknaer seems to enjoy himself.

Danz and Braeknaer have a twisted and sorted past. They currently avoid each other and refuse to work together. This is not the result of anything like hatred, but more like brotherly rivalry. Neither knows what happened to Braxis.

Abilities:

**Corruption:** Those who bond with Braeknaer suffer two primary effects. The first is a slow shift in alignment. Anyone bonded with the sword will find his alignment shifting, step by step, until he becomes fully Diabolical. The amount of time it takes for the change to take place varies for each victim, but none receive any sort of saving throw. Aside from attempting to get rid of the sword, nothing short of divine intervention can stop the process once it has begun. And Braeknaer is very skilled at convincing his wielders (subconsciously, of course) that he is well worth keeping around, despite any changes.

Usually Braeknaer will leave its victims once the full transformation has occurred. More often than not it tries to make its victims aware of the horrible change they've undergone before he leaves, leaving them even more tormented.

At the G.M.'s discretion this corruption may be curable, but it will take something very powerful, usually along the lines of extremely rare magic or another divine miracle.

**Psionics:** Braeknaer is a very powerful psychic with all of the following abilities: Bio-Regeneration (wielder), Induce Sleep, Suppress Fear, Alter Aura, Mind Block, Telekinesis, Clairvoyance, Empathy, See Aura, Total Recall, Cause Insanity, Empathic Transmission, Hypnotic Suggestion, Induce Nightmare, Insert Memory, Mental Illusion, Mentally Possess Others, Mind Wipe, and Mind Bolt. It is a master psionic and may even have additional powers, which it seldom uses. All psionics are used at 15th level proficiency.

I.S.P.: 1265. Regenerates 1D6x10 I.S.P. per hour.

Damage: 6D6 S.D.C.

Combat Bonuses: +1 to initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +2 to all saving throws, and immune to all forms of mental possession by other beings.

Alignment: Diabolic.

Bonds With: Selfish or good aligned characters, preferably good. Evil characters who attempt to use the blade will experience a horrid revulsion to it and will be unable to wield it whatsoever.

## The Senshut

These mysterious suits of armor are items of incredible power and legend. The Senshut (pronounced Sen-Shoot) are of an utterly alien design and creation, unlike anything else normally encountered on Palladium. The armor appears as a mass of tiny, black, garrotte-like wires that wrap around the wearer, completely enshrouding him. The wires are able to flow and expand about the wearer's body like thousands of prehensile tentacles.

The origin of the Senshut is unknown. More than likely they are the spawn of another dimension, come to Palladium by un-

known means. Only two things are known about these suits of armor. They are evil, and they are powerful. So little is known because no one who has ever seen the Senshut has lived to tell about them. In fact, it is suspected that they are not even suits of armor at all, but demonic creatures that possess and corrupt their wearers. Indeed, no one who has ever worn this armor has ever been seen or heard from again.

If viewed as a race, the Senshut are still hard to understand. They live life in utter seclusion and darkness. Their supernatural abilities make them superb assassins, but to what extent these skills are used is unknown. No known race is known to have openly interacted with them, and they've never been known to interact with any beings likewise.

#### Abilities:

**Movement:** The Senshut may use its tentacles to climb all but the sheerest of surfaces with perfect ability. Their speed while climbing is 32. While climbing, the armor is utterly silent.

**Entangle and Strangle Opponents:** The armor is able to ensnare and strangle its enemies. The tentacles have a supernatural strength of 40. Opponents with lower strength are overpowered. Opponents with higher strength may break free by rolling under their strength on a roll of 1D20+40. Opponents with a strength over 60 are not affected. Victims of strangulation suffer 3D6 S.D.C. per round for the first four rounds. After four rounds, they suffer 6D6 S.D.C. per round. After eight rounds they suffer 1D4x10 S.D.C. per round until death or escape. All damage due to strangulation goes straight to Hit Points. Victims too weak to break free may escape by causing 200 S.D.C. in damage to the attacker within a time span of two rounds. However, victims are -8 to strike. Spell casting is impossible.

**Additional Abilities:** The armor is absolutely invisible in darkness, and it is impervious to absolutely all forms of detection, magical and otherwise. The wearer is able to see perfectly in darkness and can see the invisible. The armor is impervious to all normal weapons, fire, cold, and electricity. Magical fire, cold, and electricity do half damage. Direct sunlight does 3D6 S.D.C. per round of exposure.

**Penalties:** It is believed that this armor is sentient and extremely evil. It is thought that anyone who wears the armor runs the risk of being permanently possessed by it.

A.R.: 19.

S.D.C.: 1000. Regenerates 1D6x10 S.D.C. every ten rounds. If reduced to 0 S.D.C. the armor becomes inert, but does not "die." It will regenerate back to full S.D.C. within three hours. There is no known way of destroying/killing the armor.

Cost: This item simply can't be bought.

# Nightbane<sup>®</sup>

## New Morphus Tables for Nightbane

By Aaron Oliver

First Appeared in *The Rifter*<sup>®</sup> #1

Running out of ideas for making truly unique Nightbane characters? We've got just the thing. Ten new Morphus appearance tables, ranging from wild, to wondrous, to weird.

### Animated Nightbane Table

This table is for comic or animation-style Morphus forms. This may be considered an Alien Shape table for those GM's going by the book. Nightbane with these features may have been fans of the types of animation they have become, or perhaps artists of them. A third possibility is that these 'Bane have always been (please excuse the pun) highly animated, and that is now reflected in their true form. All these forms are three-dimensional, move freely and as comfortably as the 'Bane's normal body, and can be seen from any perspective, as a normal person could be, they just appear to be cartoons.

**01-12 Pencil and Ink:** The Morphus looks like a perfect sketch of a person, almost human, except that their body is white or off-white (depending on the type of paper used), shaded slightly with normal pencil. The primary lines of the character and their features will be in black ink. The character can even be used as a sketch pad, but any markings made that are not normally part of their form will disappear within 1D4 hours. Add 1D6 to P.B., 1 to M.A., and 20 to S.D.C. The colorless form can be very unsettling, add 3 to Horror Factor.

**13-24 Sketch:** This might be considered the predecessor to the Pen and Ink above. This Morphus looks like a rough drawing in need of refinement. They will be white or off-white, resembling some type of paper. Their bodies and features are made from rough pencil lines. There will be no dark or definite features, even in the face, making the character appear to be nothing more than a white outline from a distance. Other than this, the Morphus resembles an average human with slightly blurred features (like being viewed through thick fog) and a very pale complexion. Like the Pen and Ink, this image can be very disturbing to those looking at it, add 4 to Horror Factor. Also add 1 to P.B. and M.E. and 30 S.D.C.





**25-36 30's Black & White:** The Morphus is short, about three or four feet tall (1 to 1.3 meters), with a large, round head, round body, and shorter-than-normal arms and legs. Their mouth is large and usually pulled up into a large grin, the eyes are large, white ovals with large pupils and no irises, and the nose is a ball in the middle of the face. All the character's emotions will be extremely showy and exaggerated. They will have large feet and hands with three fingers and toes. Their voices will be higher than usual (even males) and they will typically enjoy singing and whistling. They are only black and white in color. Their clothes will usually only be a pair of shoes and either a pair of shorts or a skirt and large pair of panties. Add 2D6 to Spd., 1D4x10 to S.D.C. and 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**37-48 Comic Strip:** The character resembles something out of the Sunday funnies. They don't look realistic or human at all and may even have shapes that appear to be impossible to be 3-D. Most (85%) will be in vivid colors. The character may even resemble a popular figure in the comics. One strange effect is that when the character talks, it will sound like incoherent gibberish, but their words will appear in a bubble above them (others must know how to read to be able to speak with the character). On the plus side, blunt impacts, like punches, falls and frying pans, do no damage! Add 6D6 S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**49-61 Modern American 'Toon:** This is basically the style of animation that America has been using for the past 50 or so years. The character has large, round eyes (or possibly, the eyes are one oval with two pupils), a small nose, three fingers, a thin neck, and is either much shorter or taller than the average person. Their bodies may be short and round, incredibly heavily muscled, or rail thin. The character's features are done in heavy black lines and lack a great deal of detail. The body will have relatively little shading, colors being uniform until they are separated by a line. The head will be disproportionate to the rest of the body, either being too large or too small. This form is also easily applied to Nightbane with animal features, and these Nightbane usually do not wear any clothes. Blunt impacts do half damage. Add 1D6 to M.A., 1 to P.S. and P.E., 1D6 to Spd., 1D4x10 to S.D.C., and 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**62-75 Japanimation/Anime:** This is the Japanese style of art that has become incredibly popular in the states. The 'Bane's nose is small, almost non-existent. The eyes are overly large and well detailed. The mouth is small, but can open incredibly (and impossibly) wide, especially when the character is excited or scared. The skin is shiny and smooth and, at times, the Morphus will stand perfectly motionless, with only their mouth moving to talk. The clothes are either futuristic, Japanese, or martial arts outfits, or some combination of those. The Nightbane receives +10% to motionless prowling (hiding), +1D6 to P.B., and +1 to P.P. Add 4D6 to S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**76-84 Child's Doodle:** This Morphus looks like it's been drawn by a child. The head is a large, squiggly circle, the body is a large oval, and the limbs are crooked lines. The eyes are either dots or circles and the mouth is a semicircle filling half the face. These characters can bend their bodies in unbelievable ways and are completely double-jointed, giving them a +4 to roll with punch/fall. The character's coloration is white with the lines drawn from pencil or markers and colored in loosely by crayons. These Nightbane can acquire any elite talents that re-

quire a Toy form at one less P.P.E. than normal. Add 1 to P.E., 1D6x10 to S.D.C., and 1D6 + 1 to Horror Factor.

**85-00 Animated Animal:** Many cartoon stars are anthropomorphic animals. Roll on the Animal Form table to determine what type of animal the character resembles or choose one on your own. The character will be fully bipedal, with two human-like arms and hands, a furry but definitely human trunk, and a head resembling a cartoony version of the animal. Do not roll on a specific animal table! Re-roll on this table, ignoring any rolls of 85 or higher, to determine the animation/art style the anthropomorphic animal resembles. The Nightbane can acquire any elite talents requiring an animal feature.

## Armadillo Table

For many in the world of the twenty-first century, reality has become as frightening as any horror movie (with the possible exception of those put out by the Hotchkiss companies). Because of this, it is not surprising that many simply wish to hide away from the world, or at least not go out without some added protection. The armadillo is normally thought of as a walking tank, fulfilling these people's need for protection very well. All armadillo Nightbane have the ability to tunnel through dirt and clay (not loose material like gravel or sand or hard materials like rock) at one-third their normal Spd. This leaves a passable tunnel behind them, which will normally remain until some heavy force causes its collapse (tunnel built beneath roads will normally collapse within minutes). The exact size of the tunnel depends on the type of Armadillo features possessed. Armadillos also have the ability to excavate (hollow out) large, underground areas. One cubic foot of dirt per point of P.S. can be removed in half an hour. These areas collapse after a few hours or, if properly reinforced, could be permanent. They can keep up either of these activities (digging or excavating) at this pace for two minutes per point of P.E. They also have a natural swimming skill of 65%.

**01-15 Giant Armadillo:** The Morphus is an enormous armadillo, measuring over ten feet (about 3 meters) from nose to tail! The thick, plated shell provides an extra 1D4x100 S.D.C. and if they roll themselves into a ball, roughly five feet (1.5 meters) across, they take only one-third damage from any and all attacks, even Darkblades! (No actions can be done while in a ball, other than rolling). They can roll at top speed, but have no way of seeing where they are going while doing so. Rolling over someone does 1D8x10 damage. The armadillo's paws are too large and clumsy to hold anything or perform skills (-60%), but the claws add 4D6 to supernatural P.S. damage. A tail swat does supernatural P.S. damage, and a bite only does 1D8 damage. The armadillo's great size and strength add 10 to P.S. and 6 to P.E., but subtract 3 from P.P. and 4 from Spd. The form, although very alien, still seems peaceful to others, adding only 2 to Horror Factor. These 'Bane leave tunnels approximately seven feet (2.1 meters) across while digging.

**16-35 Were-'Dillo:** These Nightbane still appear to be large armadillos, standing around six feet tall (1.8 meters), but stand upright and possess thick, human-like arms and legs. Their thick shell grants them an extra 5D4x10 S.D.C. and, like the larger form, the 'Bane can roll into a large ball and take only one-third

damage from any attacks. Balls are about three feet (.9m) across. Rolling over someone while balled up causes 5D6 damage. Their hands are more claw than finger, causing a minus 20% to all delicate skills, but adding 3D6 to supernatural damage. A bite does 1D6 damage. Their strength is also much greater than the average person, adding 7 to P.S. and 5 to P.E., but they are slightly clumsy, subtracting 3 from P.P. and Spd. They also add 1D4 to Horror Factor. Were-'Dillos leave tunnels about five feet (1.5m) across while digging.

**36-55 Humanoid Armadillo:** These Nightbane could pass for human in very bad light, but still possess an elongated nose, pointed ears, tough, banded back, stubby tail, and short, black claws. Their tough skin adds 2D6x10 S.D.C., but cannot be rolled into a ball. Their strength is still great, adding 5 to P.S. and 4 to P.E., but subtracting 2 from P.P. and Spd. Their tiny claws add 1D6 damage to a punch. These 'bane leave tunnels about four feet (1.2m) across. Add 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**56-70 Shell:** The 'Bane, although otherwise human, has a tough, armadillo shell growing from his back. It is impossible to hide with anything short of a cloak or cape. The shell adds 5D4x10 S.D.C. and allows the 'Bane to roll into a ball, like above. Rolling over someone does 4D6 damage. The form also adds 2 to P.S. and 1D4 to Horror Factor. The 'Bane can tunnel as well, leaving a three-foot (.9m) wide path behind him.

**71-80 Armadillo Head:** The body of this Morphus appears to be a totally normal human (as far as Nightbane go), but the head has an elongated muzzle, scales, coarse fur, tubular ears, and the beginnings of a shell under the hair. This adds 6D6 to S.D.C., 1 to P.S. and improves perception, adding 3 to any hearing or smell-related, or 1 to any vision-related roll. A bite does 1D8 damage. This form adds 1D4 to Horror Factor. These 'Bane can tunnel as well, leaving a three-foot (.9m) wide path behind them.

**81-90 Claws:** The hands and feet of the Morphus possess thick, tough claws almost three inches (8 cm) long. These subtract from accuracy of the hands (-15% to any delicate skills), but improve climbing ability (+15%) and hand-to-hand damage (+2D6 to supernatural damage). They also add 2D4 to S.D.C. and 1D6 to Horror Factor. These Nightbane can tunnel surprisingly well with just the claws, leaving 4-foot (1.2m) tunnels behind them.

**91-00 Armadillo Centauroid:** This form appears similar to the Giant Armadillo Morphus, except where the neck should be is the waist and upper body of a human. The shell is very tough, adding 1D4x100 to S.D.C., but the human torso prevents the 'Bane from rolling into a ball without seriously injuring themselves. They also add 8 to P.S. and 6 to P.E., but subtract 3 from P.P. The giant claws on the armadillo legs add 3D6 to supernatural P.S. damage. A swipe from the tail does normal P.S. damage. The form also adds 1D6 to Horror Factor. These Nightbane can tunnel well, leaving seven-foot (2.1m) wide tunnels.

## Dolphin/Whale Table

Cetaceans, also known as dolphins and whales, have long been popular animals in people's minds. They are intelligent and playful creatures, and seem to possess almost human-like personalities. All these creatures are mammals and must breathe air. All Nightbane with these features can hold their breath for

1D6+5 minutes and have an echolocation power, similar to radar. In other words, they can pinpoint objects in the dark or when blinded, and are able to operate perfectly under such conditions. They cannot be surprised by an attack from behind and can make strikes against invisible foes with only half the normal penalties (they are still affected normally by illusion powers). Unless otherwise mentioned, they also have a natural Swim Skill of 80%, swimming speed is running Spd plus 50% (Ex: a character whose land Spd. is 24 could swim at a speed of 36).

**01-15 Full Cetacean:** The Nightbane is fully dolphin or whale-shaped. The body will be long and tube-shaped with wet, rubbery skin and little hair. Their arms have been replaced with simple flippers (incapable of manipulating any objects) and their legs have become a tail. Exact size, shape, and coloration depend on the species. Dolphins are typically 5 to 7 feet (about 1.8 to 2.1 meters) long, and receive +1D6 to I.Q., +1 to M.A., +3 to P.S. and P.E., +4 to P.P. when swimming, +2D6 to Swimming speed, +2 to all perception rolls, and +1D6x10 S.D.C. Whales can range from 6 feet to over 100 feet (about 2 to 30 meters) long, though anything over 20 feet or 6 meters, about the size of a killer whale, is probably a bit much for a player character. Whales also receive +1D6 to I.Q., +1 to M.A., +3 to P.S. and P.E., +4 to P.P. while swimming, +2D6 to Spd., +2 to perception rolls, and +1D6x10 S.D.C. For every 2ft (.6 meters) larger than 8ft (2.4 meters), add 2 to P.S., +1 to Spd., and 1D4x5 S.D.C. These 'Bane possess a natural Swim Skill equal to 98% (Spd. as above), but will be helpless on land (P.S., P.P., and Spd. all reduced to 1 and no attacks per meleel) unless purchasing the Air Swimmer talent (allows character to swim through the air, as high as twenty feet/6.1 meters above the ground, as if they were in the water, the character does not suffer penalties from drying out, permanently costs 5 P.P.E. but is always active while in Morphus and does not interfere with any other talents). In a pinch, these characters can manipulate objects with their mouths (-50% to delicate skills, -5 to strike or parry with held weapon, cannot use modern weapons like this). A head-butt from a dolphin does Supernatural PS damage + 1D8. A bite from a whale does Supernatural PS +1D6. Either animal adds 1D6 to Horror Factor, +1 for whales over 10 feet (3 meters).

**16-35 Humanoid Dolphin/Whale:** The character still resembles a whale/dolphin, but the tail is replaced by a pair of legs with webbed toes and the flippers to the sides have become humanoid arms with webbed fingers (-10% to delicate skills). There is still a triangular dorsal fin on the back, and the coloration and the head's shape are still definitely animal. The Nightbane is roughly human sized (6 to 9 feet tall, or 2 to 3 meters). A head-butt from a dolphin or a bite from a whale does Supernatural PS damage plus 1D6. Add 1 to I.Q. and M.A., 3 to P.S., P.E., and P.P., 1D6 to Spd., 1D6x10 to S.D.C., +1 to all perception rolls, and 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**36-55 Finned Humanoid:** The Nightbane is relatively human, but has a triangular fin growing from each forearm (however many arms they may have), as well as on the lower leg, and a dorsal fin in the middle of the back. Their fingers and toes are webbed as well. The hair is most likely black, blue, blue-gray, or white. The character has no visible ears. Fins add +2 to punch or kick damage. Add +1 to I.Q. and P.S., +2 to P.P., and +3D6 to swimming Spd. This form grants +20 S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor.



**56-70 Exotic Aquatic Humanoid:** The Nightbane appears mostly human, but has soft skin of a strange tone, webbed fingers and toes, and the hair is black, blue, blue-gray, or white. Their eyes also have a strangely exotic nature. The character can easily pass for human. Add +1 to P.P., +1D6 to I.Q., + 1D8 to P.B., and 2D6 to Spd. Add 6D6 to S.D.C. and 1 to Horror Factor.

**71-85 Cetacean Head:** The 'Bane's body is human, but the head is that of a whale or dolphin, complete with blowhole. Head-butt or bite does supernatural PS damage plus 1D6. Add 1D6 to I.Q., +1 to M.A., +3 to swimming Spd, +2 to all perception rolls, and 3D6 to S.D.C. Add 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**86-00 Mermaid:** From the waist up, this Morphus appears to be a normal human, but from the waist down is a long, dolphin-like tail. The tail is slightly longer than the rest of the body, giving the average "mermaid" a length of about 7 feet (2.1 meters). In this form, the Morphus is nearly helpless on land (P.P. and Spd. are reduced to 3, halve normal number of attacks and no combat bonuses) unless the Air Swimmer talent is purchased (see note above). Add 2 to P.S., +3 to P.P. while swimming, +3D6 to swimming Spd. and 1D4x10 to S.D.C. Adds 1D4 to Horror Factor.

## Enlarged Features Table

This Morphus form is perfectly normal in appearance, the only exception is that one feature is grossly enlarged. The rest of the body is perfectly normal in size and shape, unless other Morphus features dictate otherwise. A 'Bane with one of these features usually has a relatively high opinion of themselves, especially in whatever area that has become "larger than life."

**01-12 Enlarged Cranium:** These 'Bane have usually either prided themselves on their brainpower or their hair. Either way, the head above the eyes has become incredibly large, roughly two feet (.6 m) across. This can appear as a huge mass of hair, a super-sized forehead, or look like the brain has grown through the skull. Add 30% to the character's total weight, add 2D6 to the I.Q. and 1D6 to M.E. Add 6D6 S.D.C. and +1D4 to Horror Factor. Despite appearances, these 'Bane have no neck problems.

**13-26 Bulbous Eyes:** The Morphus' eyes are roughly the size of tennis balls and bulge from the head. The majority of these people have thought their eyes contain a certain charismatic power. The eyes themselves can be anything the player desires, yellow and cat-like, dark like a rodent's, insect-like, and so on. No matter what the appearance, the 'Bane has perfect eyesight and extended night vision (range 100 feet or 30 m), they also receive a +3 to any vision-related perception checks. Add 2D4 S.D.C. and 1D6 to Horror Factor. The Morphus may purchase any vision related talent at a cost of 1 less P.P.E. than normal (minimum of 1 P.P.E.).

**27-40 Muscular Arms:** These Morphus' arms aren't just muscular, they're enormous, and reach down to their knees. They have wide shoulders and biceps that are easily as big around as their head, however their hands and chest are normal size and, compared to these giant arms, may even seem smaller than normal. These individuals have usually believed their physical strength makes them important. Add 4D6 to P.S., 1D4x10

S.D.C., +1D6 to Horror Factor, and increase the total body weight by 50%. The character may purchase any super strength-related talent at a cost of 1 less P.P.E. point than normal (minimum of 1 P.P.E.).

**41-54 Enormous Hands:** These are people who have always depended on their hands to support them (boxers, doctors, artists). Their hands have become super-sized, over two feet (.6 meters) across and three feet (1 meter) long! The character can grab and hold any man-sized or smaller object simply by making a successful roll to strike. The character's gripping strength is equal to twice their P.S. attribute (it takes a combined strength greater than this to break the captive free). Also, by squeezing they can do one point of damage per melee for every P.S. point above 15, or they can simply hold the victim until they wish to release them. The fingernails (now roughly three to four inches/7.6-10 cm across) are very tough (A.R. 19) and can be used to parry weapons. Finally, add +1D6 to P.S., +1D6x5 S.D.C., +1D4 to Horror Factor, and increase total body weight by 35%. Surprisingly, these large digits do not interfere with any of the 'Bane's delicate skills.

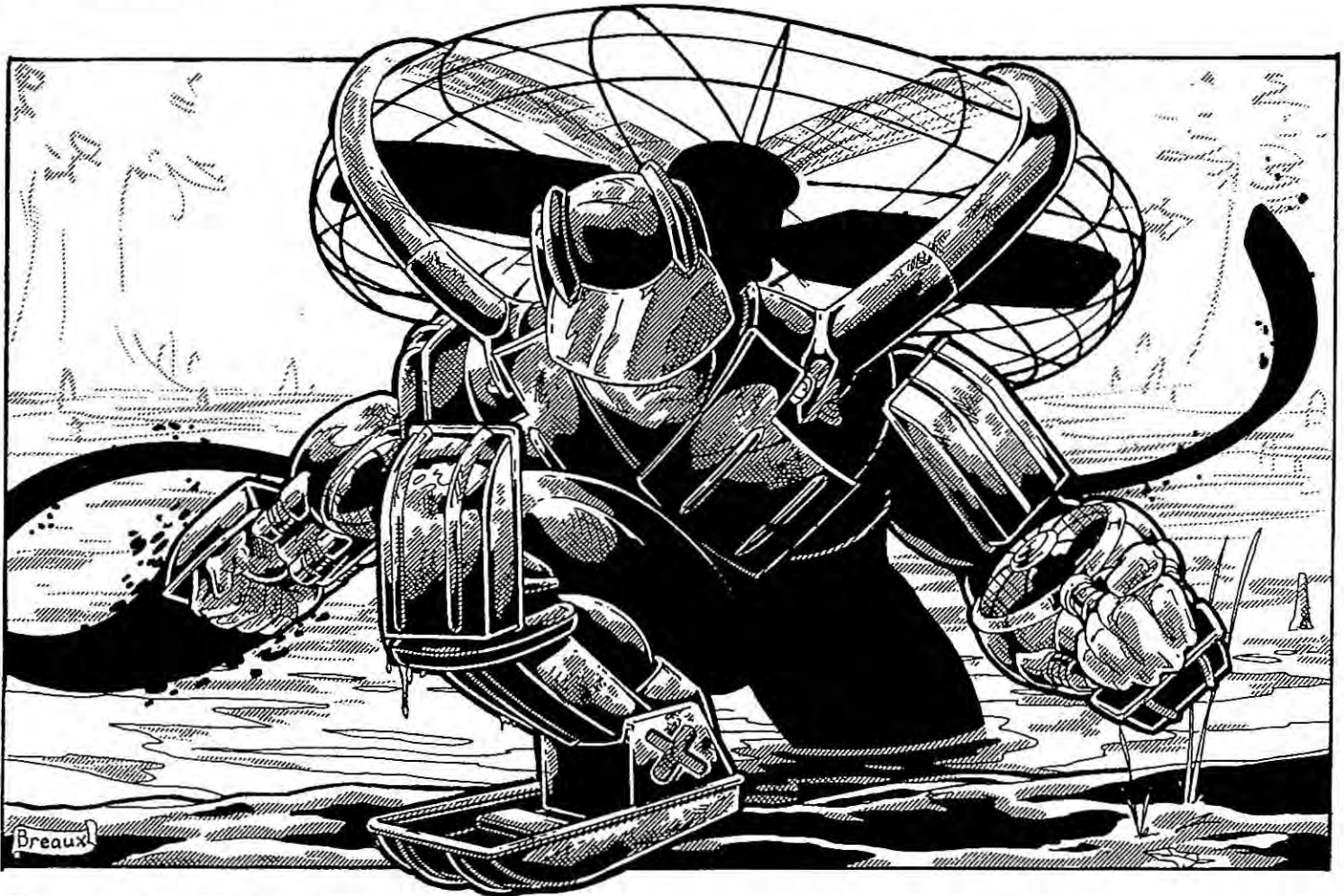
**55-68 Swelled Chest:** This goes one of two ways, either the 'Bane's chest is large and muscular-looking, or, for some females, well, use your imagination. These people have either valued their muscles or...ahem, to get them by or at least make them attractive, and now these features have been super-enhanced to inhuman sizes. Add 2D6x10 S.D.C. and the character's chest has an A.R. of 8. Increase P.S. and P.E. by 2D4 and Horror Factor by 1D4. Increase the character's height by 1D4 feet (or 2D6x10 centimeters), and double the character's weight. This is due solely to the size of the chest; the legs, stomach, neck, arms, and head are all normal size. These characters will have trouble walking through ordinary doors unless they turn sideways (and even then, for some).

**69-82 Bulbous Belly:** These characters may not have ever actually valued their eating ability (then again, some might), but this form is more representative of gluttonous and greedy people. The 'Bane's stomach rolls out in numerous fatty rolls and is soft and squishy. Increase P.S. by 1D6 and reduce P.P., P.B., and Spd. by 1D4. Double the character's weight, and add 3D6x10 S.D.C. Any blunt blows to the stomach area, even car collisions, do no damage! Increase the Horror Factor by 1D6.

**83-90 Boulder Butt:** Do I really need to go into detail on this one? The Morphus' rear is inflated to the size of a small trunk (almost four feet/1.2 m across). These people may have valued a cute and tight rear, or they may have just felt self-conscious about their own posterior. Their weight is increased by 50% and their P.P. is dropped by two points. On the plus side, falls do half damage as long as the character lands on his backside, the character's S.D.C. is raised by 1D6x10, and the butt can be used as a blunt weapon, doing 1D8 damage plus P.S. bonus. Add 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**91-00 Giant Feet:** The character has valued either their speed or footing for years. These loves are now reflected in their size 50-EE feet, covered with a second "skin" shoe of the player's choice. Decrease the Morphus' P.P. by 1D4, but increase their Spd. by 5D6. A kick from these giant feet does 2D6 damage and is +2 to penetrating armor. The character also has one extra attack per melee, so long as it is used for a kick. Increase their weight by 20% and add 1D4+3 inches (2D6+6 cm)

to their height. If using the optional knockdown rules, the character is +15% to avoid being knocked over. The character may purchase any speed related talents at a cost of 1 less P.P.E. than normal (1 P.P.E. minimum). Add 2 to Horror Factor.



## Everglades Table

For all those Nightbane out there who are as fond of this expansive wetlands as I am, I have put together a combination of the various elements found in the Florida Everglades. Now, I don't want anyone out there getting confused: the Everglades are not a swamp (they contain a few), they are wetlands. Swamps are dank, murky, muddy areas filled with stagnant water. Wetlands are brightly lit areas, mostly grasslands, which are covered almost entirely by a few feet of water. The Everglades are home to hundreds of species of fish, birds, reptiles, and mammals and provide valuable breeding grounds for many more.

In the world of the twenty-first century, the destruction of these valuable wetlands has continued and, under King Moloche's control, even sped up. It is only natural that among the hundreds of people who loyally defend this valuable world, a few would turn out to be Nightbane. Their Morphus would then reflect this deep love of these almost-magical lands.

**01-15 Gator Man (or Croc Man):** Very similar to the Humanoid Reptile in the first book, the Gator Man has a humanoid body, although hunched over, but is covered in tough, dark green scales. Their head resembles an alligator, with a flat snout,

rows of sharp teeth, little or no hair, and eyes set on top. Their jaws have become incredibly powerful, capable of snapping bones easily. A bite does supernatural P.S. damage, plus 2D6. Their hands and feet have become webbed, and each finger tipped with a powerful claw, adding +3 to punch damage, but makes delicate work difficult, -15%. Their long tail aids them in swimming, adding 2D6 to swimming speed (natural swim skill of 85%). Add 3 to P.S., 1 to M.E., 2D6 to Spd., and 1D4x10+10 to S.D.C. Their tough hide provides an A.R. of 12 and a Horror Factor of 1D6. These Nightbane can purchase any Elite Talents requiring an Animal Form.

**16-30 Mud-Form:** The 'Bane's body is made of thick mud! In addition, small plants grow from various areas, sticks and twigs poke out here and there, and water drips from them constantly. Like the Plasmoid form, the Nightbane can squeeze through small openings, slip out of bonds, and physical attacks only do half damage. They also do not need to breathe, allowing them to walk along a riverbed, or through a poison-gas cloud, or survive an airtight room indefinitely. Unfortunately, they constantly drip mud and water, leaving a clear trail wherever they go. Add 4D6 to S.D.C. and 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**31-45 Bird Body:** The Morphus is that of some sort of water bird, particularly cranes, pelicans, ibis, ducks, gulls, and eagles.



Their bodies, although basically human, have feathers rather than hair, dark eyes, and the mouth and nose poke forward slightly. Their toes are webbed and they can float on water (except eagles) at a speed equal to running. There is a chance (1-30%) of wings growing from their backs, starting at their shoulder blades. It is more likely (31-80%) that the wings grow from the arms instead. If they have wings, they can fly at a speed of 1D6x10. Excellent vision adds 1 to initiative and perception. Add 1 to P.S., 2 to P.P., 1 to P.E., 3D6 to S.D.C., and 1D4 to Horror Factor. These Nightbane can purchase any Elite Talents requiring an animal form.

**46-60 Air-Boat:** So, these aren't part of the natural landscape, but they are a necessity if you want to travel through the Everglades without damaging it. The Nightbane's body has now become grafted with certain air-boat parts so they can do the same. Their feet have been replaced by short, metal skis and their eyes (and possibly, entire face) have been covered by a windshield-like visor. Their entire body is stout and powerful-looking, but by far, the most noticeable feature is the enormous, circular fan mounted on their back. It is almost as large as the character is tall and only clears the ground by about a foot (.3 meters) and is covered by a screen to keep children and small animals from accidentally being sucked in. The fan can be used to propel the character across water (or underwater), muddy ground, ice, and sand at their Spd. attribute plus 2D6x10! By lying on their backs, the 'Bane can become a sort of hovercraft, hovering 1 to 6 feet (.3 to 2 meters) above the ground, but must find another method of locomotion. The fan makes a deafening noise when on and makes it impossible to prowl with it activated. Add 2 to P.S., 3 to P.E., and 1D6x10 to S.D.C. This form, although not truly ugly, is still frightening, add 1D4 to Horror Factor, plus 2 when the fan is on. These Nightbane can purchase any talents requiring a Bio-Mechanical form.

**61-75 Reeded Skin:** The skin of the Morphus is covered in short reeds and grass. This can vary in type from normal grass to seaweed to cattails or any combination (such as seaweed-covered legs, grass growing from the torso and arms, and reeds springing up where the hair should be). They can breathe both oxygen and carbon dioxide and can feed entirely off of sunlight and water. When in an environment similar to what they are made of, they can blend in with 90% success (like a motionless prowl). Add 1D4 to M.E., 1D6 to P.E., 4D6 to S.D.C., and increase Horror Factor by 1D6-1 (minimum of 1). These 'Bane take double damage from fire.

**76-90 Fish Body:** The Nightbane possesses the body of a giant fish! This is complete in every way except for size, which is now six to nine feet (2 to 3 meters) long. The most common species include catfish, bass, and small grouper. Although their fins are incapable of performing delicate skills, using weapons, or even punching, they can attack with head butts or tail lashes, both of which do supernatural P.S. damage plus 2D6. These 'Bane can breathe both air and water, although they will be quite helpless on land (P.S., P.P., and Spd. all reduced to 1). The alternative is to purchase the Air Swimmer talent, which allows the character to swim through the air, as high as twenty feet (6.1 m) above the ground, as if they were in the water, and the character does not suffer penalties from drying out; permanently costs 5 P.P.E. but is always active while in Morphus and does not interfere with any other talents. Add 1D4 to P.S., 2 to P.P.,

1D6 to P.E., and swimming speed is twice normal Spd. Increase S.D.C. by 1D6x10 plus 10, and Horror Factor by 1D4+1. These Nightbane can purchase any Elite Talent requiring an animal characteristic.

**91-00 Spirit of Destruction:** This is either for those Nightbane who actually support the destruction of the wetlands, or those who try to teach a lesson to others through fear and pity. They appear to be normal humans (other than other Morphus features) except that the head is completely hidden underneath a ragged, cloth hood. Not even the face can be seen without close examination. Upon that examination, or if the character pulls back the hood, their face reveals all the emotions and horrors summoned by the destruction of the habitat. It reveals the death of innocent beings and their eventual extinction, the slow draining of the life from these millions of square miles, the poison and sickness caused by dumping, and the beauty that may soon never be seen again. Those witnessing this must make a save vs. Horror Factor 17 or either break down crying or run away, refusing to believe what they saw. Increase M.E. by 1D6+1, P.S. by 1, Spd. by 2D6, and S.D.C. by 3D6, but reduce P.B. and M.A. by 1D6 each. The hood itself only adds 1 to Horror Factor, but the unmasked face has the effects as above. These Nightbane can purchase any elite talents that require a Stigmata.

## Griffin Table

Griffins are powerful creatures of Greek, and later, Medieval myth. Their large, majestic forms commonly command respect from all who picture them. They were also rumored to line their nests with gold, gems, and other precious minerals. Morphus with this form either possess or admire the power and grace that these creatures emanate. Although most are not truly greedy, most Nightbane with this form are somewhat materialistic and protective of their possessions.

Because of their affinity for riches, a griffin Morphus can acquire any talents relating to gold, gems, or precious minerals for 1 P.P.E. less than normal. (No talent can ever be reduced to 0.)

**01-15 Full Griffin:** This Morphus transforms completely into one of these gigantic creatures. They are slightly larger than an elephant and covered with shiny, golden feathers and fur, making prowling somewhat difficult (-20%). Their transformation grants them +2D6+7 to P.S., +3 to P.P., +10 to P.E., +5 to P.B., +4D6 to Spd., and +3D6x10 S.D.C. and they can fly at 100 mph plus 15 mph (160 km, plus 24 km) per level of experience. The creature's natural instincts grant a +1 to initiative and strike rolls, as well as +2 to perception rolls (+4 to any rolls involving gold, silver, or precious stones). Vision is twice as powerful as a normal human's. The griffin's beak provides an extra attack per melee and does 3D6 damage per bite, and they have retractable claws that do 4D6 damage for a swipe or 1D8 for a slam/pin (also grant climbing bonus of +25%). In this form, the 'Bane has no thumbs, making delicate skills impossible except by manipulation with the beak (-65%). Adds 2D4 to Horror/Awe Factor.

**16-35 Were-Griffin:** Can stand on two legs, but is between seven and nine feet (2.1 to 3 meters) tall. Cannot be disguised as a human because of large beak, long lion's tail and wings. +7 to

P.S., +2 to P.P., +9 to P.E., +4 to P.B., +2D8 to Spd., +2D6x10 S.D.C., flight speed is 85mph plus 10mph (136 km, plus 16 km) per level of experience. The Morphus is +3 to any perception rolls involving gold or precious gems. Vision is roughly twice as powerful as a normal human's. Beak does 2D8 damage for a bite or 1D6 for a peck. 70% chance of retractable claws that do 3D6 damage for a swipe, as well as granting a +30% climbing bonus. Delicate skills can be done, but are somewhat difficult with the oversized paws/hands (-30%). Adds 1D6 to Horror/Awe Factor.

**36-60 Humanoid Griffin:** This is basically a large-looking person covered completely with soft, golden fur. 50% chance of beak existing, and 45% chance of retractable claws (+25% to climb skill). +5 to P.S., +1 P.P., +7 to P.E., +3 to P.B., +1D6 to Spd., small wings do not allow for flight, but the Nightbane can glide at up to 60 mph (96 km) with enough altitude. Vision is perfect by human standards. Paws/Hands can use any normal tools or devices without penalty. Beak (if applicable) does 2D6 damage and claws can do 1D8. +3 to Horror/Awe Factor (+4 if beak is present).

**61-75 Partial Griffin 'Morph:** This 'Bane looks like a normal human with certain griffin body parts grafted on. The head possesses a beak that does 2D6 damage, and the eyes grant perfect eyesight. Furry arms and paws add +3 to P.S. and are 50% likely to possess a set of retractable claws doing 1D8 damage and adding 20% to climbing skill. Large wings allow the 'Bane to fly at 65 mph (104 km). The Morphus also has a long, lion-like tail. Adds 1D6 to Horror/Awe Factor.

**76-90 Lower Body Griffin:** This form is simply a human with the lower body and wings of a griffin. Add +3D6 to Spd. and +5 P.E. for running time and carrying loads. Wings allow the Morphus to fly at 85 mph plus 5 mph (136 km plus 8 km) per level of experience. Small claws on the feet add +4 damage to a kick if the Nightbane is barefoot, as well as adding +10% to climb skill. Adds 1D4 to Horror/Awe Factor.

**91-00 Griffin Centauroid:** The 'Bane's upper body is human, but beneath it is a griffin's body, beginning at the neck. The griffin body is about the size of a Clydesdale horse and causes a -20% to prowl, +7 to P.S., +6 to P.E., +2 to P.B., +3D6 to Spd, and +4D6x10 S.D.C. Nose is slightly pointed and ears cling to the side of the head. Wings allow the 'Bane to fly at 85 mph plus 10 mph (136 km plus 16 km) per level of experience. +1 to initiative and +2 to perception rolls. Vision is much better than the human norm. Adds 1D6 to Horror/Awe Factor.

## Gross Stigmata Table

If you're one of those people who didn't think the Stigmata table in the main book was disturbing enough, these are for you. Reader discretion is advised.

**01-10 Splitting Headache:** The Nightbane's head has been split apart! We're not talking about a neat, little sword slash across the cheek. Nope, it looks more like a pipe bomb had been strapped onto the hairline! Blood is splattered across their face and clothing and the brain (or what's left of it) can clearly be seen twitching around in the skull and dribbling from the wide wound. More than likely (85%), one of the eyes has been knocked out by the force that cracked their skull and either left

an empty socket or is dangling by its nerves. Add 2D6 to S.D.C. and 5 to Horror Factor.

**11-20 Visible Intestines:** The Morphus' abdomen has been slashed open and now everything that is supposed to be inside is hanging out and highly visible. Aside from just seeing the intestines, stomach, and parts of the liver, they also constantly drip blood, leaving a highly visible trail wherever the Nightbane goes. Add 1 to P.E., 5D6 to S.D.C., and 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**21-30 Outer Veins:** Every blood vessel that would normally be an inch under the Bane's skin is now running along the surface, crisscrossing the surface with countless red tubes and making their skin ripple and pulse with every heartbeat. Add 6D6 to S.D.C. and 1D4+1 to Horror Factor.

**31-40 Psycho:** The Nightbane looks like a raving psychotic. They are spattered with blood from head to toe, their eyes are opened incredibly wide, their mouth is constantly pulled into an evil grin, and their entire body shivers as if in anticipation. In addition to this, there is a knife, ax, or similar weapon permanently attached to one of their hands, adding 2D6 to P.S. damage. Whenever they talk, their words will be convoluted and they will laugh or giggle maniacally after every few words. Add one attack per melee, +1 to initiative, +2 to P.S., +3D6 to S.D.C., and +1D6+1 to Horror Factor.

**41-50 Nightmare Pet:** Roll once on the animal type table or choose an animal at random. This type of creature is permanently a part of the Nightbane, appearing as if he were impaled on it or it was sewn on in a quick, careless manor. The fur is matted and covered with blood and the creature is constantly growling, squawking, or hissing and struggling to free itself from the Morphus. The Bane receives an extra attack from this creature, which will bite/horn/claw during combat, doing 4D6 damage. Add 1D4x10 S.D.C. and 1D4+1 to Horror Factor.

**51-60 Decapitated:** The Morphus' head has been cut off of the body and now must be carried in their hand or in some other manner. The neck stub squirts up bits of blood and flesh every few minutes and the bottom of the head drips almost constantly. Despite this, the head still sees, smells, hears, eats, and speaks normally and the movement isn't restricted. The body can be controlled from up to 3 miles (4.8 km) away per level of experience (of course, it isn't much good if the Bane can't see or hear what it's doing). The head houses all of the Morphus' Hit Points, while the body is composed entirely of its SDC (striking the head requires a called shot, at -3 to strike). The head can also be swung by the hair like a mace, adding 1D8 to PS damage. The head's skin is pale and the eyes bulge slightly. Add 2D4 to Hit Points and 1D6+1 to Horror Factor (minimum of 4).

**61-70 Blood-Sucker:** The Nightbane's canine teeth are grossly enlarged, even beyond those of vampires. In addition to that, the teeth, along with their lips and chin, are constantly dripping with a disgusting mixture of blood, drool, and bile. Their eyes are heavily bloodshot and wide, making them look perpetually hungry. A bite from these teeth does 4D6 damage plus the victim must save vs. lethal poison or take an extra 5D6 damage. Add 2D6 to S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**71-80 Slashed:** The Nightbane looks as if someone has taken a razor blade and crisscrossed it across their face. Several of the pieces have already fallen out or are peeling off, revealing muscles and tendons beneath, along with plenty of blood. Add 5D6 to S.D.C., reduce P.B. by half, and add 1D4+1 to Horror Factor.



**81-90 Acne:** This could make anyone wish to be a normal teen again. The Bane's face, along with most of their body, is covered in thousands of huge, infected zits! These will bleed from time to time and, if popped, release a very corrosive substance (5D4 damage, 5 foot/1.5 m range), and any pimples popped will reform within an hour. Add 2D6 S.D.C., reduce P.B. by 5, and add 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**91-00 Crushed:** Some part of the Morphus looks like it has been crushed beneath a heavy weight or vehicle. The portion of the body is only 1 to 3 inches (2.5-7 cm) thick, has broken and shattered bones ripping through the skin at several spots, along with countless cuts and tears in the skin that are constantly bleeding, not to mention heavy bruising and distortion. Add 4 to roll with punch/fall, +1D4x10 S.D.C., and 1D6+1 to Horror Factor.

## Otter Table

Playful, hyper, optimistic, and unpredictable; even with the seemingly horrible downward spiral of the world today, many people are still able to muster up these emotions and continue on with life happily. Nightbane like these commonly become an animal with a very similar outlook: the otter. These 'Bane can be either river or sea otters, the only major difference being size (sea otters are larger).

Despite the exact nature of their forms, all Nightbane with otter features have an automatic swim skill equal to 85% and their swimming speed is double the normal Spd attribute. They can hold their breath for 1D6 minutes per level of experience. Finally, they possess small, sensitive whiskers that can detect the tiniest changes in the air or water, allowing them to sense air and water temperature accurately, sense wind/current direction, and sense the approach of something from out of sight (anyone attempting to prowl up on them are at -30%).

**01-15 Giant Otter:** The Morphus is identical to a normal otter, the only difference being that when this otter stands on its hind legs it reaches six to ten feet (1.8 to 3 m) tall. Like all otters, they are very flexible, giving them a +5 to roll with punch/fall. The giant size, along with the thick fur, adds 2D6x10 +20 to S.D.C. and they take no damage from cold. Their hands look too large and inarticulate to perform fine skills accurately, but are still surprisingly dexterous, subtracting only 20% from skills. A bite does 4D6 damage, a swipe from the webbed, clawed hands does punch damage +2D6, and a tail slap does punch damage. The 'Bane's nightvision is even better than most, adding 500 feet (152 m) to their range. Finally, add 8 to P.S., 5 to P.P., 4 to P.E., and 10 to Spd. Add 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**16-35 Were-Otter:** All of the Nightbane's features are still distinctly otter, but the body shape is human. They stand from five to seven feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) tall, are covered in dark brown fur, have rubbery, webbed hands and feet with small claws, a thick, muscular tail reaching to their ankles, and a head that couldn't be mistaken for human. The hands are very nimble, but still clumsier than human hands (-10% to delicate skills). Nightvision is very good, adding 300 ft (91 m) to their normal range. A bite does 3D6 damage, a claw slash does punch damage plus 1D6, and a tail slap does punch damage. This form

adds 4 to P.S., 3 to P.P., 3 to P.E., and 2D6 to Spd. Increase S.D.C. by 2D4x10 and Horror Factor by 1D6.

**36-55 Humanoid Otter:** The body is completely human, although furry. The hands are dark with slight webbing (no increased damage, no penalty to skills). The face is normal except for a slight muzzle, dark nose, and very small ears. The tail is short and stout. These 'Bane could pass for human in bad light or with heavy clothing. Nightvision is better than average, adding 100 feet (30 m). Add 1D6x10 to S.D.C., 3 to P.S., and 2 to P.P. and P.E. Increase Horror Factor by 1D4.

**56-70 Otter Tail and Whiskers:** The Nightbane appears to be a normal human being (as Nightbane go, anyway), except for the long whiskers growing from the cheeks, and the muscular tail reaching to their ankles. The whiskers are even more sensitive than most other otter forms, providing all the normal abilities plus a bonus of +2 to initiative (+4 underwater). The tail can be used to attack, doing punch damage, or to aid in swimming (add 3D6 to swimming speed). Add 3D6 to S.D.C., 2 to P.S. and P.P., and 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**71-89 Webbed Hands and Feet:** Again, the 'Bane appears to be a normal person except for the dark, rubbery hands with webbing and small claws. The webbing helps when swimming, adding 4D6 to swimming speed, and the claws add to hand-to-hand damage, doing punch damage plus 2D6.

**90-00 Otter Centauroid:** The body of this Nightbane resembles a giant otter, but beginning at the neck is a human torso, arms, and head. Because of their size, these 'Bane will have trouble fitting into vehicles and through many doorways. Add 2D6x10+10 to S.D.C. Add 7 to P.S., 4 to P.P. and P.E., and 10 to Spd. A tail slap does normal punch damage, and a swipe from the clawed otter hands does punch damage plus 2D6. Also add 100 feet (30 m) to nightvision range.

## Saurian Table

In our modern world, most people have had at least a passing fascination with dinosaurs. Although most people outgrow them, many still admire these long-gone lizards. The 'Bane with these features may admire any of these creatures for a variety of reasons, but most will be at least a little more curious than the average person.

**01-14 Sauropod Neck:** The gentle giants of the dinosaur days, the sauropods ranged in size from the size of an elephant to the 100 foot (30.5 m) long Ultrasaurus. The Nightbane's neck is 1D6+1 feet (0.6-2.1 m) long and can bend and twist to a limited degree (although not as flexible or limber as a prehensile tail or trunk). The 'Bane's nostrils are on top of their head, rather than the front of their face, allowing them to breathe underwater with only the very top of the head above water. The Nightbane can hold their breath for 10 plus 2D6 minutes. The Morphus' arms and legs will appear very thick and round, almost tree-like. Their eyes also hold a sort of placidity and peaceful and trusting nature, regardless of their alignment. +4 to P.S., +1D6 to M.E., +1D6x10 to S.D.C. Add 4 to Horror Factor.

**15-28 Raptor Legs:** Raptors were not merely represented by the Velociraptors shown in certain popular movies. The family includes several dozen other members, all sharing quick wits and an even quicker set of legs. The feet have three toes, and the

legs are covered with dark scales (brown, black or green). Legs add 2D6x10 to Spd and 6D6 to S.D.C. The 'Bane also possesses a large scythe claw on the big toe of each foot that does 3D6 damage with a kick. Add 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**29-44 Ceratopid Head:** This family includes one of the favorites of many children, the triceratops. All the ceratopids share the bony frill around their head, in any imaginable pattern, as well as a parrot-like beak. A head-butt will do 2D6 damage, but uses two attacks, the beak can do 1D6 damage from a bite. There is an 85% chance the Morphus will have 1D6 horns; each horn will add 1D6 damage to a head butt, or can be used to slash, doing 2D6 damage, regardless of how many horns there are. The bony frill adds 1D6x10 S.D.C. and gives the head a natural A.R. of 15. The Nightbane also gains 1D8 to P.S., P.E., and Spd. Adds 1D6 to Horror Factor.



**45-58 Ankylosaur Shell:** The Morphus' entire back is covered with a tough, bony shell with large spikes protruding from it and a long tail ending in a hard, bone club. The shell adds 1D6 to P.S. and 3D6x10 to S.D.C., and has an A.R. of 16 for any attacks from the rear. The tail adds an extra attack per melee and does 1D10 damage. There is a 50% chance that the shell continues over the head, down to the nose. If this happens, the character has no hair or only hair along the outer edges. The shell will be covered with small horns, doing 2D6 with a head butt and giving the head an AR of 12. Adds 1D6 plus 1 to Horror Factor.

**59-72 Duckoid Crest:** The duckoids, or Hadosaurs, were a group of large wading dinosaurs with enormous, decorative head-crests they used to create deep mating calls. The crest extends one to two feet back from the head and can be of almost any design. The lips will protrude slightly like a duck's bill. The character can make deep, resonating noises through their crest that can be heard up to TWO MILES (3.2 km) away! Anyone standing within 20 feet (6.1 m) of the Bane when they make one

of these sounds will have to make a Saving Throw vs.16 to avoid deafness for 2D6 minutes (-3 to strike, parry, and dodge, -6 to initiative). The Morphus also has the ability to compose beautiful melodies with their crest, giving them a sort of sing skill automatically (80% +3% per level). The Bane can control the volume as easily as they control their normal voice. They can also hold their breath for 2D6 minutes and receive a +20% to swim skill if taken. Adds 1D6 to Horror Factor.

**73-86 Tyrannosaur Jaws:** The fierce and famous king of the 'Terrible Lizards,' the Tyrannosaurus Rex is known by most people. This Morphus will possess an enormous head, nearly twice the normal size, as well as elongated. The mouth covers half the face and is filled with jagged teeth, doing 4D6 damage with a bite. The Bane's sense of smell is about twice the normal level, and add 100 feet (30.5 m) to nightvision range. The form adds 3 to P.S., 2 to P.P., 3 to P.E., 2D6 to Spd., and 1D6x10 S.D.C. The arms and fingers will extend from the front of the body rather than the side and will only be two-thirds as long as normal (-20% to any delicate skills). This horrifying visage adds 6 to Horror Factor.

**87-00 Pterodactyl Wings:** The character's body is gaunt with an elongated head. Enormous wings sprout from beneath the arms (wingspan equals three times Morphus' height). Although not able to fly, the 'Dactyl can make exceptionally long jumps (up to 100 feet/30 m long, not up), and, with enough altitude, they can glide at up to 85 mph (136 km). There is a 60% chance that the Nightbane's feet will be prehensile, they can grasp items and carry them, but have trouble with any delicate skills (-20%) and combat (-3 to strike, -5 to parry). Adds 4 to Horror Factor.

## Weird Clothing Table

This is a table I've made for those players out there who want their characters to look weird, but don't want a totally alien appearance. It may be thought of as an Alien Shape table if you're going strictly by the book. Nightbane showing these features may have been fond of certain articles of clothing and now find themselves permanently a part of it. On the other hand, it may represent an aspect of their personality or a great love or fear. All these clothes are actually a sort of second skin that has formed over the Morphus and, no matter how artificial they may look, are actually as much a part of them as their normal skin. The clothing does not alter the rest of their body or change their size or shape, it simply covers the body they've already got.

**01-10 Old Favorite:** This person has been permanently covered with their favorite article of clothing. This will most likely include a ratty old sweater, pair of jeans or shorts, an old pair of tennis shoes, and a nappy-looking hat. These clothes are almost always old and comfortable, but are not likely the kind of thing a person would wear out in public. Add 3D6 S.D.C. and 1 to P.E. This form grants no bonus to Horror Factor (they don't look alien or disgusting, just poorly dressed).

**11-20 Disco Inferno:** This Morphus looks like they've just walked out of a bad 70's movie. Guys will be decked out in a leisure suit, complete with bell-bottoms, ruffles, open chest, and gaudy chains. Girls will have a short dress in ugly, bright colors, as well as tacky jewelry. Both sexes will also have platform



shoes and huge hair (a must). These characters will constantly be ready to dance and will often hum or even sing disco songs. Add 5D6 to S.D.C., 1D4 to P.P. and P.E., and 1D6 to Horror Factor. (Just a suggestion, but this form can be incredibly nasty when combined with certain stigmata).

**21-30 Classic Victorian Era:** This is a time period spreading from the early to late 1800's, best characterized in England. The ladies of this period were expected to cover every part of their bodies below the neck and commonly wore elegant, high-necked dresses that spread out in long, full skirts reaching the floor, linen stockings, leather high-heeled boots or shoes, and elbow-length gloves. They usually wore expensive (or at least, expensive looking) jewelry. The gentlemen of the era wore tailcoats, ruffled shirts, pants reaching down to the knees, linen stockings reaching up to the knees, and buckle shoes. These Nightbane tend to either be from that era, very patient and proper, or have a taste for the refined. Add 1D6 to M.E., 1 to M.A., and 1D4x10 to S.D.C. (from the heavy layers of clothing). Add 1D4 to Horror Factor.

**31-40 Animal Costume:** The Nightbane should roll on the Animal Form table and take the appropriate Humanoid Animal from the resulting animal, but with the following modifications. The form looks to be a costume, with seams, a zipper etc., but is actually the skin of the Nightbane. Add 2D6 S.D.C. but gains one less point of H.F. than normal for the animal form. The Nightbane may still choose Elite talents appropriate to the animal form he rolled. (Special thanks to Matthew Ignash for this one.)

**41-50 Clown Suit:** The Nightbane's Morphus appears like it's dressed in a clown outfit, although this outfit may not be removed. It may vary from relatively simple to the most outrageous outfit ever. Multi-colored polka dots or pin stripes adorn the outfit (the Nightbane's skin) and insure that the character will stick out in any crowd. The exact colors, as always, are up to player and GM, although cheerful Nightbane will have brighter colors than the dour and depressed. The clothes feel as if they are made of very starched cloth, and provide +4D6 S.D.C. Add +1 to Horror Factor because the other features of the Nightbane combined with the clown getup looks frightening. (Special thanks to Smitty for this one.)

**51-60 Futuristic:** The Morphus looks like something out of a cheap sci-fi movie. The clothing is most likely tight, shiny, and has rings at several points. Other interesting little additions that might be present are high-tech gizmos attached here and there

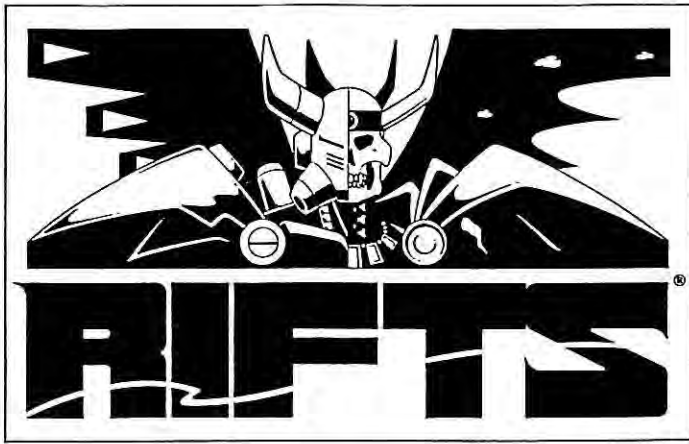
(no real function, they just look cool), a colored visor across the eyes, or strange hair colors. Lasers and other light-based attacks do half damage, due to the reflective nature of the clothing. Add 4D6 to S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor. These characters can purchase any Elite talents requiring a Bio-Mechanical form.

**61-70 Old Fogey:** This is the Morphus of those Nightbane who are mentally elderly, or just have no taste. The shirt is wrinkled and faded, the belt is hiked up high, and the pants or skirt are a tacky color (most likely plaid), and starched. They will also be wearing flat loafers and knee-high socks and possibly bifocals or a hearing aid. Add 1D6 to I.Q. (older and wiser) and 2 to M.A. Increase S.D.C. by 10 and Horror Factor by 2 (mostly due to the shock of seeing an old man or woman in mortal combat).

**71-80 Baby:** For those Nightbane who are immature or just like to be pampered. This 'Bane is dressed in a large, bulky diaper (cloth or disposable, player's choice) with a safety pin, a baby bonnet on the head, bib, pacifier hanging around the neck, and a pair of baby booty shoes. These Nightbane will prefer their meals pureed or out of a baby bottle and give off a constant aroma of baby powder or a dirty diaper. Add 2 to M.A., 1 to P.B., and 1D6 to crawling Spd. Add 5D6 to S.D.C. and 1D4 to Horror Factor (due mostly to the fact that enemies will be laughing their heads off).

**81-90 Legitimate Businessman:** Decker out in the classic outfits for the 1920's gangster, these Nightbane are ready for anything the underworld may offer. The guys are dressed in a finely pressed, pinstripe suit and a fedora with the brim pulled down. Women, or Molls, are dressed in a halter top and tight, knee-length skirt (both are most likely pinstripe), fishnet stockings, beret, and possibly a single garter band. These Nightbane receive +1 to M.A., 5D6 to S.D.C., +1D6 to their Horror Factor, and automatically receive W.P. Sub-Machinegun while in their Morphus.

**91-100 Opposite Sex:** The Morphus is dressed in clothes that are obviously meant for a member of the opposite sex. The Nightbane's true gender may be bluntly obvious (a dress and a five o'clock shadow, or a business suit being pressed out in the chest), or cleverly disguised, so they truly appear to be the opposite sex. Of course, there are no true changes to their physical body, it's all just cleverly hidden. Add 1D4 to M.A., 1D6 to either P.S. or P.P. (player's choice), 3D6 to S.D.C., and 1D4 (if character does not look like gender) or 1 (if they resemble the gender) to Horror Factor.



# Three Words

A Short Story by Jason Marker

First Appeared in *The Rifter*® #8

In the blink of an eye it was over. Norr had watched Billy draw the homemade bone knife from the waistband of his ragged jeans and lunge at the CS guard. The rest happened with dreamlike slowness: The knife glanced off the hard ceramic of the guard's breastplate. The faceless guard pushed Billy back into line, then casually drew his sidearm and burned Billy's face away. The old goat's corpse tumbled heavily to the ground and lay twitching at Norr's feet.

Another blink, and now Norr simply stood and stared at his friend's cooling body, his six eyes watching the heat slip from the old goat like a soul seeking salvation. Norr shifted the battered hoe he carried and thought some more. Thinking was something that took considerable effort for Norr. The faceless guard that had shot Billy was approaching him now, and everything became slow again. Norr thought harder, and remembered the past.

\* \* \*

Subject 4291203 stepped from the GED vat, dripping the milky Lone Star mutagen.

The engineers were delighted that the experiment had worked. They had never combined arachnid DNA with a human's before. Now what was quite possibly the greatest espionage agent ever created stood before them, staring blankly with its coal black eyes. The spider genes had given it unnatural stealth and strength, cold cunning, an extra set of arms, and the ability to excrete a sticky web-like substance that was perfect for "pacification." The human genes gave it an athlete's build and the intellect to learn and control its power. That, at least, was the plan. After the mutant was sterilized it was whisked away to an evaluation center and jacked into countless machines, which all reported that the subject was perfect in every way but one: It was an idiot. Subject 4291203 possessed the intellect of a three-year-old human and was unable to follow the simplest of commands. The researchers threw up their hands in

disgust, but instead of destroying the mutant they shipped it to a menial labor camp that was excavating a site for another new research building.

\* \* \*

The guard stopped, smoke still curling from the muzzle of his pistol, and stared coldly at Geck, the first slave in the chain. Geck's rosy muscles were tight under his scaly skin as he clenched his pickaxe. He stared back at the guard with hard eyes, and the guard waited for any excuse to shoot him down as well.

Norr thought harder.

\* \* \*

Life was hard for subject 4291203 at the labor camp. Three days after its arrival, its body had bloated and its athletic figure had sagged around it like a fleshy sack. The engineers had attributed this to an unstable genetic code and ordered it put under watch for any further unexpected mutations. This, plus its obvious mental deficiencies, made it the butt of one cruel joke after another.

The soldiers kicked it and pushed it for moving too slow. They antagonized it and tried to get it to attack them so they could get rid of it. And when it made a mistake or broke one of the hundreds of rules the guards made up, they would not punish it, but the rest of the mutants in its gang. In retaliation, the other mutants would steal its food. They would snag its chain to trip it and abuse it all day, and then tie it to its bunk at night and terrorize it. It never flinched or struck back, or showed any reaction. It thought this was the natural order of things and accepted the abuse and terror as life. And then everything changed.

\* \* \*

The guard moved past Geck and stood staring at Norr, waiting. Norr stared back with his blank, black eyes, not moving. Viscous, poisonous drool ran down his mandibles and dripped onto his sagging gut. The guard snorted and said something derisive to his fellows, their laughter ringing hollowly from their helmets.

\* \* \*

The goat-headed mutant who walked through the bunkhouse door was so tall he had to bend almost double to avoid knocking himself out. His limbs were long and gangly, but knotted with muscle. He moved like a cat and his pride and serenity were almost tangible in the fetid half light of the bunkhouse. His horned head turned slowly from left to right as he took in the motley inhabitants. Geck, who was mean and dumb and considered himself the leader of the mutants, approached the newcomer with a manner that was all swagger and belligerence. "I'm in charge here," he spat. "I give the orders and you'll be happy to take 'em."





The goat swung his gaze around to Geck. "I take orders from a higher power, mutant," he said in a strangely warbling voice. "Not you."

There was a moment of strained silence as the scales on Geck's face darkened. "I'll show you a higher power, goat-boy," he hissed. He took a step backward, and then swung a plated fist at the tall mutant's head. The goat swayed to the left like a reed in a breeze and caught the incoming fist in his huge hand. A heartbeat passed as Geck stared at the goat in surprise. Then the goat began to squeeze.

The other mutants flinched as they heard bones snap in Geck's hand. As Geck began to squeal in pain, the goat balled his other hand into a fist and slammed Geck in the jaw. Geck's head snapped back, black blood spraying from his mouth, and his legs buckled as consciousness fled. The goat let loose of Geck's hand and the big lizard crumpled into a bleeding heap at his feet.

The bunkhouse was silent as the newcomer stepped over the inert body of his victim and strode to the center of the room. Standing nearby was subject 4291203, watching the unconscious lizard's blood pooling on the floor. It slowly lifted its head as the goat filled its vision, expecting to be attacked as well.

The tall mutant extended his broad hand. "I am Billy," he said. "What is your name, mutant?"

Subject 4291203 stared at the goat's hand for a moment, not understanding, and a sound escaped from between its mandibles.

"Nrrrrrr."

There was an unnerving high-pitched tittering and a leathery sound as another mutant, the snakeman Whip, slithered up to Billy. "Don't wathte your tiiiime," Whip lisped. "He ith an iiiidiot and can't thpeak. He ith uthleth." Suddenly Whip swung his tail around and stung Subject 4291203 on its forearm with a crack. Subject 4291203 just stared at its arm where an ugly welt began to rise on its pasty skin, then it dropped its head and looked at the floor.

Whip tittered again but was brought up short as the tall mutant turned a raging glare on him. Whip shrunk back from Billy's gaze, and suddenly felt he would be safer elsewhere. As the mutant slithered hurriedly away, Billy turned back to Subject 4291203.

"It is very nice to meet you, Norr."

\* \* \*

The soldier glanced once again at Norr and warily holstered his sidearm. He knew the ugly mutant was dumb and harmless, but the soldier had always had a secret fear of spiders and the silent Norr unnerved him. He turned his back on the spider, happy to avoid the gaze of its coal black eyes, and crouched down to roll the dead goat over. The chains jingled as the spider shifted its weight.

\* \* \*

Months passed, and Billy took Norr under his wing. Billy protected him from the abuse of the other mutants. He shared his food with Norr and pummeled any mutant who laid a hand on him. Billy worked hard to teach Norr a few basic words, but Norr could only ever manage three. The tall mutant told Norr stories in the dark about many things he couldn't understand. Billy spoke of meeting "The Maker," a beautiful goddess who came to him bathed in a blue light and whispering secrets. She taught Billy how to lead his people, the mutants, to a place called "The Den" where they would find paradise. Billy's eyes would fill with fire when he spoke this way, but Norr just repeated his three words. Billy would smile a crooked smile and clap Norr on the shoulder. "Yes, Norr. I am."

\* \* \*

The soldier turned Billy over with rough hands and pulled a small plasma cutter from his belt. He sparked it and began to remove the chains from the corpse. A terrible rage welled up inside of Norr. He had never experienced anything like it before and it confused him, as things often did, but suddenly he understood something. Billy would never tell him another story again. Billy would never teach him another word or shelter him from the violence in his life. Norr had only had one thing in his pitiful life, and this faceless soldier had taken it away in a heartbeat.

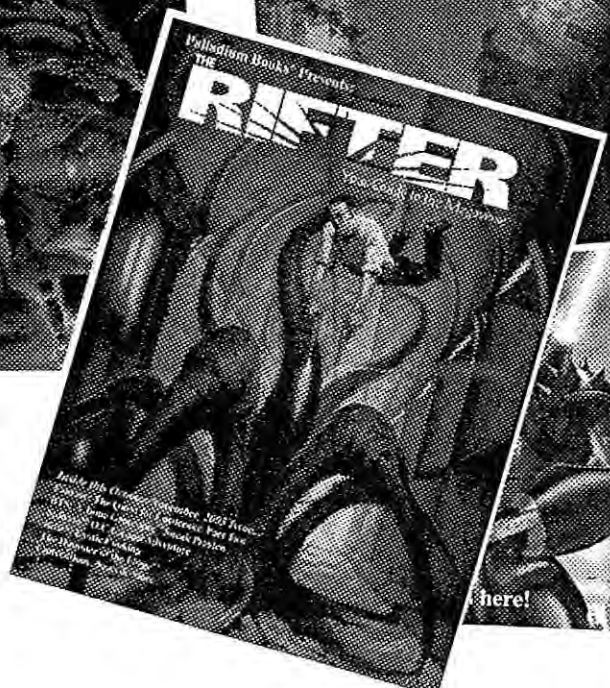
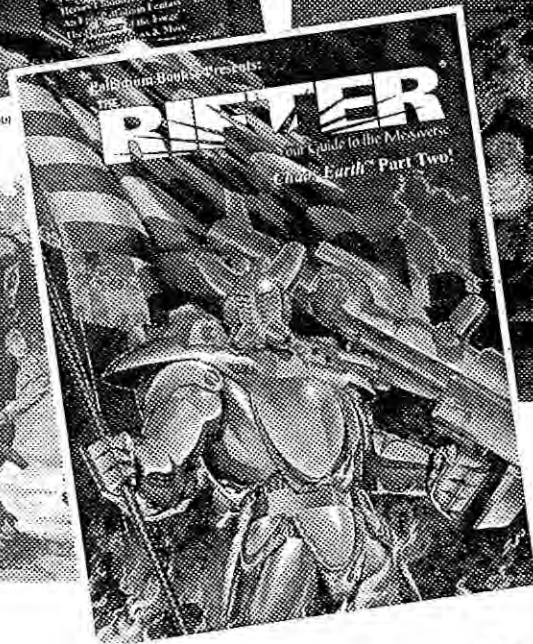
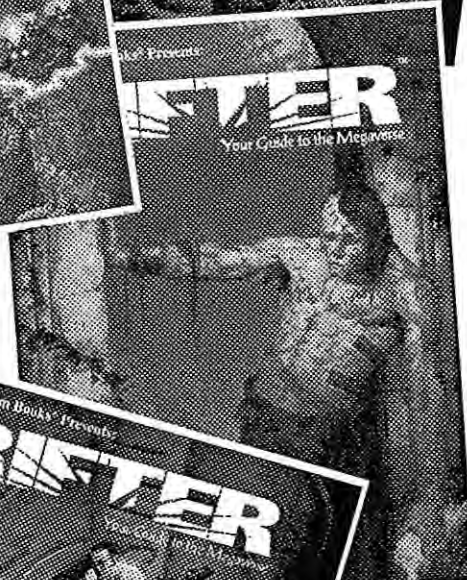
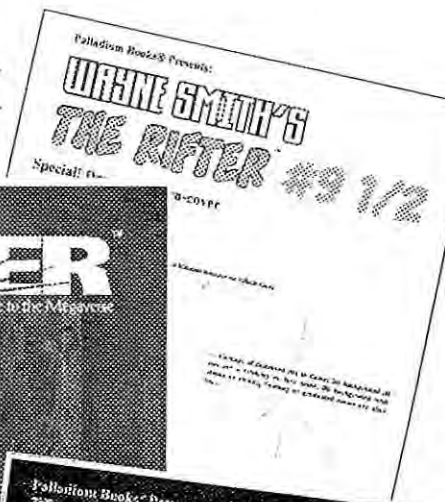
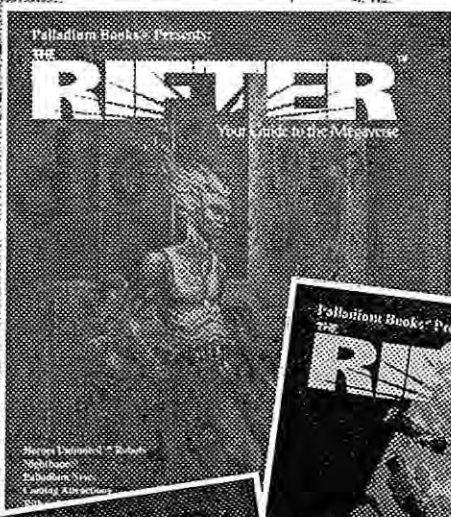
With blinding speed, Norr brought the hoe from his shoulder down on the head of the crouching soldier, shattering the handle. The soldier grunted and pitched face down in the dirt. A blink of an eye, and sadness filled Norr as oily black tears seeped from his two largest eyes. He turned on the shouting guards, clutching the broken haft of the hoe tightly in his fists. As they raised their rifles, Norr said his only words.

"Billy Norr friend."

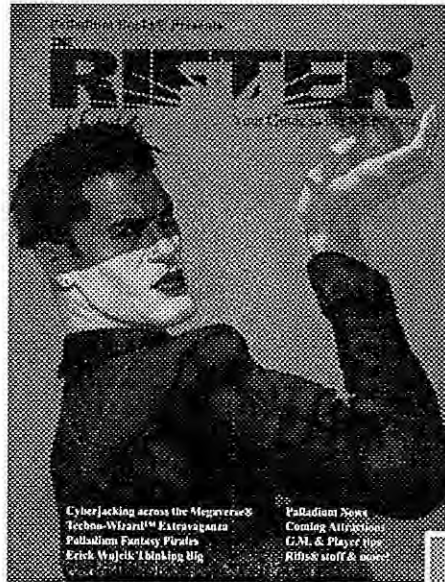
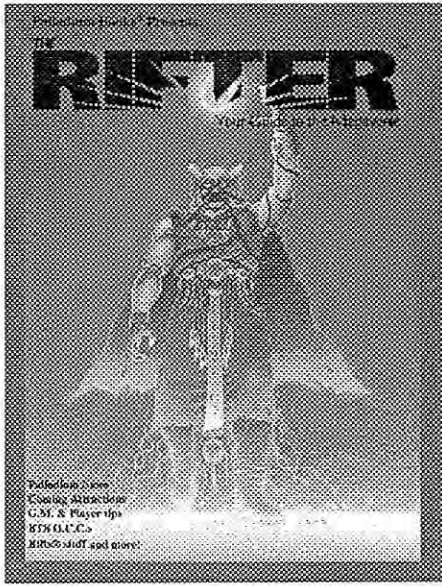




# The Rifter® Index

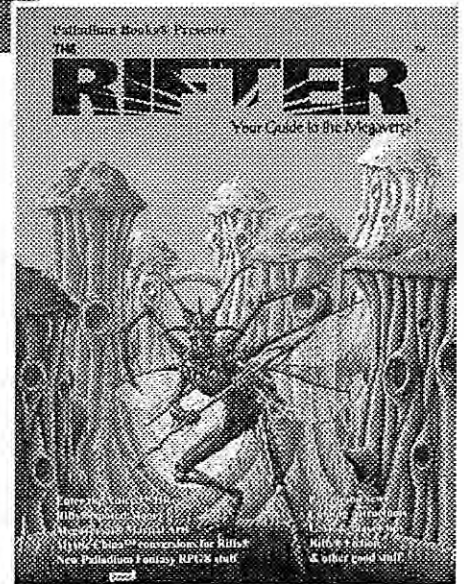


# Contents for Issues #1-33



## The Rifter® #1 – January 1998

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
The Name Giver (G.M. Tips)	8
Knights of the Dinner Table	13
News & Coming Attractions	15
Rifts® City Creation Rules	24
Rifts® The New Roman Republic	30
Rifts® The Knights of Kamnos	42
Rifts® The Hammer of the Forge (Story)	46
Rifts® The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story)	50
HU2: New Major Super-Powers	66
Nightbane® New Morphus Tables	84
Nightbane® The Inlustris	93
Nightbane® Hook, Line & Sinkers	104
Beyond the Supernatural™ (1st Ed.): O.C.C.s	111



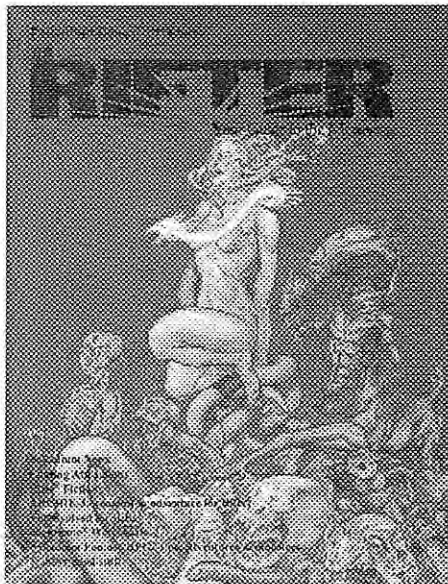
## The Rifter® #3 – July 1998

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Mastering the Game (G.M. Tips)	8
Fantasy: Critters, Magic & Herbs	11
Knights of The Dinner Table	15
News & Coming Attractions	17
Everybody's Kung-Fu Fighting	25
Revised Grappling Rules & New Martial Arts	39
Mystic China™ Conversions for Rifts®	44
Rifts® The Xiticix	61
Rifts® Spatial Mage O.C.C.	78
Rifts® Primorder	90
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 3)	99
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	107
Errata & Clarifications	110

## The Rifter® #2 – April 1998

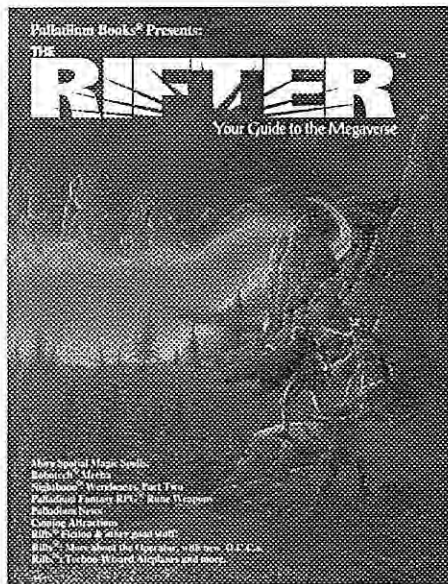
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Thinking Big (G.M. Tips)	8
Knights of the Dinner Table	11
News & Coming Attractions	13
The Rifts® Connection	18
The Imp: Supernatural Rumormonger	20
Fantasy: Pirates	21
Hacking, Cyberjacking & Supernatural	
Data Theft Across the Megaverse®	27
Wormwood™: The Blood Shaman	55
Rifts® Techno-Wizard Extravaganza	66
Rifts® Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part Two)	102
The Hammer of The Forge™ (Story)	107





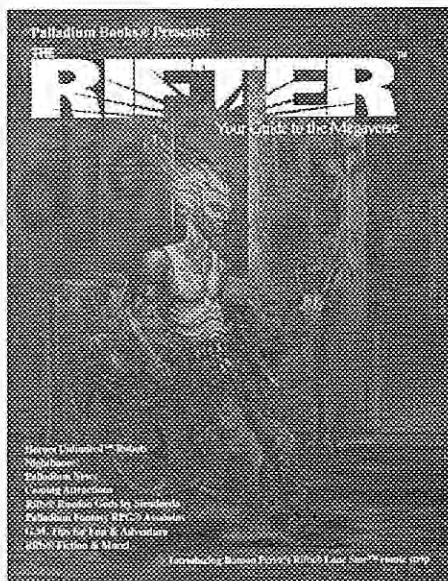
### The Rifter® #4 – October 1998

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
News & Coming Attractions	7
Fantasy: Western Empire Hook, Line & Sinks	12
Knights of The Dinner Table	21
Long, Strange Trips (G.M. Tips)	23
Fantasy: Death is Not Always Final	33
Nightbane® Tribes of the Moon (Part One)	40
Rifts® A.R.C.H.I.E.-Three vs The World	64
Rifts® The Evolved	90
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 4)	96
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	102
Optional Character Sheets	109



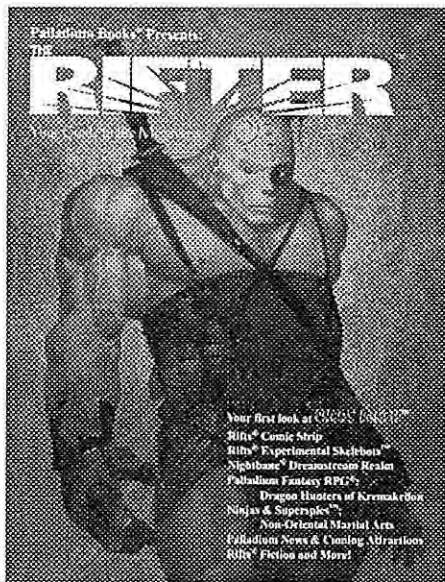
### The Rifter® #5 – January 1999

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
News & Coming Attractions	8
Knights of The Dinner Table	15
Robotech®: New Mecha	17
HU2 Heroes Throughout the Ages	22
HU2 The Rahu-Man, An In-Depth Study	31
Fantasy: A Mind of Their Own	42
Rifts® & Robotech: The Right Stuff	49
Rifts® The World of the Operator	62
Rifts® Spatial Mage Additions	70
Nightbane® Tribes of the Moon (Part Two)	75
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 5)	98
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	105



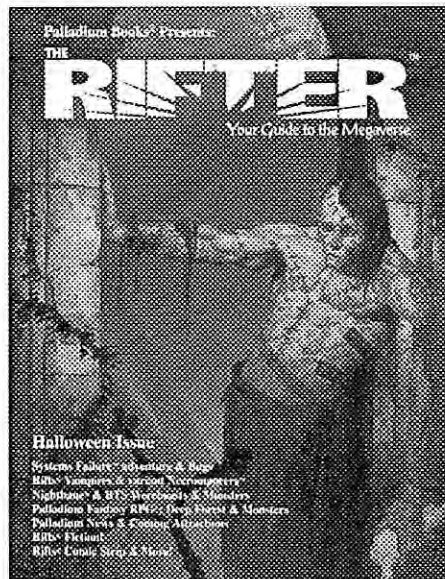
### The Rifter® #6 – April 1999

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
News & Coming Attractions	7
Knights of The Dinner Table	13
Fantasy: Cloak & Dagger	15
Rifts® Russian Gods	30
Focus on Fun – G.M. Tips	50
Ninjas & Superspies™: Intrigue in Singapore	67
Nightbane®: The Old Ways	71
HU2: Hunter Robotics	76
Rifts® The Khans of Mongolia	83
Rifts® Lone Star Comic Strip: Part One	95
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	103
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 6)	109



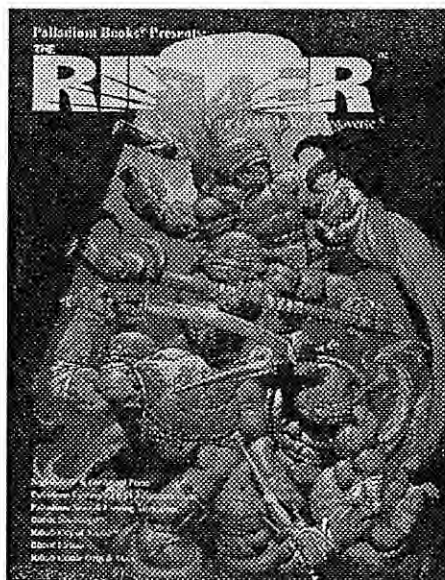
## The Rifter® #7 – July 1999

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
News & Coming Attractions	8
Knights of The Dinner Table	13
Nightbane®: The Children of Domhain Dorcha	15
Fantasy: The Dragon Hunters of Kremakrilon	31
HU2 & Ninjas & Superspies: World Warriors	39
Chaos Earth (Sneak Peek)	55
Rifts® Skelebots: The Mechanical Menace	58
Rifts® England: A Green and Unpleasant Land	70
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	83
Rifts® Lone Star™ Comic Strip: Part Two	91
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 7)	99



## The Rifter® #8 – October 1999

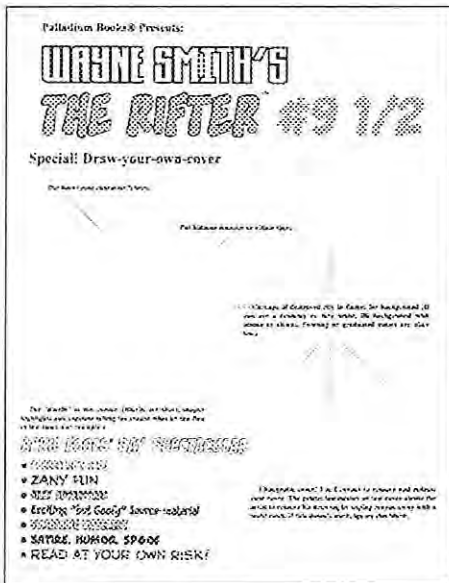
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
News & Coming Attractions	7
Systems Failure™ Adventure & Source Material	12
Knights of The Dinner Table	28
Fantasy: Mysteries of the Deep Forest	30
Nightbane® & BTS-1: The Charonis	40
Nightbane® & BTS-1: The Laughing Man R.C.C.	47
Rifts® Lone Star™ Comic Strip: Part Three	49
Rifts® Demonwrath (Adventure)	57
Rifts® The New Kingdom (Vampires)	60
Rifts® Bring Out Your Dead (O.C.C.s)	76
Rifts® Three Words (Story)	95
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	99
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 8)	105



## The Rifter® #9 – January 2000

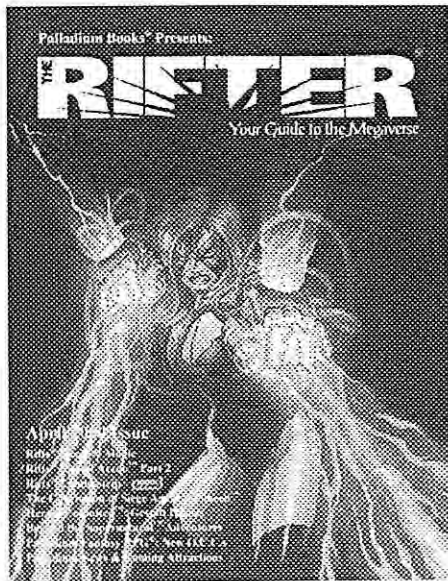
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
TMNT® RPG Liquidation Sale	9
News & Coming Attractions	10
Knights of The Dinner Table	16
Nightbane® Beyond Between the Shadows	18
Rifts® Lone Star Comic Strip: Part Four	39
Rifts® New Type Bio-Borgs	47
The Hammer of the Forge™	64
The Siege Against Tolkeen (Story, Part 9)	70
Rifts® The Territory of Arzno, Part One	81
General RPG Tips	105
Benefactors (A Rifts® Story)	106
Fantasy Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures	108





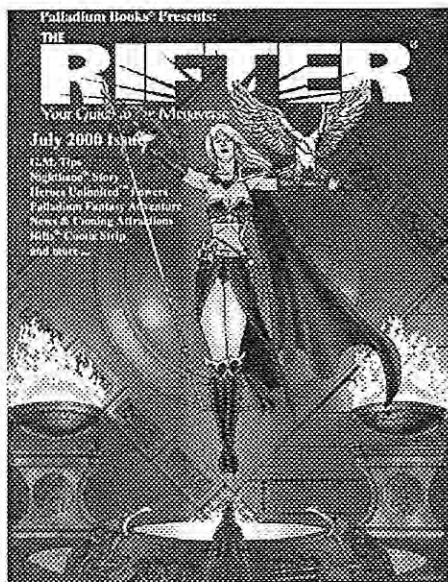
**The Rifter® #9 ½  
(2000 April Fool's Day Humor Special)**

We Want You Poster . . . . . 5  
 From the Desk of Wayne Smith . . . . . 6  
 Palladium News & Coming Attractions . . . . . 7  
 The Rifter® Credit Card . . . . . 9  
 Giga-Damage . . . . . 10  
 Silly Answers to Some Silly Questions . . . . . 17  
 HU2 Where's Wayne (Adventure) . . . . . 22  
 HU2 Wacky Powers for Heroes Unlimited . . . . . 28  
 HU2 Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers . . . . . 31  
 HU2 Reality Twist . . . . . 41  
 Heroes Unlimited™ (Again!?)– Super Abilities . . . . . 55  
 Megaversal: Unlikely Gods . . . . . 58  
 Megaversal: Trickster & Ludicrous Mage . . . . . 64  
 Fantasy: Crazy Accoloth's Discount Alchemy . . . . . 93  
 Rifts® Tourist O.C.C. . . . . 97  
 Rifts® Short Story: Every Motherless Son . . . . . 102  
 The Truth behind this issue! . . . . . 111



**The Rifter® #10 – April 2000**

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . . 7  
 Palladium News . . . . . 8  
 Coming Attractions . . . . . 10  
 The Rifter® April Fool's Day Issue . . . . . 15  
 Knights of The Dinner Table . . . . . 17  
 Fantasy: The Magic of Science . . . . . 19  
 Fantasy: The Changeling Metamorph . . . . . 24  
 HU2: The Gestalt Power Category . . . . . 26  
 BTS-1: Trouble in the Midwest Adventure . . . . . 40  
 BTS-1: Dark Consequences Adventure . . . . . 46  
 Nightbane®: On the Fringe of the Night . . . . . 48  
 Rifts® Lone Star™ Comic Strip: Part Five . . . . . 57  
 Rifts® The Territory of Arzno™, Part Two . . . . . 65  
 Rifts® The Environment of Space . . . . . 79  
 The Siege Against Tolkeen (The End!) . . . . . 93  
 The Hammer of the Forge™ . . . . . 107



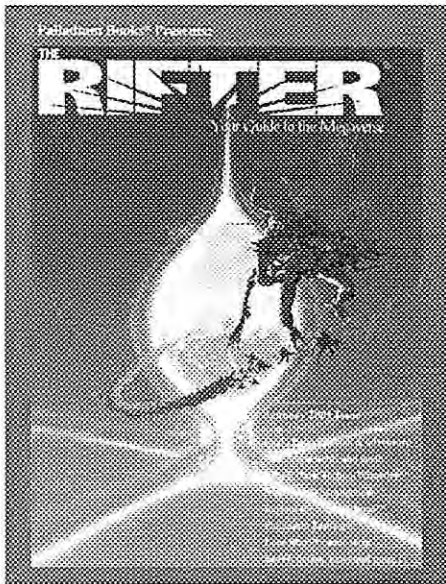
**The Rifter® #11 – July 2000**

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . . 7  
 Palladium News . . . . . 8  
 Coming Attractions . . . . . 9  
 Megaversal: Optional Combat Rules . . . . . 17  
 HU2: New Super Powers . . . . . 22  
 Rifts® G.M. Tips, Suggestions & Good Advice . . . . . 28  
 Palladium Megaverse® Questions & Answers . . . . . 48  
 Rifts® Lone Star Comic Strip: Part Six . . . . . 53  
 The Nightbane® . . . . . 63  
 The Nightbane: Gregor's Chronicle . . . . . 65  
 Fantasy: The Shrine of Ventax Adventure . . . . . 77  
 The Hammer of the Forge™ . . . . . 107



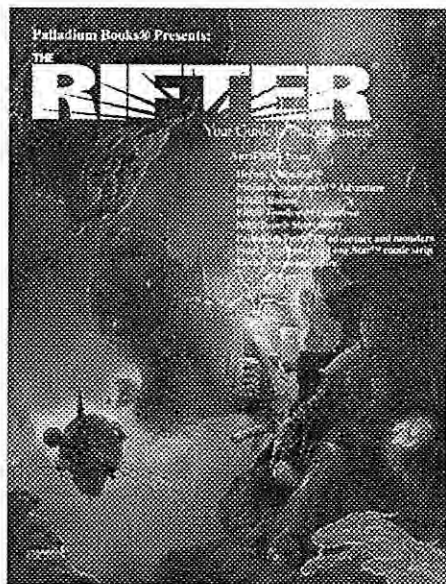
### The Rifter® #12 – October 2000

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	10
Knights of The Dinner Table	21
Palladium Megaverse® Questions & Answers	23
Character Creation 201; Player & G.M. Tips	27
Fantasy: Into the Shadows	29
System Failure: Texas Lone Star Cavalry	40
HU2 Geiger Organization & Super Squads	48
Rifts® Blueprint of a Dragon	73
Rifts® Phase World®: Tyrell Industries	79
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	103
Rifts® Lone Star™ Comic Strip	111



### The Rifter® #13 – January 2001

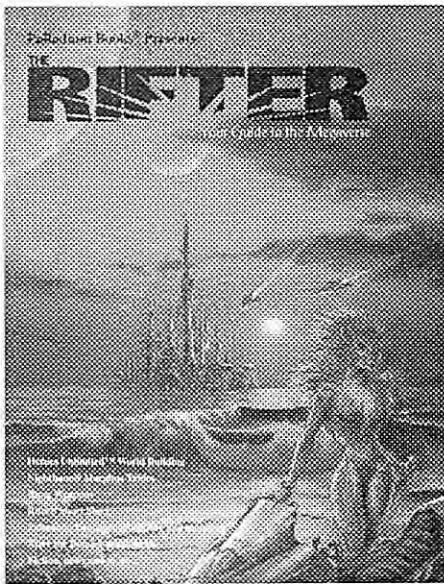
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	7
Rumor Killers	8
Coming Attractions	9
Knights of The Dinner Table	14
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	16
Lucky Charms & Superstitions	19
Nightbane®: The Cursed P.C.C.	22
BTS-1: Optional O.C.C.s & Ideas for BTS	24
BTS-1: Living Numbers & Curses	30
BTS-1: The Fayfield Inn Adventure	34
Fantasy: In the Hands of Fate	38
Fantasy: The Thirteenth (Wolfen) Tribe	45
Fantasy: The Thirteen Deadly Magicks	49
Fantasy: The Legend of the 13 Orcish Lords	54
Rifts® Dark Techno-Wizardry	71
Rifts® The Thirteenth Hour	85
Rifts® Lone Star™ Comic Strip: Part Seven	97
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	105



### The Rifter® #14 – April 2001

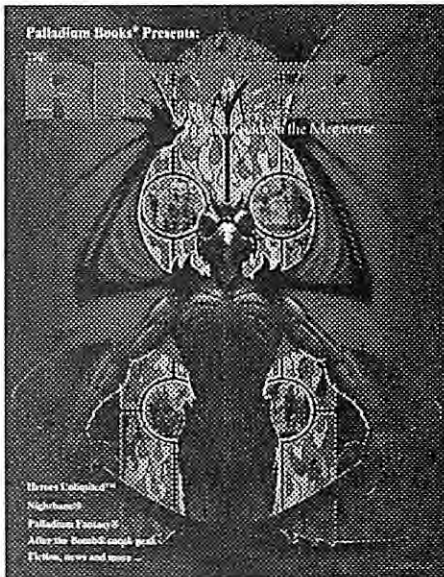
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	7
Coming Attractions	8
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	12
Rifts® Lone Star Comic Strip: Part Eight <i>Finale</i>	15
HU2: The Atorian Empire	27
Ninjas & Superspies: Destiny's Call	38
Fantasy: Beneath the Surface (many monsters)	57
Rifts® Goodcourt – life in a Fadetown	71
Rifts® Horlock Robots Inc.	87
Nightbane®: Asylum (Story)	97
Robotech® Liquidation Sale	105
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	107





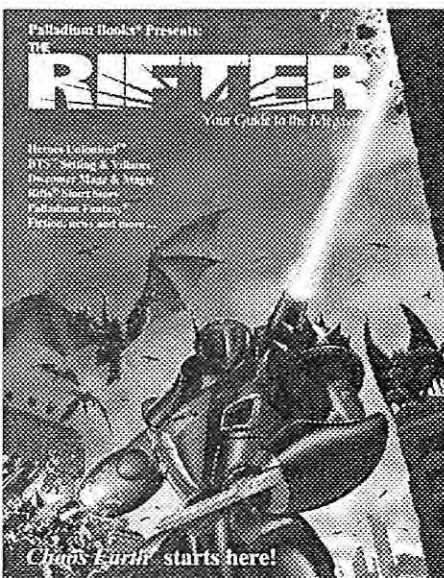
## The Rifter® #15 – July 2001

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	9
After the Bomb® RPG Sneak Preview Part One	14
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	17
Fantasy: Knights of the Eastern Territories	19
Fantasy: Blade Law	27
HU2: In Only Six Days	33
Nightbane® Brain Fry	42
Nightbane® New Morpheus Tables	51
Rifts® Operation Ironskull	65
Rifts® One Chance in a Million (Story Part One)	76
Rifts® Specialized Shifters	88
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	105



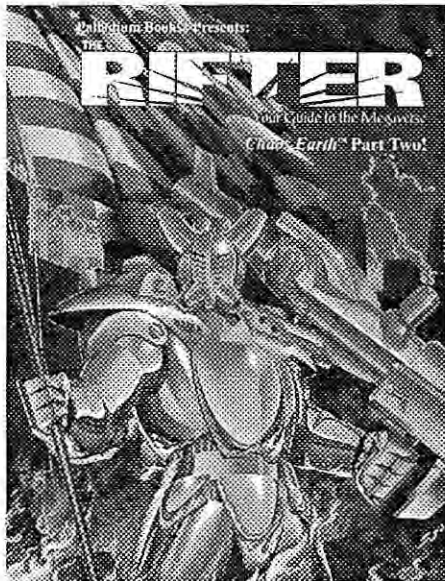
## The Rifter® #16 – October 2001

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions (Rifts® Movie Buzz)	9
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	17
The Palladium Weapon Series is Back	23
Fantasy: Young, Dumb & Ugly	24
HU2: Teen Heroes Unlimited	28
Ninjas & Superspies: Hell, Frozen Over Adventure	33
Nightbane®: Dark Revelations	49
Rifts® Final Siege: Official HLS Adventures	82
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	91
Rifts® One Chance in a Million (Story Part Two)	97
After the Bomb® RPG Sneak Preview, Part Two	110



## The Rifter® #17 – January 2002

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	9
Coming Attractions	10
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	16
BTS-1: Last Street, Scenario Setting	25
HU2: The Thropo Aliens Revisited	35
Fantasy: Stilt City	45
Dweomer Mage O.C.C. & New Magic	56
Rifts® The Bandits of Hollow Hill	69
Rifts® Blood Magic	79
Rifts® One Chance in a Million (Story End)	84
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	93
Chaos Earth™ RPG Preview, Part One	101



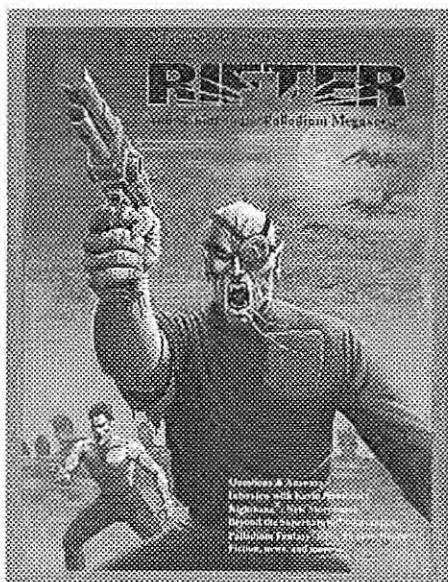
## The Rifter® #18 – April 2002

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	9
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	16
HU2: Expanded Unusual Characteristics Table	20
Mysteries of Southeast Asia	26
Planetary Creation Guide	34
Fantasy: Song Magic	47
Rifts® Wormwood Symbiotic Warrior	54
Rifts® A Long, Dark Walk	62
Rifts® Coalition Biowarfare Division	68
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	86
Chaos Earth RPG Preview, Part Two	94



## The Rifter® #19 – July 2002

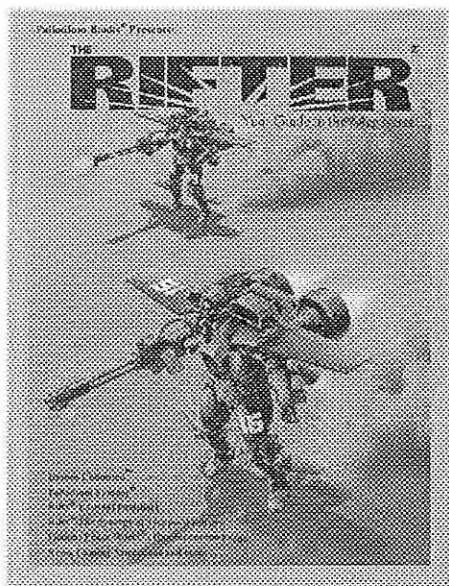
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	11
What would I do with 2,000,000 CCG cards?	18
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	21
Fantasy: Wand Magic	25
Fantasy: The Magic of Ophid's Grasslands	29
Fantasy: By Lance & Speed of Wing	33
Megaversal®: Go Mental	37
Rifts® We're Not All Mind Readers, You Know	43
Rifts® Coalition Support Vehicles	54
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	66
Systems Failure™: Fort Folsom	72
Megaversal®: Demon Hunters	81
Chaos Earth PRG Preview, Part Three	91



## The Rifter® #20 – October 2002

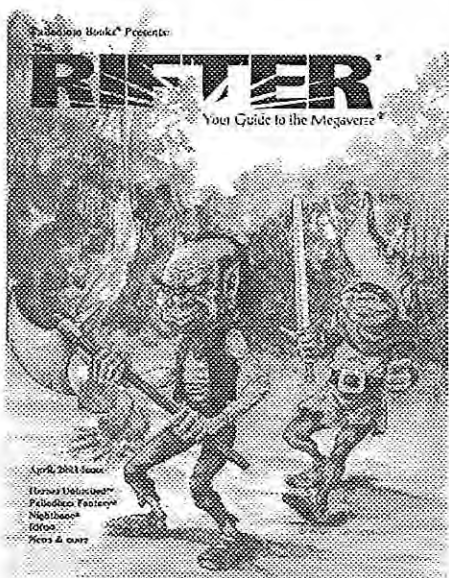
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	10
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	16
BTS-1: A Last Street Adventure	20
Nightbane® Morpheus Tables for Themed Nightbane	32
Fantasy: From the Shadows	67
An Interview with Kevin Siembieda	83
Rifts® Thunderbolt Adventure	88
Rifts® A Few Hook, Line & Sinkers	98
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	104





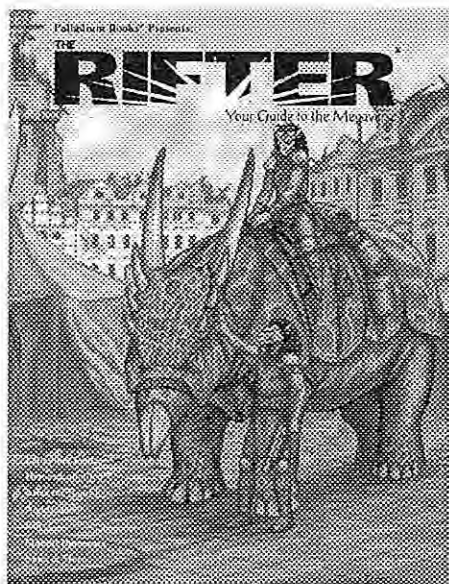
### The Rifter® #21 – January 2003

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	9
Coming Attractions	11
P.P.E. Channeling	15
HU2: The Motherframe	18
Rifts® Familiars of Rifts Earth	27
Rifts® Techno-Wizard Form & Function	40
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	47
Fantasy: The Long Forgotten Quest	54
A Glimpse at the Palladium Fantasy RPG® Series	93



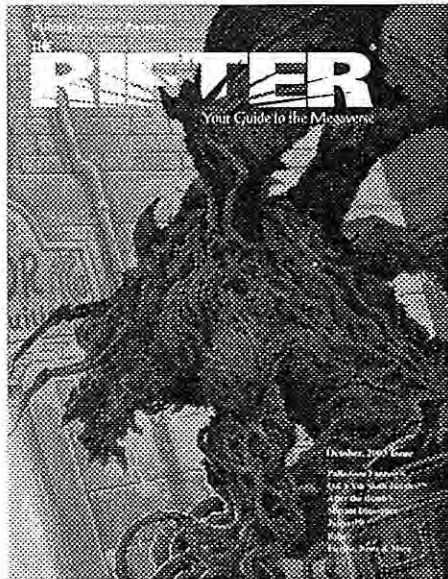
### The Rifter® #22 – April 2003

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	10
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A	14
Rifts® Mage Armor	17
HU2: Building a Better Super-Soldier	18
Rifts® New Ludicrous Magic	25
Medieval Army Combat Rules	47
Flashing Blades: Fencing in Palladium	62
Nightbane & HU2: Flynn & Company (Story)	67
HU2: The Games Palladium Plays	82
The Hammer of the Forge	89



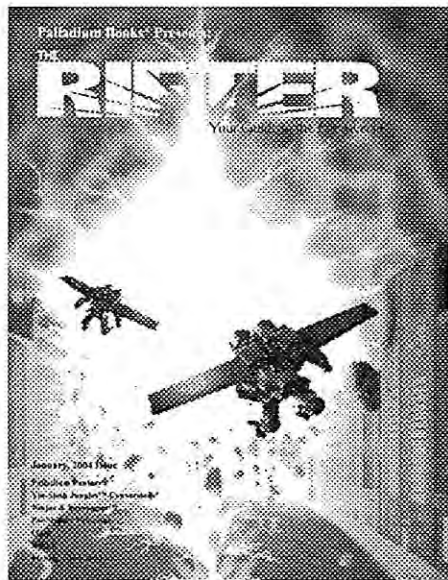
### The Rifter® #23 – July 2003

Rifts® Movie Deal is Official	6
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	10
Nightbane®: The Spell Breather	17
Fantasy: Palladium Astronomy	23
Fantasy: The Blade Mage	29
After the Bomb®: Mesozoic Land: Part One	41
Rifts® The Faerie Harvest	60
Rifts® CS Target Acquisition Groups	74
Rifts® Modern Army Combat Rules	77
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	92



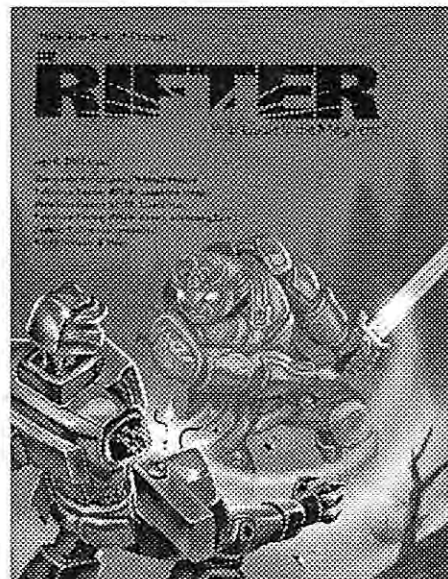
### The Rifter® #24 – October 2003

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . .	7
Palladium News . . . . .	9
Coming Attractions . . . . .	10
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . .	18
After the Bomb®: Mesozoic Land: Part Two . . . . .	27
Rifts® Media in Rifts Earth . . . . .	48
Rifts® The Metabolic Juicer . . . . .	72
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story) . . . . .	82
Fantasy: Card Magic . . . . .	89
2003 Fall Catalog . . . . .	97



### The Rifter® #25 – January 2004

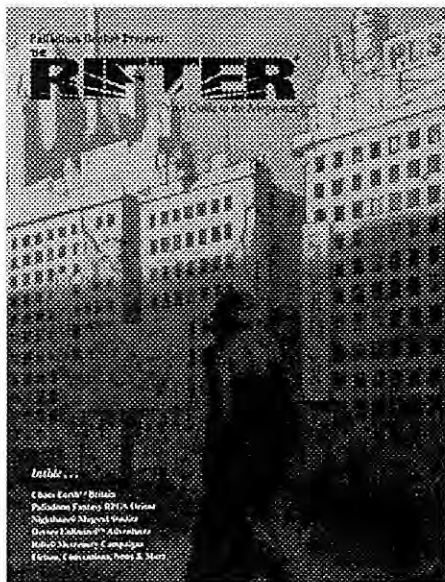
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . .	7
Palladium News . . . . .	8
Coming Attractions . . . . .	10
HU2 & N&S: Guns for Hire . . . . .	14
Fantasy: The Lost Art of Golemancy . . . . .	40
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath, Part One . . . . .	45
Rifts® Enthralled (Psionics) . . . . .	67
The Hammer of the Forge (Story) . . . . .	83
Rifts® Phage World (Psi-Stalkers) . . . . .	89
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . .	92



### The Rifter® #26 – April 2004

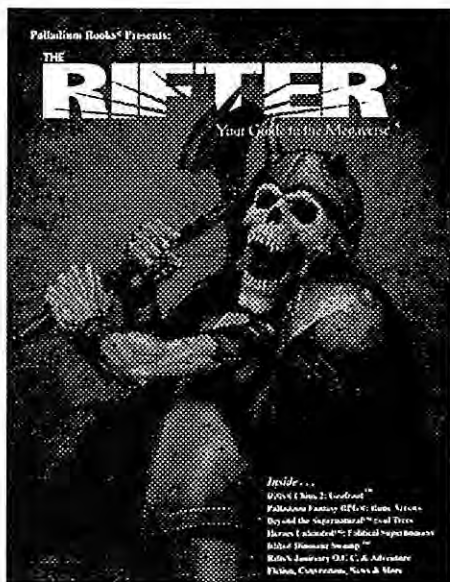
From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . .	6
Palladium News . . . . .	8
Coming Attractions . . . . .	11
Coming Soon . . . . .	13
Fleas for Systems Failure . . . . .	14
Beyond the Supernatural 2nd Ed. Preview . . . . .	19
Fantasy: Construct Animation Magic . . . . .	31
Fantasy: Unknown Depths . . . . .	40
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath, Part Two . . . . .	47
Mutants of Rifts Earth . . . . .	66
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story) . . . . .	86
Lord of the Deep (Story) . . . . .	91
2004 Summer Catalog . . . . .	97





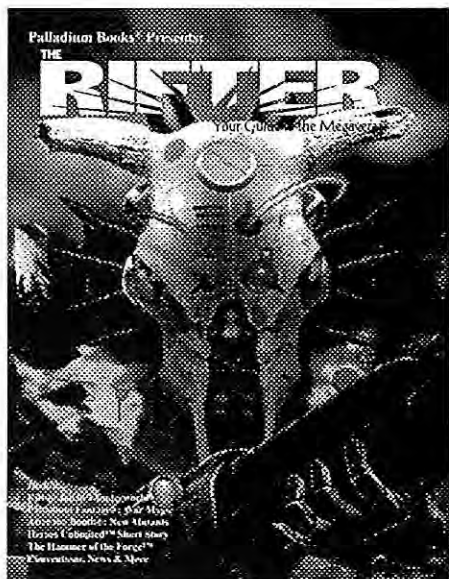
## The Rifter® #27 – July 2004

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	12
Chaos Earth: Britain in Chaos	16
Rifts® Running a Character Driven Merc Campaign	30
Fantasy: The Palladium Orient	39
Nightbane: The Pros & Cons of Studying Magic	57
HU2: The Software Valley War, Adventure	64
HU2: The Fallen Angels (Story)	76
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	91



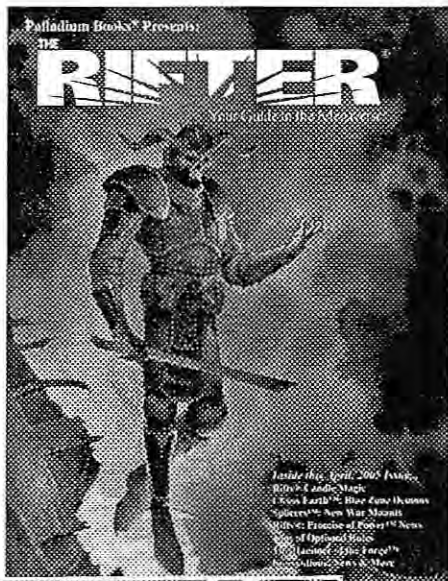
## The Rifter® #28 – October 2004

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	9
BTS-1: The Soul Tree	17
HU2: Power Up the Vote	23
Rifts® The Arrows of Ith'arian	34
Rifts® China Two: The Geofront	41
Rifts® Dinosaur Swamp: Creatures of Horror Forest	55
Rifts® The Janissary Project	65
Rifts® Shadow Realms	82
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	93



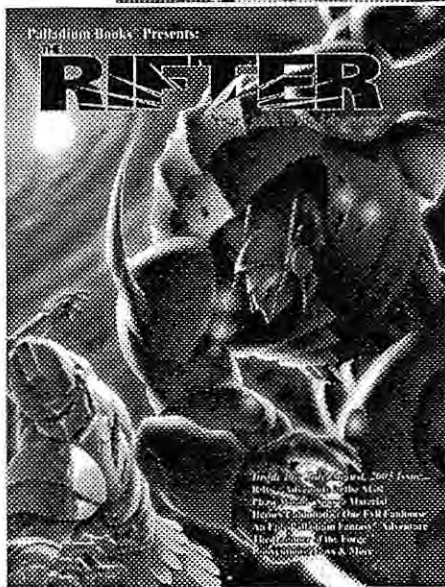
## The Rifter® #29 – January 2005

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	7
Convention Schedule	7
Coming Attractions	8
Fantasy: The Magic of War	13
HU2: New Types of Mutants	43
HU2: Fractures (Story)	60
Rifts® Crime & Punishment in Japan	74
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	93



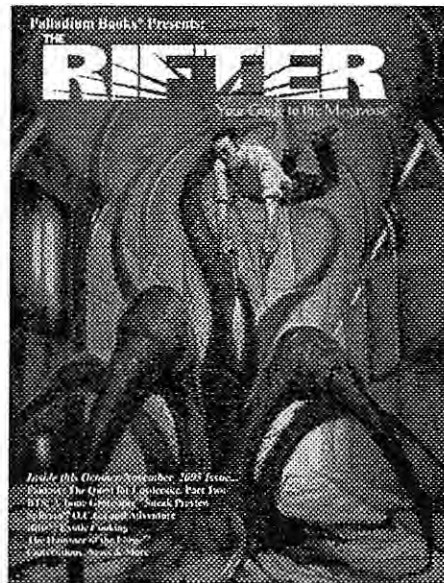
## The Rifter® #30 – April 2005

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	7
Palladium News	8
National Games Week	10
Coming Attractions	11
Megaversal Rules for ALL Palladium Games	16
Splicers™ New War Mounts	47
Chaos Earth™ Blue Zone Demons	68
Rifts® Candle Magic	83
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	91
Congratulations on KoDT #100	96



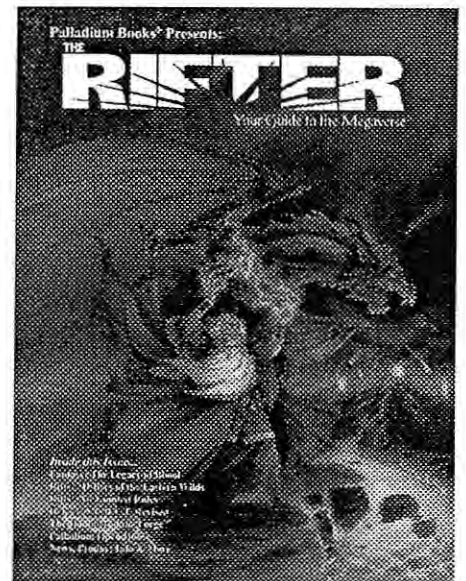
## The Rifter® #31 – July 2005

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	10
Coming Attractions	11
HU2: Rooms with a Skew	16
Fantasy: The Quest for Castlerake, Part One	23
Rifts® A Komplex Problem, Triax Adventure	61
Phase World® Sunhammer Consolidated	79
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	90



## The Rifter® #32 – October 2005

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	7
Holiday Gift Ideas	9
BTS-2: The Squatter	14
BTS-2: Tome Grotesque Sneak Preview	18
Splicers™: The Wastes	20
Fantasy: The Quest for Castlerake, Part Two	34
Rifts® Mega-Steel Chef, Cooking for Rifts	70
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	90



## The Rifter® #33 – January 2006

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda	6
Palladium News	8
Coming Attractions	10
Palladium Open House	14
Fantasy: Legacy of Blood	17
HU2: SECRET Revisited & Revised	29
Rifts® D-Bees of the Eastern Wilds	50
Rifts® Air Combat Optional Rules	68
The Hammer of the Forge™ (Story)	90



# Index by Category

## Adventures (Notable)

BTS-1: Dark Consequences Adventure	(R-10) 46
BTS-1: Fayfield Inn Adventure	(R-13) 34
BTS-1: Last Street Adventure Setting	(R-17) 25
BTS-1: Last Street Adventure	(R-20) 20
BTS-1: Trouble in the Midwest Adventure	(R-10) 40
BTS-2: The Squatter Adventure	(R-32) 14
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath Adventure, Part One	(R-25) 45
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath Adventure, Part Two	(R-26) 47
Fantasy: Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures	(R-9) 108
Fantasy: Legacy of Blood Adventure Setting	(R-33) 17
Fantasy: Long Forgotten Quest, The	(R-21) 54
Fantasy: Quest For Castlerake, Part One	(R-31) 23
Fantasy: Quest For Castlerake, Part Two	(R-32) 34
Fantasy: Shrine of Ventax Adventure	(R-11) 77
Fantasy: Stilt City	(R-17) 45
Fantasy: Western Empire	(R-4) 12
HU2: Rooms with a Skew	(R-31) 16
HU2: The Software Valley War, Adventure	(R-27) 64
Nightbane®: On the Fringe of Night Adventure	(R-10) 48
Ninjas & Superspies: Hell, Frozen Over Adventure	(R-16) 33
Ninjas & Superspies: Destiny's Call Adventure	(R-14) 38
Rifts® Bandits of Hollow Hill Adventure	(R-17) 69
Rifts® Demonwrath (Russia Setting)	(R-8) 57
Rifts® HLS Adventures	(R-20) 98
Rifts® Final Siege: Official HLS Adventures	(R-16) 82
Rifts® Thunderbolt Adventure	(R-20) 88
Splicers: The Wastes Adventure & Source Material	(R-32) 20
Systems Failure: Fleas & Adventure Ideas	(R-26) 14
Systems Failure: Fort Folsom Adventure	(R-19) 72
Systems Failure: The Guns of Sulfur Gulch	(R-8) 12
Systems Failure: The Texas Lone Star Cavalry	(R-12) 40
Where's Wayne	(R-9½) 22

## A.R.C.H.I.E. Three™

A.R.C.H.I.E. Three vs The World	(R-4) 64
---------------------------------	----------

## Beyond the Supernatural™

BTS-2: Sneak Preview	(R-26) 19
BTS-2: Squatter, The	(R-32) 14
Charonis, The	(R-8) 40
Cryptozoologist & Other O.C.C.s	(R-13) 24
Dark Consequences Adventure	(R-10) 46
Fayfield Inn Adventure	(R-13) 34
Last Street Scenario Setting	(R-17) 25
Laughing Man R.C.C.	(R-8) 47
Living Numbers and Curses	(R-13) 30

Imp, Supernatural Rumormonger	(R-2) 20
Optional O.C.C.s & Ideas for BTS-1	(R-13) 24
Psychic P.C.C.s	(R-1) 111
Soul Tree	(R-28) 17
Squatter, The	(R-32) 14
Trouble in the Midwest Adventure	(R-10) 40

## Combat: Hand to Hand

Everybody's Kung-Fu Fighting	(R-3) 25
Flashing Blades: Fencing in Palladium Fantasy	(R-22) 62
Go Mental (psychic combat)	(R-19) 37
Martial Arts: World Warriors	(R-7) 39
Mysteries of Southeast Asia	(R-18) 25
Optional Combat Rules	(R-11) 17
Revised Grappling Rules & New Martial Arts	(R-3) 39

## Fantasy Articles

A Mind of Their Own	(R-5) 42
Assassins in the Palladium World	(R-6) 15
Assassin Into the Shadows	(R-12) 29
Astronomy	(R-23) 23
Beneath the Surface	(R-14) 57
Blade Law (Rune Swords)	(R-15) 27
Blade Mage, The	(R-23) 29
By Lance & Speed of Wing	(R-19) 33
Card Magic	(R-24) 89
Changeling Metamorph	(R-10) 24
Cloak & Dagger: Fantasy Assassins	(R-6) 15
Construct Animation Magic	(R-26) 31
Critters, Magic & Herbs	(R-3) 11
Death is Not Always Final	(R-4) 33
Deck of Fate (see In the Hands of Fate)	(R-13) 38
Dragon Hunters of Kremakrilon	(R-7) 31
Fires of Korath, Part One Adventure	(R-25) 45
Fires of Korath, Part Two Adventure	(R-26) 47
Flashing Blades: Fencing in Palladium Fantasy	(R-22) 62
Goblins & Kin (see Young, Dumb & Ugly)	(R-16) 24
Gryphons & Other Riding Animals	(R-19) 33
Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures	(R-9) 108
Knights of the Eastern Territories	(R-15) 19
Legacy of Blood (O.C.C.s & Setting)	(R-33) 17
Lizard Men (see Unknown Depths)	(R-26) 40
Long Forgotten Quest Adventure	(R-21) 54
Lost Art of Golemancy, The	(R-25) 40
Magic of Science, The	(R-10) 19
Magic of War, The	(R-29) 13
Medieval Army Combat Rules	(R-22) 47
Mysteries of the Deep Forest	(R-8) 30

Ophid's Grasslands, The Magic of	(R-19) 29
Orcish Lords of the 13 Tribes	(R-13) 54
Palladium Orient, The	(R-27) 39
Pirates	(R-2) 21
Quest For Castlerake, Part One	(R-31) 23
Quest For Castlerake, Part Two	(R-32) 34
Shadow Beasts (see From the Shadows)	(R-20) 67
Shadow Magic (see From the Shadows)	(R-20) 67
Song Magic	(R-18) 47
Shadow from the Past, A (see Castlerake)	(R-31) 23
Shrine of Ventax Adventure	(R-11) 77
Stilt City Setting and Adventure Ideas	(R-17) 45
Thirteen Spells	(R-13) 49
Unknown Depths (Lizard Men)	(R-26) 40
Wand Magic	(R-19) 25
War Magic	(R-29) 23
Western Empire Hook, Line & Sinkers	(R-4) 12
Wolfen, Thirteenth Tribe	(R-13) 45

## Fiction/Stories

HU2: Fallen Angels	(R-27) 76
HU2: Fractures	(R-29) 60
Nightbane® Asylum	(R-14) 97
Nightbane® Gregor's Chronicle	(R-11) 65
Nightbane and HU2: Flynn & Company Story	(R-22) 67
Rifts® Benefactors (A Rifts® Story)	(R-9) 106
Rifts® Blueprint of a Dragon	(R-12) 73
Rifts® England: A Green and Unpleasant Land	(R-7) 70
Knights of the Dinner Table Comic	(R-1– R-10, R-12–R-13)
KoDT Congratulations on 100 Issues	(R-30) 96
Rifts® Lord of the Deep	(R-26) 91
Rifts® One Chance in a Million	(R-15 thru R-17)
Rifts® Siege Against Tolkeen	(R-1 thru R-10) 96
Rifts® The Hammer of the Forge	(R-1 thru present)
Rifts® Three Words	(R-8) 95

## Halloween Issues (Horror Theme)

The Rifter® Number Four
The Rifter® Number Eight
The Rifter® Number Twelve
The Rifter® Number Sixteen
The Rifter® Number Twenty
The Rifter® Number Twenty-Four
The Rifter® Number Twenty-Eight
The Rifter® Number Thirty-Two
The Rifter® Number Thirty-Six

## Heroes Unlimited™

After the Bomb®: Mesozoic Land, Part One	(R-23) 41
After the Bomb®: Mesozoic Land, Part Two	(R-24) 27
Atorian Empire, The	(R-14) 27
Building a Better Super-Soldier	(R-22) 18
Character Sheet: Heroes Unlimited	(R-4) 111
Character Sheet: Mutant	(R-4) 111
Character Sheet: Ninjas & Superspies	(R-4) 112
Defective Powers (Humor)	(R-9½) 55
Dinosaur Mutants (Mesozoic Land 1 & 2)	(R-23 & R-24)
Eighteen Beings (Geiger Organization)	(R-12) 48
Expanded Unusual Characteristics Table	(R-18) 20
Flynn & Company	(R-22) 67
Games Palladium Plays	(R-22) 82
Gestalt Power Category	(R-10) 26
Geiger Organization & Super Squads	(R-12) 48
Guns for Hire (Mercs, Skills, etc.)	(R-25) 14
Heroes Throughout the Ages	(R-5) 22
Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers	(R-9½) 31
Hunter Robotics	(R-6) 76
Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures (Geiger)	(R-12) 65
In Only Six Days (G.M. tips)	(R-15) 33
Mercenaries (see Guns for Hire)	(R-25) 14
Motherframe (psionic A.I.)	(R-21) 18
Mutant Character Sheet	(R-4) 111
Mutants, Dinosaurs (See Mesozoic Land)	(R-23 & R-24)
Mutants, New Types	(R-29) 43
Mutants, Plants (see Room with a Skew)	(R-31) 16
New Major Super Powers	(R-1) 66
New Super Powers	(R-11) 22
Planetary Creation Guide	(R-18) 34
Power Up the Vote	(R-28) 23
Reality Twist: Oddball Heroes & Villains	(R-9½) 41
Rooms with a Skew Adventure	(R-31) 16
S.C.R.E.T. Revisited & Revised	(R-33) 29
Teen Heroes Unlited	(R-16) 28
The Rahu-Man, An In-Depth Study	(R-5) 31
Thropo Aliens Revisited	(R-17) 35
Wacky Powers	(R-9½) 28
Where's Wayne Adventure +Wacky Villains	(R-9½) 22
World Building (see In Only Six Days)	(R-15) 33
World Warriors: Martial Arts	(R-7) 39

## Magic & Spells

Blood Magic	(R-2) 57
Blood Magic	(R-17) 79
Bloodwing or Cauldron Terror (Fantasy)	(R-4) 35
Candle Magic	(R-30) 83
Card Magic	(R-24) 89
Construct Animation Magic	(R-26) 31
Conversions for Chi Magic Spells	(R-3) 48



Conversions for Celestial Calligraphy . . . . .	(R-3) 48
Critters, Magic & Herbs (Fantasy) . . . . .	(R-3) 11
Crazy Accoloth's Discount Alchemy . . . . .	(R-9½) 93
Dark Techno-Wizardry . . . . .	(R-13) 71
Deck of Fate (Fantasy) . . . . .	(R-13) 38
Dukun O.C.C. (Mysteries of Southeast Asia) . . . . .	(R-18) 26
Dweomer Mage O.C.C. & New Magic . . . . .	(R-17) 56
Dweomer Magic Spells . . . . .	(R-17) 58
Faerie Harvest & Bio-Wizardry . . . . .	(R-23) 60
G.M. Tips on Spellcasters . . . . .	(R-11) 28
Golemancy, The Lost Art of . . . . .	(R-25) 40
Ludicrous Mage O.C.C. . . . .	(R-9½) 74
Ludicrous Magic . . . . .	(R-9½) 77
New Ludicrous Magic . . . . .	(R-22) 25
Ophid's Grassland Spell Magic . . . . .	(R-19) 29
Shadow Magic (see From the Shadows) . . . . .	(R-20) 77
Shadow Spells (see Shadow Realms) . . . . .	(R-28) 91
Shadow Realms . . . . .	(R-28) 82
Song Magic . . . . .	(R-18) 47
Space Magic O.C.C.s . . . . .	(R-10) 89
Space Magic Spells . . . . .	(R-10) 82
Space TW Items . . . . .	(R-10) 91
Spatial Mage . . . . .	(R-3) 78
Spatial Magic . . . . .	(R-3) 80
Spatial Magic Additions . . . . .	(R-5) 70
Spell Breather for Nightbane® . . . . .	(R-23) 17
Techno-Wizard & New TW Items . . . . .	(R-2) 66
Techno-Wizard O.C.C. . . . .	(R-2) 70
Thirteen Deadly Magicks (Fantasy) . . . . .	(R-13) 49
Trickster Card Magic . . . . .	(R-9½) 67
Trickster Mage O.C.C. . . . .	(R-9½) 64
Wand Magic . . . . .	(R-19) 25
War Magic . . . . .	(R-29) 23

## Megaversal™, Multi-Game Worlds

Character Creation 201, Player & G.M. Tips . . . . .	(R-12) 27
Cut Above: Optional Rules . . . . .	(R-30) 16
Cyberjacking Across the Megaverse . . . . .	(R-2) 27
Demon Hunters . . . . .	(R-19) 81
Dweomer Mage O.C.C. & New Magic . . . . .	(R-17) 56
General RPG Tips: Weather . . . . .	(R-9) 105
G.M. Tips . . . . .	(R-6) 50
G.M. Tips, Suggestions & Good Advice . . . . .	(R-11) 28
Go Mental (psionic combat) . . . . .	(R-19) 37
Lucky Charms & Superstitions . . . . .	(R-13) 19
Ludicrous Mage O.C.C. . . . .	(R-9½) 74
Ludicrous Magic . . . . .	(R-9½) 77
Mega-Steel Chef, for any M.D.C. Setting . . . . .	(R-32) 70
Optional Combat Rules . . . . .	(R-11) 17
Planetary Creation Guide . . . . .	(R-18) 34
P.P.E. Channeling . . . . .	(R-21) 15

Rahu-Man – An In-Depth Study . . . . .	(R-5) 31
Shadow Magic Spells (see From the Shadows) . . . . .	(R-20) 77
Trickster Card Magic . . . . .	(R-9½) 67
Trickster Mage O.C.C. . . . .	(R-9½) 64
Unlikely Gods . . . . .	(R-9½) 58

## Monsters

Armor Golem (see Magic of War) . . . . .	(R-29) 38
Astral Monsters . . . . .	(R-7) 15
Astral Monsters . . . . .	(R-9) 34
Athanatos (see Gregorians) . . . . .	(R-16) 63
Beneath the Surface . . . . .	(R-14) 57
Bio-Borgs, New Types (Rifts®) . . . . .	(R-9) 47
Blood Priest (Rifts® New Kingdom) . . . . .	(R-8) 71
Blood Shaman (Wormwood) . . . . .	(R-2) 55
Bloodwing . . . . .	(R-4) 35
Blue Zone Demons (Chaos Earth) . . . . .	(R-30) 68
Changeling Metamorph . . . . .	(R-10) 24
Creatures of Horror Forest . . . . .	(R-28) 55
D-Bees of the Eastern Wilds . . . . .	(R-33) 50
Death is Not Always Final (monsters) . . . . .	(R-4) 33
Evolved, The . . . . .	(R-4) 90
Familiars of Rifts Earth . . . . .	(R-21) 27
Gormaglut, BTS-2 Tome Grotesque Sneak Preview . . . . .	(R-32) 18
Gregorian Manifestations . . . . .	(R-16) 62
HU2: Gestalt Power Category . . . . .	(R-10) 26
Imp . . . . .	(R-2) 20
Lizard Men (see Unknown Depths) . . . . .	(R-26) 40
Monsters of Southeast Asia . . . . .	(R-18) 31
Mysteries of the Deep Forest . . . . .	(R-8) 30
Nightbane, The . . . . .	(R-11) 63
Nightbane: The Charonis . . . . .	(R-8) 40
Nightbane: Children of Domhain Dorcha . . . . .	(R-7) 15
Nightbane R.C.C.s & Morphus Tables . . . . .	(R-1) 84
Orcish Lords (Fantasy) . . . . .	(R-13) 54
Rifts® New Kingdom, The (vampires) . . . . .	(R-8) 60
Shadow Beasts (see From the Shadows) . . . . .	(R-20) 67
Shadow Realms . . . . .	(R-28) 82
Soul Fragment & Others; Death is Not Always Final . . . . .	(R-4) 33
Soul Tree (BTS) . . . . .	(R-28) 17
Splicers: New War Mounts . . . . .	(R-30) 47
Splicers: The Wastes . . . . .	(R-32) 20
Thropo Aliens, The . . . . .	(R-17) 35
Vampires (Rifts®) . . . . .	(R-8) 60
Werebats (see The Charonis) . . . . .	(R-8) 40
Werebeasts (see Tribes of the Moon, Part 1) . . . . .	(R-4) 40
Werebeasts (see Tribes of the Moon, Part 2) . . . . .	(R-5) 75
Xiticix, The . . . . .	(R-3) 61

## Nightbane® Articles

Astral Domains (Beyond Between the Shadows)	(R-9) 18
Asylum (Short Story)	(R-14) 97
Beyond Between the Shadows	(R-9) 18
Brain Fry	(R-15) 42
Charonis, The	(R-8) 40
Children of Domhain Dorcha	(R-7) 15
Cursed, The	(R-13) 22
Dark Revelations	(R-16) 49
Designer Drugs (see Brain Fry)	(R-15) 42
Domhain Dorcha, Children of	(R-7) 15
Flynn & Company	(R-22) 67
Fringe Groups & O.C.C.s	(R-10) 51
Gregor's Chronicle; Tale of a Lost Boy (story)	(R-11) 65
Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures	(R-1) 104
Inlustris, The (R.C.C.)	(R-1) 93
Laughing Man R.C.C.	(R-8) 47
Martial Arts; Everybody's Kung Fu Fighting	(R-3) 25
New Morphus Tables	(R-1) 84
New Morphus Tables	(R-15) 51
New Morphus Tables, Themed	(R-20) 32
New Nightbane Talents	(R-15) 63
Nightbane, The	(R-11) 63
Old Ways (Mafia & Crime Syndicates)	(R-6) 71
On the Fringe of Night Adventure	(R-10) 48
Pros & Cons of Studying Magic	(R-27) 57
Shadow Weapon (see New Morphus Tables)	(R-15) 64
Spell Breather	(R-23) 17
Themed Nightbane & Morphus Tables	(R-20) 32
Tribes of the Moon, Part One	(R-4) 40
Tribes of the Moon, Part Two	(R-5) 75

## Ninja & Superspies™

Destiny's Call Adventure	(R-14) 38
Everybody's Kung-Fu Fighting	(R-3) 25
Guns for Hire (Mercs, Skills, etc.)	(R-25) 14
Hell, Frozen Over, Adventure	(R-16) 33
Intrigue in Singapore	(R-6) 67
Martial Arts: World Warriors	(R-7) 39
Martial Arts Powers, New	(R-3) 57
Mysteries of Southeast Asia	(R-18) 26
Rahu-Man, An In-Depth Study	(R-5) 31
Revised Grappling Rules & New Martial Arts	(R-3) 39
World Warriors: New Martial Arts	(R-7) 39

## Official Material

BTS-2: The Squatter & Gormaglut	(R-32) 14
Fantasy: Death is Not Always Final	(R-4) 33
Rifts® Russian Gods	(R-6) 30
Rifts® Siege on Tolkeen HLS Adventures	(R-16) 82
Rifts® China Two: The Geofront	(R-28) 41
Rifts® Dinosaur Swamp: Horror Forest	(R-28) 55

## Rifts® Articles

Air Combat Optional Rules	(R-33) 68
A.R.C.H.I.E. Three vs The World	(R-4) 64
A.R.C.H.I.E. Three: Titan Robotics	(R-4) 68
Arizona/Arzno: The New Kingdom	(R-8) 60
Arizona/Arzno, Part One	(R-9) 81
Arizona/Arzno, Part Two	(R-10) 65
Arrows of Ith'arian, The	(R-28) 34
Bandits of Hollow Hill Adventure	(R-17) 69
Bio-Borgs, New Types	(R-9) 47
Blood Magic	(R-17) 79
Bring Out Your Dead (O.C.C.s)	(R-8) 76
Candle Magic	(R-30) 83
Chaos Earth: Blue Zone Demons	(R-30) 68
Chaos Earth: Britain in Chaos	(R-27) 16
Chaos Earth Preview, Part One	(R-17) 101
Chaos Earth Preview, Part Two	(R-18) 94
Character Driven Merc Campaign	(R-27) 30
Character Sheet	(R-4) 109
City Creation Rules	(R-1) 24
Coalition Biowarfare Division	(R-18) 68
Coalition Target Acquisition Groups	(R-23) 74
Comic Strip: Rifts® Lone Star ( <i>Begins</i> )	(R-6) 95
Cooking for Rifts®, Mega-Steel Chef	(R-32) 70
Creatures of the Horror Forest	(R-28) 55
Crime & Punishment in Rifts Japan	(R-29) 74
D-Bees of the Eastern Wilds	(R-33) 50
Dark Techno-Wizardry	(R-13) 71
Demonwrath (Adventure)	(R-8) 57
Dinosaur Swamp (Horror Forest)	(R-28) 55
Dweomer Mage O.C.C. & New Magic	(R-17) 56
Dweomer Magic Spells	(R-17) 58
England: A Green and Unpleasant Land (Story)	(R-7) 70
Enthralled (Psioncs)	(R-25) 67
Environment of Space, The	(R-10) 79
Every Motherless Son (Story)	(R-9½) 102
Evolved, The	(R-4) 90
Fadetown, Life in (see Goodcourt)	(R-14) 71
Faerie Harvest	(R-23) 60
Familiars of Rifts Earth	(R-21) 27
Geofront (Rifts China)	(R-28) 41
Giga-Damage (joke from humor issue)	(R-9½) 10



G.M. Tips, Suggestions & Good Advice	(R-11) 28
Goodcourt, Life in a Fadetown	(R-14) 71
HLS Adventures	(R-20) 98
Horlock Robots Inc.	(R-14) 87
Janissary Project, The	(R-28) 65
Juicer 'Bot (A.R.C.H.I.E. Three)	(R-4) 74
Khans of Mongolia	(R-6) 83
Komplex Problem, The	(R-31) 61
Lone Star Comic by Ramon Perez	(R-6 thru R-14)
Long, Dark Walk	(R-18) 62
Ludicrous Mage O.C.C.	(R-9½) 74
Ludicrous Magic	(R-9½) 77
Ludicrous Magic, New	(R-22) 25
Mage Armor	(R-22) 17
Media in Rifts Earth	(R-24) 48
Metabolic Juicer	(R-24) 72
Modern Army Combat Rules for Rifts®	(R-23) 77
Movie Deal Announced	(R-23) 6
Mutants of Rifts Earth	(R-26) 66
Mystic China Conversions for Rifts	(R-3) 44
Necromantic O.C.C.s: Bring Out Your Dead	(R-8) 76
NEMA O.C.C.s	(R-18) 99
New Roman Republic	(R-1) 30
New Kingdom (Arizona Vampires)	(R-8) 60
Operation Ironskull (Cyborgs)	(R-15) 65
Operators, the World of	(R-5) 62
Phage World (Psi-Stalkers)	(R-25) 89
Phase World Source Material	(R-12) 79
Phase World Sunhammer Consolidated	(R-31) 79
P.P.E. Channeling	(R-21) 15
Primorder (a world/dimension)	(R-3) 90
Psionic Combat: Go Mental	(R-19) 37
Psionic Eruptor O.C.C.s	(R-19) 43
Psionic Enthralled R.C.C.s	(R-25) 67
Psi-Stalkers (see Phage World)	(R-25) 89
Rifts® Bring Out Your Dead	(R-8) 76
Right Stuff, The (O.C.C.s)	(R-5) 49
Russian Gods	(R-6) 30
Shadow Realms	(R-28) 82
Siege Against Tolkeen, The	(R-1) 50
Silly Answers to Some Silly Questions	(R-9½) 17
Space Magic Spells	(R-10) 82
Spatial Mage	(R-3) 78
Spatial Mage Additions	(R-5) 70
Specialized Shifters (O.C.C.s, Spells, & Items)	(R-15) 88
Target Acquisition Groups	(R-23) 74
Techno-Wizardry Form & Function	(R-21) 40
Techno-Wizard & New TW Items	(R-2) 66
Techno-Wizard O.C.C.	(R-2) 70
Three Words (Story)	(R-8) 95
Thirteenth Hour (Children of Rodian)	(R-13) 85

Thunderbolt Adventure	(R-20) 88
Titan Robotics (A.R.C.H.I.E. Three)	(R-4) 68
Tourist O.C.C.	(R-9½) 97
Triax & NGR Adventure	(R-31) 61
Tyrell Industries for Phase World	(R-12) 79
Tyrell Vehicles, Weapons & Equipment	(R-12) 83
We're Not All Mind Readers, You Know	(R-19) 43
Wormwood Symbiotic Warrior	(R-18) 54
Xiticix, The	(R-3) 61

## Robotech®

New Mecha	(R-5) 17
The Right Stuff (O.C.C.s)	(R-5) 49

## Rune Weapons

Arrows of Ith'arian, The	(R-28) 34
A Mind of Their Own	(R-5) 42
Blade Law	(R-15) 27
Quest For Castlerake, Part One	(R-31) 23
Quest For Castlerake, Part Two	(R-32) 34

## Splicers™

New War Mounts	(R-30) 47
The Wastes & Monsters	(R-32) 20

## Super Abilities

Defective Powers	(R-9½) 55
Expanded Unusual Characteristics Table	(R-18) 20
Gestalt Power Category	(R-10) 26
Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers	(R-9½) 31
Martial Arts: World Warriors	(R-7) 39
New Major Super Powers	(R-1) 66
New Super Powers	(R-11) 22
Nightbane Themed Morphus Tables	(R-20) 32
Nightbane Talents	(R-15) 63
Wacky Super Villains & Heroes: Reality Twist	(R-9½) 41
Wacky Powers for Heroes Unlimited	(R-9½) 28

## Techno-Wizardry™

See Rifts®

# Index by Author

---

- Alvarez, Ismael**  
Systems Failure: The Texas Lone Star Cavalry . . . (R-12) 40
- Aten, Brandon**  
HU2 Power Up the Vote . . . (R-28) 23  
Rifts® A Komplex Problem; NGR Adventure . . . (R-31) 61
- Baierl, Eric**  
New Morphus Tables (contributor) . . . (R-15) 51
- Bearce, Renae DeAnna**  
New Morphus Tables (contributor) . . . (R-15) 51
- Benard, Kimara**  
Rifts®: A Long Dark Walk . . . (R-18) 62
- Bingham, Nathan**  
Blood Magic (additions to) . . . (R-17) 79
- Blackburn, Jolly**  
Knights of the Dinner Table (KoDT) . . . (R-1) 13  
KoDT . . . (R-2) 11  
KoDT . . . (R-3) 15  
KoDT . . . (R-4) 21  
KoDT . . . (R-5) 15  
KoDT . . . (R-6) 13  
KoDT . . . (R-7) 13  
KoDT . . . (R-8) 28  
KoDT . . . (R-9) 16  
KoDT . . . (R-10) 17  
KoDT . . . (R-12) 21  
KoDT (Last Appearance) . . . (R-13) 14
- Blackwell, Josh**  
Candle Magic . . . (R-30) 83
- Blackwell, Samson**  
Candle Magic . . . (R-30) 83
- Breaux, Wayne Jr.**  
Atorian Empire, The . . . (R-14) 27  
Games Palladium Plays, The . . . (R-22) 82  
Hacking, Cyberjacking & Supernatural Data Theft . . . (R-2) 27  
Thropo Alien Revisited . . . (R-17) 35  
Xiticix, The . . . (R-3) 61
- Brin, Russell**  
BTS-1: Dark Consequences Adventure . . . (R-10) 46  
BTS-1: Fayfield Inn Adventure . . . (R-13) 34
- BTS-1: Living Numbers and Curses . . . (R-13) 30  
Mysteries of Southeast Asia . . . (R-18) 26
- Bundy, Stanley**  
REF Zentraedi Heavy Assault Pod . . . (R-5) 18
- Burns, Matthew**  
Rifts® Demonwrath . . . (R-8) 57
- Calder, James**  
BTS-1 & Nightbane: The Laughing Man R.C.C. . . (R-8) 47  
Fantasy: Thirteen Deadly Magicks . . . (R-13) 49  
Rifts® Dweomer Mage & New Magic . . . (R-17) 56
- Cannon, M.G.**  
Hammer of the Forge . . . (R-1 thru present)  
In Only Six Days (G.M. Tips) . . . (R-15) 33  
Nightbane/BTS-1: The Charonis . . . (R-8) 40  
Rifts®/Phase World®: Knights of Kamnos . . . (R-1) 42
- Casebolt, Lee**  
Revised Grappling Rules & New Martial Arts . . . (R-3) 39
- Carlson, K.G.**  
HU2: Fallen Angels . . . (R-27) 76  
HU2: Fracture – A Sequel to Fallen Angels . . . (R-29) 60  
HU2: Rooms with a Skew Adventure . . . (R-31) 16
- Cartier, Randi**  
Citters, Magic & Herbs (Fantasy) . . . (R-3) 11  
Death is Not Always Final (Fantasy) . . . (R-4) 33  
Mysteries of the Deep Forest . . . (R-8) 30
- Charlian, Brian**  
An Interview with Kevin Siembieda . . . (R-20) 83
- Charbonnier, Kurt**  
Teen Heroes Unlimited . . . (R-16) 28
- Christensen, Kevin**  
Fantasy: Wand Magic . . . (R-19) 25  
Fantasy: The Magic of War . . . (R-29) 13
- Clements, Jeremy**  
Rifts® A few HLS Adventures . . . (R-20) 98  
Rifts® Horlock Robots Inc. . . . (R-14) 87
- Cluney, Ewen**  
Rifts® The Environment of Space . . . (R-10) 79  
Rifts® Space Magic . . . (R-10) 82



- Coffin, Allison**  
 Crazy Accoloth's Discount Alchemy . . . . . (R-9½) 93
- Coffin, Bill**  
 HLS Adventures for Coalition Wars . . . . . (R-16) 82  
 HLS Adventures for the Western Empire . . . . . (R-4) 12  
 Giga-Damage . . . . . (R-9½) 10  
 Long, Strange Trips: G.M. Tips . . . . . (R-4) 23  
 Systems Failure Adventure & Source Material . . . . . (R-8) 12
- Constantin, C.N.**  
 Familiars of Rifts Earth . . . . . (R-21) 27
- Cooney, Evan**  
 Fantasy: Construct Animation Magic . . . . . (R-26) 31  
 Fantasy: The Legacy of Blood . . . . . (R-33) 17
- Craigo, RC**  
 New Morphus Tables (contributor) . . . . . (R-15) 51
- Dawes, Steven**  
 BTS-2: The Squatter Adventure . . . . . (R-32) 14
- Denis, Daniel**  
 Ludicrous Mage (creator & co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 74  
 Ludicrous Magic (creator & co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 77  
 Ludicrous Magic, New . . . . . (R-22) 25  
 Planetary Creation Rules . . . . . (R-18) 34
- Diaczyk, Greg**  
 Fantasy: The Magic of Science . . . . . (R-10) 19  
 Fantasy: The Palladium Orient . . . . . (R-27) 39
- Dimitry, Ted**  
 Rifts® Operation Ironskull . . . . . (R-15) 65  
 Rifts® Faerie Harvest . . . . . (R-23) 60
- Drumond, Duncan**  
 Interview with Kevin Siembieda . . . . . (R-20) 83
- Edwards, Steve**  
 Knights of the Eastern Territories . . . . . (R-15) 19
- Emmer, Edwin**  
 Fantasy: The Arrows of Ith'arian . . . . . (R-28) 34  
 Fantasy: The Quest for Castlerake, Part One . . . . . (R-31) 23  
 Fantasy: The Quest for Castlerake, Part Two . . . . . (R-32) 34
- Evans, Glen**  
 HU2: S.C.R.E.T. Revisited & Revised . . . . . (R-33) 29
- Fackler, Erick**  
 Rifts® The Janissary Project . . . . . (R-28) 65
- Fellows, Bill**  
 Dark Techno-Wizardry . . . . . (R-13) 71
- Felkins, Dan**  
 Fantasy: Medieval Army Combat Rules . . . . . (R-22) 47  
 Rifts® Crime & Punishment in Rifts Japan . . . . . (R-29) 74  
 Rifts® Modern Army Combat Rules . . . . . (R-23) 77
- Field, Wayne**  
 Coalition Support Vehicles . . . . . (R-19) 54
- Finin, Peter**  
 The Rahu-Man – An In-Depth Study . . . . . (R-5) 31
- Fitzloff, Jay**  
 Heroes Throughout the Ages . . . . . (R-5) 22  
 HU2 The Gestalt Power Category . . . . . (R-10) 26
- Foster, Matthew M**  
 Hunter Robotics (HU2) . . . . . (R-6) 76
- Fox, Chris**  
 Lord of the Deep (Story) . . . . . (R-26) 91
- Frasier, Crystal**  
 Fantasy: In the Hands of Fate . . . . . (R-13) 38
- Gleba, Carl**  
 Palladium Astronomy . . . . . (R-23) 23  
 Rifts® Shadow Realms . . . . . (R-28) 82
- Goodson, Caleb**  
 HU2: New Types of Mutants . . . . . (R-29) 43
- Growen, Erik**  
 Ninjas & Superspies: Destiny's Call . . . . . (R-14) 38  
 Ninjas & Superspies: Hell, Frozen Over . . . . . (R-16) 33
- Haendler, David**  
 Brain Fry . . . . . (R-15) 42  
 Siege Against Tolkeen (story) . . . . . (R-1 thru R-10)  
 Skelebots: The Mechanical Menace . . . . . (R-7) 58
- Hall, Mark**  
 Fantasy: The Changeling Metamorph . . . . . (R-10) 24  
 Fantasy: Young, Dumb & Ugly . . . . . (R-16) 24  
 Rifts® Phage World . . . . . (R-25) 89

**Jenkin, Richard**  
Phase World Source Material: Tyrell Industries . . . (R-12) 79

**Johnson, Owen**  
General RPG Tips (Weather, etc.) . . . . . (R-9) 105  
Rifts® Thunderbolt Adventure . . . . . (R-20) 88

**Johnstone, Levi**  
Rifts® Enthralled (Psionics) . . . . . (R-25) 67  
Optional Rules for ALL Palladium Games . . . . . (R-30) 16

**Jones, Christopher**  
Rifts® The Khans of Mongolia . . . . . (R-6) 84  
Rifts® Benefactors (Story) . . . . . (R-9) 106

**King, Hugh**  
Focus On Fun: G.M. Tips . . . . . (R-6) 50  
G.M. Tips, Suggestions & Good Advice . . . . . (R-11) 28

**Kluge, Chris**  
Splicers New War Mounts . . . . . (R-30) 47  
Splicers The Wastes . . . . . (R-32) 20

**Larsen, Joseph**  
BTS-1: The Soul Tree . . . . . (R-28) 17  
Fantasy: Lucky Charms & Superstitions . . . . . (R-13) 19  
Fantasy: Song Magic . . . . . (R-18) 47  
HU2: The Motherframe . . . . . (R-21) 18  
Systems Failure: Fleas . . . . . (R-26) 14

**Lind, Eric J.**  
Rifts® City Creation Rules . . . . . (R-1) 24

**Lindsey, Erin**  
Mega-Steel Chef, Cooking for Rifts® . . . . . (R-32) 70

**Long, Michael**  
Fantasy: The Shrine of Ventax Adventure . . . . . (R-11) 77  
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath, Part One . . . . . (R-25) 45  
Fantasy: The Fires of Korath, Part Two . . . . . (R-26) 47

**Lucas, Ben**  
HU2: World Warriors . . . . . (R-7) 39

**Luna, Nick**  
HU2: New Super Powers . . . . . (R-11) 22

**Lukowski, Jason**  
HU2: New Super Powers . . . . . (R-11) 22

**Manning, Brian**  
Mage Armor (the original concept & art) . . . . . (R-22) 17

**Marciniszyn, Alex**  
April Fool – The Truth . . . . . (R-9½) 111  
Editor of The Rifter® . . . . . (R-1 thru Present)  
Reality Twist . . . . . (R-9½) 41

**Marker, Jason**  
Rifts® (Story): Three Words . . . . . (R-8) 95  
Rifts® Sunhammer Consolidated Freightways . . . . . (R-31) 79

**Matthy, Chris**  
Fantasy: Card Magic . . . . . (R-24) 89

**May, Edward A.**  
Rifts® Air Combat Optional Rules . . . . . (R-33) 68

**Miron, Anthony**  
Nightbane®: Asylum (Story) . . . . . (R-14) 97

**Merrow, Shawn**  
Fantasy Pirates . . . . . (R-2) 21  
Fantasy Hook, Line & Sinker Adventures . . . . . (R-9) 108  
Nightbane®: The Cursed . . . . . (R-13) 22  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-11) 48  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-12) 23  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-13) 16  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-14) 12  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-15) 17  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-16) 17  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-17) 16  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-18) 16  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-19) 21  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-20) 16  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-22) 14  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-24) 18  
Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-25) 92

**Moran, David Liam**  
Coalition Biowarfare Divison . . . . . (R-18) 68

**Morrison, Rob**  
HU2: Expanded Unusual Characteristic Tables . . . . . (R-18) 20

**Mueller, Nicholas**  
The Magic of Ophid's Grasslands . . . . . (R-19) 29

**Muench, William R.**  
BTS-1: Psychic P.C.C.s . . . . . (R-1) 111  
BTS-1: The Imp, Supernatural Rumormonger . . . . . (R-2) 20  
Everybody's Kung Fu Fighting  
(Martial Arts & Nightbane® . . . . . (R-3) 26  
Gregor's Chronicle: The Tale of a Lost Boy . . . . . (R-11) 65  
Nightbane: The Inlustris . . . . . (R-1) 93



<b>Newman, R.L.</b>	Rifts® Techno-Wizard Extravaganza . . . . . (R-2) 66
Flynn & Company . . . . . (R-22) 67	Rifts® The Territory of Arzno: Part One . . . . . (R-9) 81
<b>Nowak, Patrick</b>	Rifts® The Territory of Arzno: Part Two . . . . . (R-10) 65
Bandits of Hollow Hill . . . . . (R-17) 69	<b>Richardson, Mike</b>
Media in Rifts . . . . . (R-24) 48	Demon Hunters . . . . . (R-19) 81
<b>Oliver, Aaron</b>	<b>Rosenstein, Julius</b>
HU2: New Major Super-Powers . . . . . (R-1) 66	Heroes Throughout the Ages . . . . . (R-5) 22
Nightbane: Morpheus Tables . . . . . (R-1) 84	Other Wacky Superbeings . . . . . (R-9½) 39
<b>Okamura, Apollo</b>	Proofreader of The Rifter® . . . . . (R-1 thru present)
Really Mastering the Game . . . . . (R-3) 8	Unlikely Gods . . . . . (R-9½) 58
<b>Osten, James A.</b>	Silly Answers to Some Silly Questions . . . . . (R-9½) 17
Every Motherless Son (Rifts® Story) . . . . . (R-9½) 102	Vaudevillain . . . . . (R-9½) 38
<b>Perez, Ramon</b>	<b>Rusling, Andrew</b>
Rifts® Lone Star Comic Strip . . . . . (R-6 thru R-14)	Fantasy: The Long Forgotten Quest . . . . . (R-21) 54
<b>Philips, David Solon</b>	Fantasy: Unknown Depths (Lizard Men) . . . . . (R-26) 40
New Morpheus Tables (contributor) . . . . . (R-15) 51	<b>Russof, Victor</b>
Old Ways, The (Nightbane) . . . . . (R-6) 71	Intrigue in Singapore . . . . . (R-6) 67
On the Fringe of the Night (Nightbane) . . . . . (R-10) 48	<b>Sauerland, Edward J.</b>
<b>Pickett, A.J.</b>	We're Not All Mind Readers, You Know! . . . . . (R-19) 43
Fantasy: The Blade Mage . . . . . (R-23) 29	The Right Stuff (Rifts & Robotech) . . . . . (R-5) 49
<b>Philpott, John Charles</b>	<b>Schroen, Ian</b>
Go Mental . . . . . (R-19) 37	Running a Character Driven Merc Campaign . . . . . (R-27) 30
Guns for Hire . . . . . (R-25) 14	<b>Sheiring, Steven</b>
Optional Rules for ALL Palladium Games . . . . . (R-30) 16	Defective Powers . . . . . (R-9½) 55
<b>Polojac, John</b>	Heroes & Villains with Unusual Powers . . . . . (R-9½) 31
Building a Better Super-Soldier . . . . . (R-22) 18	Wacky Powers . . . . . (R-9½) 28
<b>Ransom, David</b>	Where's Wayne Adventure . . . . . (R-9½) 22
Rifts® The Evolved . . . . . (R-4) 90	<b>Shera, John Courtenay</b>
<b>Rasnake, Chad</b>	Blueprint of a Dragon . . . . . (R-12) 73
Nightbane® Children of Domhain Dorcha . . . . . (R-7) 15	<b>Siembieda, Kevin</b>
<b>Rice, Sonny</b>	Beyond the Supernatural 2nd Ed. Sneak Preview . . . . . (R-26) 19
Fantasy: Beneath the Surface . . . . . (R-14) 57	Chaos Earth Advanced Preview . . . . . (R-7) 55
Fantasy: From the Shadows . . . . . (R-20) 67	Chaos Earth Sneak Preview One . . . . . (R-17) 101
Fantasy: Lost Art of Golemancy . . . . . (R-25) 40	Chaos Earth Sneak Preview Two . . . . . (R-18) 94
Fantasy: Stilt City Adventure . . . . . (R-17) 45	Chaos Earth Sneak Preview Three . . . . . (R-19) 91
<b>Richards, Jason</b>	From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda . . . . . (R-1 thru present)
P.P.E. Channeling . . . . . (R-21) 15	From the Desk of Wayne Smith . . . . . (R-9½) 6
Rifts® Mutants of Rifts Earth . . . . . (R-26) 66	Hook, Line & Sinkers for the Western Empire . . . . . (R-4) 12
Rifts® New Kingdom, The (Vampires) . . . . . (R-8) 60	Interview with Kevin Siembieda . . . . . (R-20) 83
	KoDT Congratulation on 100 issues . . . . . (R-30) 96
	Ludicrous Mage (co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 74
	Ludicrous Magic (co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 77
	Mage Armor for Rifts® . . . . . (R-22) 17

Magic Best Lost . . . . . (R-9½) 64  
 News & Coming Attractions . . . . . (R-1 thru present)  
 Nightbane, The . . . . . (R-11) 63  
 Rifts® Connection . . . . . (R-2) 18  
 Rifts® Russian Gods . . . . . (R-6) 30  
 Trickster Card Magic . . . . . (R-9½) 67  
 Trickster Mage O.C.C. . . . . (R-9½) 64  
 Unlikely Gods: Backsmack . . . . . (R-9½) 58  
 Wacky Powers (co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 28  
 Where's Wayne Adventure (co-author) . . . . . (R-9½) 22

**Sillanpaa, Paul**

One Chance in a Million, Part One . . . . . (R-15) 76  
 One Chance in a Million, Part Two . . . . . (R-16) 97  
 One Chance in a Million, Part Three . . . . . (R-17) 84

**Sinsapaugh, Josh**

Chaos Earth Blue Zone Demons . . . . . (R-30) 68  
 Rifts® D-Bees of the Eastern Wild . . . . . (R-33) 50

**Smith, Andrew**

Mystic China Conversion for Rifts® . . . . . (R-3) 44

**Smith, Leland**

HU2: New Super Powers . . . . . (R-11) 22

**Smith, Wayne**

Coordinator & Editor in Chief . . . . . (R-1 to present!)  
 Everybody's Kung Fu Fighting . . . . . (R-3) 25  
 HU2 Gestalt NPCs . . . . . (R-10) 35

**Sterrett, Todd**

Nightbane® Beyond Between the Shadows . . . . . (R-9) 18

**Stevens, John**

Rifts® CS Target Acquisition Group . . . . . (R-23) 74

**Stiles, Christina**

Character Creation 201 . . . . . (R-12) 27

**Stott, Rodney**

Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-11) 48  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-12) 23  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-13) 16  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-14) 12  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-15) 17  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-16) 17  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-17) 16  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-18) 16  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-19) 21  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-20) 16  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-22) 14

Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-24) 18  
 Palladium Megaverse® Q & A . . . . . (R-25) 92  
 Rifts® Primorder . . . . . (R-3) 90  
 Rifts® The New Roman Republic . . . . . (R-1) 30  
 Rifts® Tourist O.C.C. . . . . (R-9½) 97

**Sumimoto, Mark**

Rifts® A.R.C.H.I.E.-Three vs The World . . . . . (R-4) 64  
 Rifts® Bio-Borgs, New Type . . . . . (R-9) 47  
 Rifts® Bring Out Your Dead . . . . . (R-8) 76  
 Rifts® Techno-Wizard Extravaganza . . . . . (R-2) 66

**Swanson, Eric**

Goodcourt – Life in a Fadetown . . . . . (R-14) 71

**Syphrett, Carl**

HU2: The Geiger Organization . . . . . (R-12) 48

**Taylor, Nathan**

Rifts® A Mind of Their Own (Rune Weapons) . . . . . (R-5) 42  
 Rifts® New Kingdom, The (Rifts Vampires) . . . . . (R-8) 60  
 Rifts® The Territory of Arzno: Part One . . . . . (R-9) 81  
 Rifts® The Territory of Arzno: Part Two . . . . . (R-10) 65

**Therrien, Shawn**

Rifts® Techno-Wizardry Form & Function . . . . . (R-21) 40

**Thomassen, Richard**

Fantasy: Blade Law . . . . . (R-15) 27  
 Fantasy: Flashing Blades: Fencing Rules . . . . . (R-22) 62  
 Fantasy: By Lance and Speed of Wing . . . . . (R-19) 33  
 Fantasy: Cloak & Dagger: Assassins . . . . . (R-6) 15  
 Fantasy: The Thirteenth Tribe . . . . . (R-13) 45

**Thompson, Eric**

The Metabolic Juicer . . . . . (R-24) 72  
 World of the Operator . . . . . (R-5) 62  
 Wormwood Symbiotic Warriors . . . . . (R-18) 54

**Thompson, Jon**

Fantasy: The Dragon Hunters of Kremakrilon . . . . . (R-7) 31  
 Fantasy: Into the Shadows (assassins) . . . . . (R-12) 29  
 Fantasy: Legend of the Thirteen Orcish Lords . . . . . (R-13) 54

**Trustrum, Steve**

Nightbane: Tribes of the Moon, Part One . . . . . (R-4) 40  
 Nightbane: Tribes of the Moon, Part Two . . . . . (R-5) 75  
 Spatial Mage Additions . . . . . (R-5) 70  
 Wormwood: The Blood Shaman . . . . . (R-2) 55

**Tulloch, Alex**

Britain in Chaos . . . . . (R-27) 16



---

**Trzpuc, Blake**

BTS-1: Trouble in the Midwest Adventure . . . . . (R-10) 40

**Vey, Jason**

Dark Revelations . . . . . (R-16) 49

**White, Taylor**

We Want You (CS Recruitment Poster) . . . . . (R-9½) 5

HU2: Power Up the Vote (co-author) . . . . . (R-28) 23

Rifts® A Komplex Problem; NGR Adventure . . . . . (R-31) 61

**Whitlock, Kevin**

Rifts England: A Green &amp; Unpleasant Land (story) . . . . . (R-7) 70

**Winters, Richard**

HU2: New Super Powers . . . . . (R-11) 22

**Woodward, Ed III**

Pros &amp; Cons of Studying Magic, The . . . . . (R-27) 57

Spell Breather, The . . . . . (R-23) 17

Themed Nightbane &amp; Morphus Tables . . . . . (R-20) 32

**Wulf, Rich**

The Thirteenth Hour . . . . . (R-13) 85

**Wujcik, Erick**

The Name Giver . . . . . (R-1) 8

Thinking Big . . . . . (R-2) 8

**Yoho, Todd**

ATB: Mesozoic Land: Part One . . . . . (R-23) 41

ATB: Mesozoic Land: Part Two . . . . . (R-24) 27

BTS-1: Last Street, Scenario Setting . . . . . (R-17) 25

BTS-1: A Last Street Adventure . . . . . (R-20) 20

HU2: Software Valley War, The . . . . . (R-27) 64

Rifts® China 2: The Geofront . . . . . (R-28) 41

Rifts® Dinosaur Swamp: Horror Forest Creatures . . . . . (R-28) 55

Systems Failure: Fort Folsom . . . . . (R-19) 72

---

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Issue #13: Kevin Long

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Issue #15: Unknown

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Issue #30: John Zeleznik

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Editor in Chief: Wayne Smith

Layout/Keyline: Kevin Siembieda

**Note:** Our Apologies to anybody who got accidentally omitted, their article left out of the listing or their name misspelled.

# Palladium Open House – May 6 & 7, 2006

2006 is Palladium's 25 year anniversary. We're proud of this accomplishment and plan to celebrate all year long with the people who really matter, *YOU*.

We thought it would be fun to hold a small gathering – an *open house* at Palladium Books' warehouse. A weekend event where we could hold seminars, panel talks, gaming events, autograph sessions, sell product, and enjoy hours of playing Palladium games. And all of it happening in the back of the Palladium warehouse (17,000 sq. feet of books and fun)!

To our knowledge, nothing like this has ever been done in the history of role-playing games! At least not in the United States. So come on down to join this historic moment.

Meet the creative men and women behind Palladium Books at the location where the magic happens! Chat with Palladium creators, artists, writers, staff members and friends. Bring books to be autographed, purchase back stock items to fill in your collection, buy original art from the artists (a few of whom may be doing character sketches), and pick up special Open House items.

**The Palladium Open House will offer an unprecedented gathering of Palladium creators** – more Palladium maniacs than have ever been assembled under one roof ANYWHERE, ever!

The following Palladium creators have already agreed to be at your disposal, and MORE are expected to join the fun!

**Kevin Siembieda** – publisher, owner, writer, artist & game designer.

**Henry Siembieda** – creator of Kevin Siembieda!

**Wayne Smith** – editor and troubleshooter, Editor-in-Chief of *The Rifter*.

**Alex Marciniszyn** – editor and idea man.

**Julius Rosenstein** – contributing writer and proofreader.

**Kathy Simmons** – customer relations and American sweetheart.

**Carmen Bellaire** – writer, game designer and Game Master (author of *Splicers*, *Powers Unlimited* series and contributor to more)!

**Todd Yoho** – writer (*Dinosaur Swamp*, *Arcanum* and more).

**Jason Richards** – writer (author of *Arzno* & contributor to *The Rifter*®).

**Brandon Aten** – writer (co-author of *Madhaven* & contributor to *The Rifter*®).

**Taylor White** – writer (co-author of *Madhaven* & contributor to *The Rifter*®).

**Roger & Randi Cartier** – contributing writers (mainly *Fantasy*), map-makers and play testers.

**Thomas Bartold** – writer (PFRPG: *Island at the Edge of the World*), long-time pal, and one of the original Defilers!

**Carl Gleba** (tentative) – writer of *Three Galaxies*, *Megaverse Builder*, and others books.

**Randy McCall** (tentative) – co-author of the original *BTS*.

**James Brown** (the G.M., not the singer).

**John Zeleznik** – painter and artist supreme, coming all the way from California (tentative)!

**Ramon Perez** – artist, coming in from Toronto, Canada.

**Apollo Okamura** – artist, coming in for the Toronto area.

**Kent Burles** – artist, coming in from the Toronto area (his first time at any US gaming event).

**Mark Dudley** and *Drunken Style Studio* artists.

**Other artists** are likely to be added.

Contributors to *The Rifter*.

Palladium's Online Moderators, friends and more.

**The Palladium Open House** will be a one-shot, ONE-OF-A-KIND, one-time event to celebrate **Palladium's 25th Anniversary** and Kevin Siembieda's 50th Birthday (actually April 2). And as it turns out, Apollo Okamura's 33rd birthday is Sunday, May 7.

And you get to celebrate it all up close and personal with dozens of the Palladium madmen. (Note: The only other conventions Palladium plans on attending in 2006 are *Gen Con Indy* and *Trinity Con*.)

- **Meet the Palladium staff and creators.**
- **Talk with Kevin and crew on just about any subject involving games, art, comic books, movies, and publishing.**
- **Purchase new and back-stock Palladium product for sale.**
- **Get special Open House and Anniversary commemorative items.**
- **Original art and prints for sale by the artists.**
- **Character sketches made to order by select Palladium artists.**
- **Learn the latest news and happenings at Palladium Books.**
- **Attend seminars and panel discussions (free to all).**
- **Play in scheduled game events by Palladium creators, friends and associates (nominal fee of \$1-\$2). Palladium RPGs only!**
- **Run your own game in the *Open Gaming* area – Palladium RPGs only!**
- **This is your chance to *drop off* manuscripts and art samples for our consideration as new additions to the *Palladium Megaverse*. Also accepting writer and artist contributions to *The Rifter*®. All can be dropped off all weekend long – a signed unsolicited manuscript form is required; available at the Open House.**
- **Scheduled gaming events (nominal fee of \$1-\$2). And role-playing games only! Yep, an RPG weekend extravaganza.**
- **Meet and game with other Palladium fans from around the country.**
- **Intimate setting & tons of fun.**

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Due to space limitations and safety concerns, attendance must be limited. Sorry. Tickets will be sold on a *first come, first served basis*, so the sooner you order the more likely you are guaranteed admission. We hope you understand.

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\$40 additional for V.I.P. Friday, a special, one-evening event limited to 20-40 people. See details below.

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### Special Friday Night Event (an additional cost):

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Includes a private tour of the Palladium Offices by Kevin Siembieda (worth it alone to see the artwork hanging on the walls), and then spend 3-4 hours “hanging and chatting” with Kevin, the Palladium staff and other Palladium notables in the lounge area.

Kevin and other creators will be available to talk one-on-one, answer questions, and sign autographs. Any question may be “asked,” though we can’t promise all will be answered. You can even ask Kevin or his father, *Hank*, to tell embarrassing childhood stories!

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### Housing

Palladium’s office and warehouse is only a few miles from the *Detroit Metro Airport*. That means plenty of hotels for out-of-towners only 5-10 minutes away from the Palladium Open House. Once we have an idea of how many people will need hotel rooms, we will work to get a special rate at one or more of the hotels. We anticipate rooms to run between \$50 and \$80 a night.

Tell us if you will need a hotel room and we will try to point you in the right direction. We are NOT convention organizers, but we want to help out friends from out-of-town (which sounds like quite a few of you, based on the online reaction to our initial announcement), so please tell us if you will need a hotel room.

Ultimately, YOU will have to make your own arrangements, but we can provide a list of hotels in the area and we also hope to secure a few blocks of rooms at nearby hotels and motels, hopefully at a reduced rate.

### Transportation

Those of you who may be flying in will have to rent a car or take a taxi. The latter may be a bit expensive, even with hotels being only a few miles away. Sorry, there will NOT be any sort of shuttle service.

### Food & Restaurants

There are dozens of places to eat within a five mile radius of the Palladium office and warehouse. A half dozen are within walking distance (3-6 blocks), most are a short drive away. There is also a shopping mall, a Meijer, Target, other national chain stores, fast-food places (McDonald’s, Wendy’s, KFC, Taco Bell, White Castle, Hungry Howie’s Pizza, and many more) and sit-down restaurants within that 5 mile radius.

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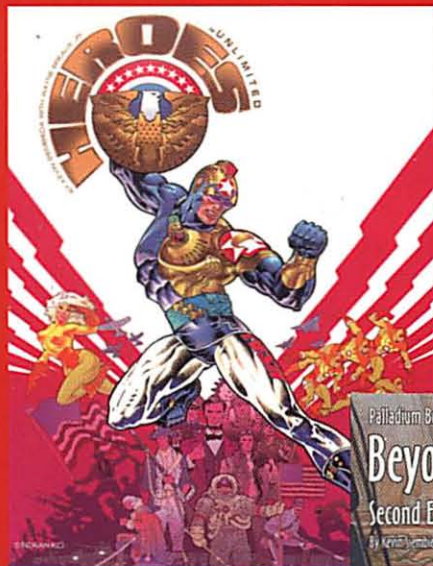
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Parking is limited, so some of you should expect to have to park and walk from as far as a block away. We plan to make arrangements with some of our neighbors to help accommodate parking.

Open House Address: 12455 Universal Drive, Taylor, MI 48180

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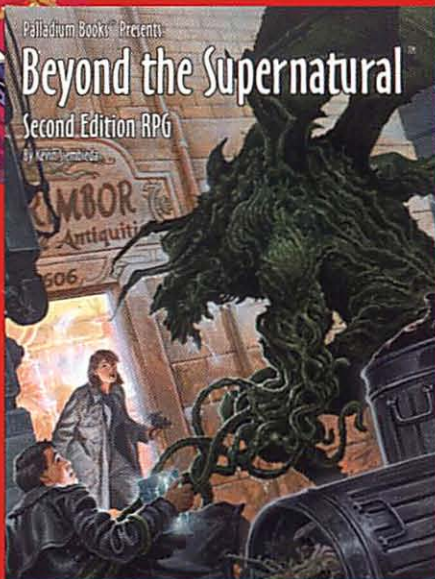
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