

INFINIVERSE™

Volume 1, Number 15

C A M P A I G N G A M E

September, 1991* — \$2.00



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*Oops! As you may have noticed, there are two September issues. This is the real one. *Infiniverse* # 13 should have been dated July, 1991, and *Infiniverse* # 14 should have been dated August, 1991. As of this issue, the temporal discontinuity is eliminated.

("Curses! Foiled again!" —Dr. Mobius)

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In preparation for All Hallow's Eve, here is the third card face for the action deck. Appropriately, it is designed for Orrorsh, but it can be used in other realms as well.

Research

This card may be used by the player who draws it, or it may be traded to another player if she wishes to use it. The card is then set out facing the gamemaster.

The *Research* card is similar to the *Alertness* and *Idea* cards only, because it is a Subplot, it has a greater range of effect. When the characters are attempting to solve a mystery or overcome a dilemma, the *Research* card allows them to discover clues they otherwise would have missed (or, in some cases, have already missed). It allows them to have leaps of insight or merely to "get lucky" when solving a problem.

The gamemaster should be inventive when working the *Research* into the adventure; in Orrorsh, this card can be used to prod character's towards find-

ing a monster's true death (sometimes accidentally) or towards completing an important occult ritual. In other realms, major mysteries can be made simpler by the playing of this card.

Once the *Research* has been used, it is removed from play.

Flee

When *Flee* appears on the conflict line, it indicates a worsening of fortune — something has gone wrong ... or gotten worse. The heroes are forced, for this round only, to attempt to break off the combat. A +3 is given to all maneuvers or other actions that the gamemaster feels are honest attempts by the players to *Flee*, and no other actions are allowed (unless the hero is being forced to perform some other action not of his or the party's choosing).

Because of the Power of Fear that permeates their existence, Orrorshan characters are allowed a +5 bonus instead of +3. ☒

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Run Away!

S: V Test H Flee
 D: H — V Breaks
 Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B C D

The gamemaster supplies needed, but unexpected, clues to a mystery when this card has been played down.

Research

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Rumors and News



First Indication reports on the newest batch of rumors to which you have responded. *Continuing Report* updates the rumors as more responses come in. *The Wrap Up* gives you the tally after the rumor has reverberated throughout the Infiniverse for about three months. The wrap up will be the last report for that rumor in *Infiniverse*.

Rumor Report

The results are given a true or false, followed by a parenthetical number. That number represents the strength of the truth or falsehood throughout the Infiniverse. For example a statement which is false (15) is false unless the gamemaster decides to test the statement; on a roll of 15 or better, the statement is actually true. Roll again on 10 and 20 when testing the truth or falsity of a reported rumor.

First Indication: Issue #13

1. Orrorshan mad scientist has discovered means of trapping human souls in marionettes. Storm Knights murdered by demonically-possessed compatriots. Apparently not — starts out at False (13).

2. Jeff Mills, creator of the *Five Realms* game, fleeing the Delphi Council and currently in hiding in Oregon. True (13).

3. Hypnotic billboard in Thebes forcing dignitaries to surrender classified info to Mobius. True (13).

4. Ninja vampyres stalking Tokyo. A resounding True (20).

Continuing Report: Issue #12

1. Edeinos Storm Knight has unearthed the crown of King Pellinore, and roused the legendary Questing Beast. Both headed for the Cyberpapacy. Drops to False (17).

2. Victorian officials losing control of their bodies and slaying themselves, possibly as a result of the occult. Leaps to True (35).

3. A mysterious net-runner named "the Phantom" operating from a terminal hidden in the Paris Opera House. Watch that chandelier, cause it's True (19).

4. American media making celebrities out of transformed edeinos, through such avenues as *Things* magazine. Oh, no, they're not, it's False (18).

5. Members of Orrorshan Hellion Court convinced Tharkold plans a second invasion. Thratchen disturbed. A runaway train at True (55).

6. Soviet ambassador to Japan kidnapped by Mobius, who hopes to learn secrets of psychic powers. Barely True (15).

The Wrap-Up: Issue #11

1. Dwarves living underground in Norway have succeeded in raising their *Tech* level to 16. Finishes at True (18).

2. Resistance in France planning expedition to Magna Verita. Ends at True (18).

3. The Guildmaster, a mysterious and powerful organizer of Stormers, appears in Hawaii. Just True at (13).

4. Cyberpapal-controlled computer companies producing propagandistic arcade games. Finally True at (16).

5. 3327 acting to prevent Senator Ty Gardner's run for US President. A jump to True (20).

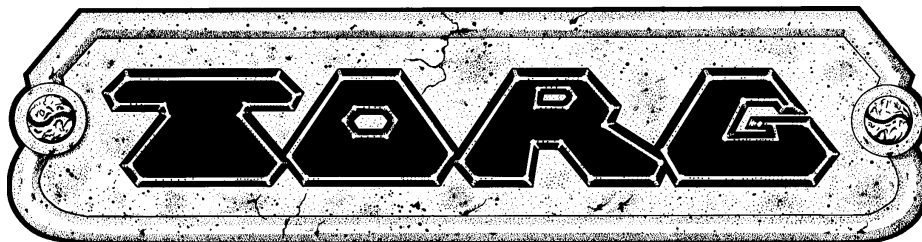
GenCon '91

The WEG crew (alas, minus Greg Gorden) has returned from Milwaukee, basking in the success of the convention. Greg G. is currently on his way to Oregon, from where he will continue to write and edit for West End (starting with some last-minute work on *Tharkold* sourcebook).

Sales were terrific at the convention, with *Torg* products flying out of the booth faster than we could keep track. *Orrorsh*, in particular, was tremendously popular, but everything was moving, and we sold a good number of boxed sets (which may mean more *Infiniverse* subscribers in the near future!)

We ran two seminars, both of which were very interesting as we heard the questions and concerns of our fans. There's a lot of excitement out there about *Space Gods* and *Tharkold*. We also got to enjoy a wonderful production called "High Lord Theatre," which had to be seen to be believed.

Finally, West End is happy to announce the hirings of administrative assistant Jeff Dennis and artist John Lona. Welcome to the *Torg* team, guys — Jeff will be playing center, John will be at guard. ☒





Elder Gods and Fax Machines

The following is a mini-adventure set in Tokyo, Japan, within the realm of Nippon Tech. The adventure reflects the growing tension between the realms of Nippon and Orrorsh, and combines elements of secrecy and deception with horror and the occult.

Gamemaster Note

Since this is a mini-adventure, it has not been described in the detail normal for *Torg* adventures. The mini-adventure supplies a structure for an adventure, but many of the details need to be filled in or, as we say in Orrorsh...

Fleshed out.

Introduction

Hento Hirosoto sighed as he heard the familiar buzz of his fax machine. *Another distraction, he thought. Ah, well; it cannot be helped.*

Feeling the cold plastic of the fax machine while keeping his eyes on the computer monitor, Hento reached over and picked up the fax.

But even before Hirosoto looked at the paper, he knew something was ... wrong. As he tore it off, he felt the paper turn brittle and old. He looked down.

In his lap was an ancient piece of parchment inscribed with red and black letters and symbols. As he stared, open-mouthed, the symbols began to move and swirl, pooling in the center of the paper.

Gasping, Hento dropped the paper onto the floor and stood up quickly. He felt a shock as his right arm impacted with the computer monitor and knocked it over. Glancing reflexively at the machine, Hento nearly missed the large, dark shape that grew out of

the paper and, in the blink of an eye, towered over him.

As the creature from the fax machine grabbed him, the last thing that Hento Hirosoto, Senior Vice President of Morinaka Exports and father of two children, thought was:

Now I'll never get those reports finished.

Prologue

Even before the bridge from Marketplace descended on Japan, bringing with it the World Laws of that corporate realm, Kenji Morinaka, head of Morinaka Exports, had differences with his son Kanjen. Kenji (which means "second son Ken" in Japanese) took over the export company after his elder brother Genichi ("first son Gen"), betrayed the Morinaka Exports company to a competitor.

While Genichi was proved guilty and exiled, the younger Kanjen Morinaka blamed his father Kenji for usurping his position. Indeed, when the bridge from Marketplace dropped, the World Laws of betrayal and Vengeance only heightened emotions already there. Kanjen became convinced that his father hated him and was only looking for a way to supplant him with one of the other vice presidents.

Then, one day, Kanjen was sent to Indonesia. After the Possibility Wars began, many of Morinaka's holdings abroad became unreachable, including those in the Orrorshan realm. After the exile of the Gaunt Man and the settling of the Victorians, Kenji decided he should try to reestablish ties with the southern holdings. He sent his only son.

Kanjen believed that his father was, by sending him to the Realm of Horror, trying to get rid of him, but he went nonetheless. In truth, Kenji believed that Kanjen was the only one he

could trust to get the job done. But, since neither ever spoke to the other of their feelings, this was unknown.

In the process of reestablishing the offices in Orrorsh, Kanjen came under the eye of one of the Orrorshan Nightmares — Skutharka, to be specific. Skutharka saw great potential in the young man's hate and fear, and took great pains to allow this Kanjen to experience his "moment of crisis." Eventually, Skutharka was successful, and Kanjen became an Orrorshan stormer — in the service of the Nightmare.

Skutharka, eager to expand his influence into technological areas, sent his protege back to Nippon with orders to take over Morinaka Exports — at any cost. To help him, Skutharka taught the young man a series of Occult rituals that would allow him to send demons — or "Elder Gods" as Kanjen insisted on calling them — over the phone lines.

Kanjen, not trusting his father, knew that he had to kill off any potential heirs to the throne of Morinaka Exports before he could kill his father and take over. Indeed, with the new, Marketplace-imposed laws, it was unlikely that even killing his father with him being the unspoken heir would get him anything.

Plus, Kanjen wanted revenge.

So, with Skutharka's aid and advice, he began a series of betrayals and murders that has drawn the Storm Knights into the web of fear that is Orrorsh, tempered with the deceit and betrayal of Nippon.

A Contact in Tokyo

The Storm Knights have been contacted by Chen Low, a Chinese Storm Knight currently employed as a troubleshooter for Morinaka Exports. He has been contracted to solve the mysteries of the three murders before

another one occurs. He has hired the Storm Knights to help.

Chen Low is a martial artist of the Tai Chi school (six levels acquired) and has all the skills of a private investigator. He became a Storm Knight after surviving an attack by MarSec agents on his village in China. Currently, he is working to get contacts within Tokyo so he can take revenge on Kanawa eventually.

The Murder Scenes

Each of the three vice presidents was murdered in his or her office on the twenty-fourth floor of the Morinaka Building. Each was alone in the office, and the security cameras and monitors outside the offices showed no one entering or exiting except the murder victim.

Inside the offices, which Chen Low will help the Knights investigate, is a gruesome scene. The murder victims were, apparently, torn or blasted apart, and the furniture and machinery in each office was almost all destroyed. If a Knight makes an *evidence analysis* or *Perception* total of 14 or higher on the furniture or the walls, she sees large claw marks as if a wild beast had raked across them.

In addition, if the Knights ask, or if they make a *Perception* or *evidence analysis* of 15 or higher, they notice that the sole surviving appliance in each office is the fax machine. It is blood-and-gore-spattered, but otherwise untouched. Near each of the fax machines is a crumpled and bloodstained piece of ancient parchment, about the size of a fax sheet, but brittle and old. There is no writing on any of the papers.

The VPs

The three vice presidents, Hento Hiroso, Jinsen Kowasaki, and Mirena Tenkinsen were killed on three consecutive nights. Hento was working late, Jinsen was, according to her notes, called in unexpectedly to the office by Kenji Morinaka, and Mirena was waiting for the company security team to arrive and escort her home.

If the Knights ask Chen Low what the execs were working on, he will claim he doesn't know — and their files are too destroyed to determine

F

From the Desk of Kenji Morinaka, President of Morinaka Exports

DATE: 9/18/91

TO: All senior and junior executives

RE: The unfortunate deaths of Hento Hiroso, Jinsen Kowasaki, and Mirena Tenkinsen

While we regret the unfortunate incidents of the past three nights, we at Morinaka Exports have not made a habit of panicking at the first sign of trouble. We will continue our operations as normally as possible, confident in the security of our building and grounds.

All staff and employees are advised that, because of the need for solidarity and mutual support, re-

quests for leave have been indefinitely postponed, and sick calls will be scrutinized most thoroughly.

All questions about these killings by staff members and employees will be brought to my attention or the attention of the department heads *immediately*. All questions from outside the company are to be answered, "no comment."

Thank you for your cooperation.

anything. He will refer them to the sole surviving vice president, Kanjen Morinaka.

Kanjen Morinaka

Whether the Knights question Chen Low or not, they will eventually meet with Kanjen Morinaka. He is the sole remaining VP of the company, and it is he who they have been — effectively — hired to protect.

Kanjen is young, in his early twenties, but tall and strong. He has a strong presence and good business intelligence. Underneath, however, there is a touch of insecurity and fear. Of course, this can be attributed to the events of the last three nights.

When the Knights meet with Kanjen, he will greet them, but coldly. Kanjen does not like the idea of outsiders, especially Gaijin, if there are any westerners in the Storm Knights' party, prowling around the offices. His father, however, has insisted that he be protected.

Kanjen, if asked, will reluctantly reveal that the three murder victims were all working on counter-industrial espionage at the time of their demise, and he has been doing the same. It seems that another company (owned by the Kanawa Corporation, if the Knights make inquiries outside

Morinaka) has been trying to leverage Morinaka into a buyout. Kenji Morinaka has been, so far, successful in resisting all takeover attempts, but this latest crisis could cause the company to lose enough face to push them over the edge.

Kanjen and Chen Low's Plan

Although Kanjen Morinaka is not pleased at the Knights' presence, he is not one to waste resources. He has a plan that he and Chen developed to insure his safety. During this afternoon, the Knights will, their business apparently concluded, leave the Morinaka building. Then, six hours later, at seven o'clock, they will "break into" the Morinaka Building using Kanjen's passkey and their own stealth abilities to avoid detection.

The Knights will then sneak up to the twenty-fourth floor and into Kanjen's office, where they will hide. Kanjen himself has volunteered to remain in the office as "bait" for the trap. They will wait and jump the attacker when he (or it) arrives.

Storm Knight Variants

Both Low and Kanjen are the most comfortable with this plan, and will

resist any major changes. If the Knights ask why they must sneak back into the building, they are answered that:

- No one knows who the murderer is, so it could be security;
- If they wait around, they may scare off the attacker, as he seems to know when the victim is alone;
- No one but Chen Low and Kanjen will know they are returning, so none of the employees can talk.

Kanjen will arrange for cameras and monitors to be “directed” away from the stairs and landings, and for the lights to be dimmed. He will also attempt to re-route the human security forces to other parts of the building at this time.

Investigation

The Knights should be allowed to investigate the area, make contacts, and have encounters within the lower levels of Morinaka and the surround-

ing city of Tokyo. The gamemaster should provide hints and clues that something “wrong” is happening at Morinaka; that people are getting very afraid; and that someone is trying to take over the company. Keep in mind, however, Kenji’s memo to his employees when answering Storm Knights’ questions.

The Take-Over

The take-over actually has nothing to do with this adventure; it was just an auspicious time for Kanjen to begin his plan. The take-over is a red herring Kanjen uses to detract attention from his activities.

The “Break In:” Gamemaster Note

The average difficulty for the Knights’ *stealth* and other related maneuvers should average, for the purposes of breaking into the building, about 14. This relatively low difficulty

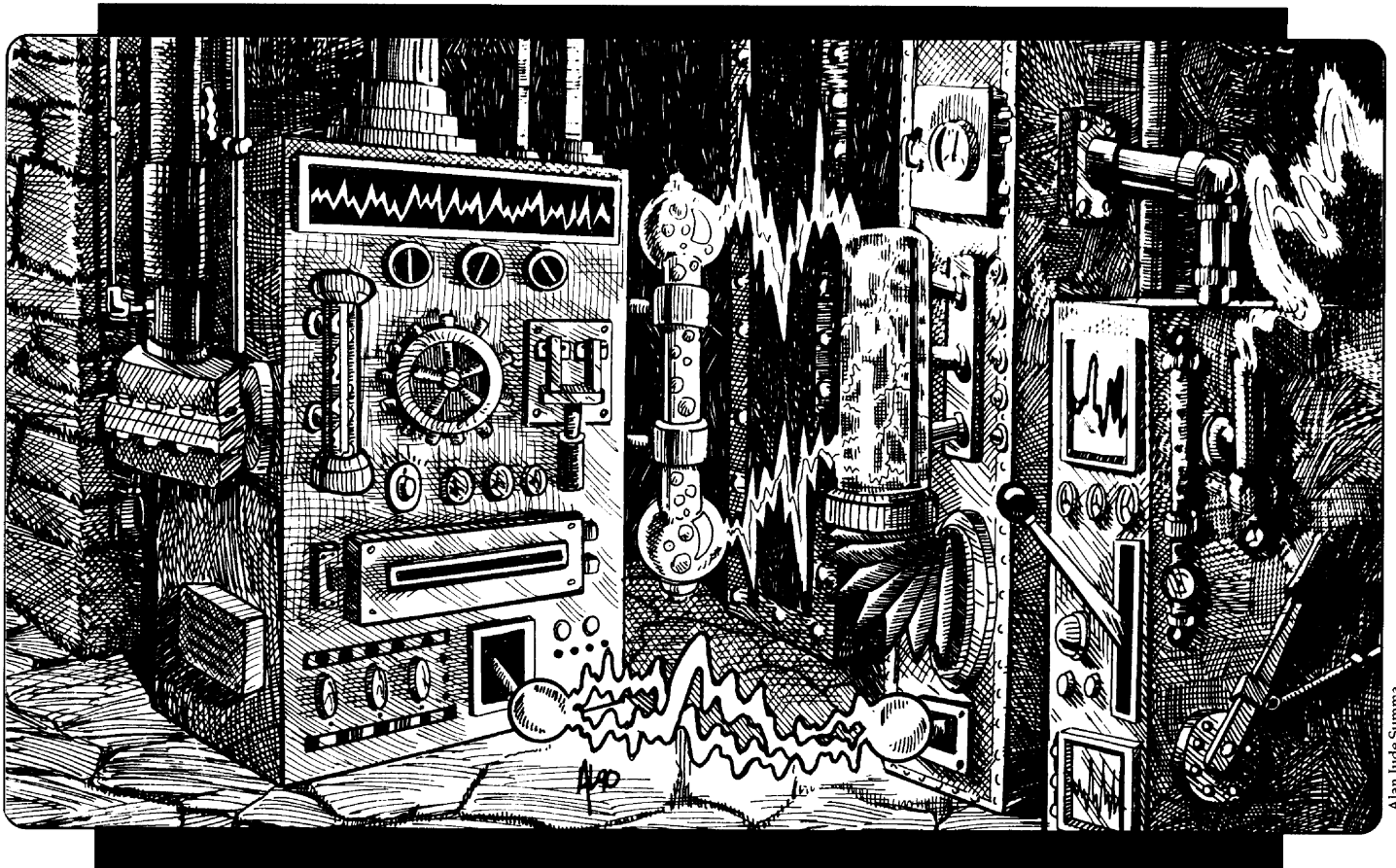
(comparatively speaking) reflects the help they get from Kanjen.

When the Knights “break in” (using Kanjen’s card to open all the locks), they should not have to make more than five skill checks to get to the twenty-third floor — Kanjen has been efficient in his “sabotage.”

Ambush!

However, when the Knights reach the twenty-third floor, there are a group of Morinaka security guards waiting for them. The only way to the separate stairwell that leads to the executive level is, effectively, through them.

This should appear odd to the Knights, as the guards are, truly, waiting for them. There are two per Storm Knight, and two are possibility-rated. They are well armed and armored, and they have orders — from Kanjen himself — to “stop the murderers from reaching him.”



Alan Jude Summa

The Voice from Above

Should the Knights get past the guards, they can make their way to Kanjen's office, only to find he is gone. On a *Perception* total of 10 or higher, however, they notice that the intercom on his desk is "open," apparently locked into another office. A *Perception* or *evidence analysis* or *science (mechanical)* total of 13 reveals that the button has been accidentally stuck down — this was not planned.

The Knights, listening at the intercom, can hear voices. One is obviously Kanjen Morinaka, low and threatening, another is Chen Low's astounded and anxiety-ridden, while the third is a pain-soaked but dignified older voice that, presumably, belongs to Kenji Morinaka, Kanjen's father.

If anyone understands Japanese in the group, or if they can make a *language* total of 12 or higher, they determine that Kenji is claiming that he set up the vice presidents to be murdered and if he is not given complete control of the company, he will "let the creature loose" on his father. Kenji is resisting, but his voice is growing fainter, and Chen Low is both angry with Kanjen and anxious about "the creature" threatening him and his employer.

If the Knights wait around too long, they hear a scream and then static.

The Creature from Hell

Upstairs, in Kenji Morinaka's penthouse office, a horror from *Orrorsh* has been transported in. It is a third-planting *Orrorsh* gospog — a were-

tiger (described on page 103 of the *Orrorsh* sourcebook). The creature is being held in one corner of the room by Kanjen, who is holding a strange, multi-limbed amulet that glows a sickly yellow color.

When the Knights enter, the creature is threatening (or has killed, if they take too long) Chen Low. Kanjen is on the other side of the creature and a bleeding but alive Kenji is sitting on the floor across the room.

When the Knights see the gospog, they have to make a *Perseverance* DN of 12 or higher (see the *Orrorsh* sourcebook for details), but, because they have made it through the previous scenes, they start with a *Perseverance* rating of 10 (11 if Chen Low is still alive).

In order to deal with the gospog, the Knights must kill it in its monster form — a form it is trapped in until it kills Kenji Morinaka. When Kanjen sees the Knights, he will instruct it to kill them, and it will try, because he bears an amulet that keeps it from accomplishing its mission.

The amulet gives the bearer +15 to all attempts at *intimidation* versus this specific creature. When it kills Kenji, it will vanish, the ritual completed. If it cannot, then it will stay until it dies. It will kill anyone Kanjen tells it to until he loses the amulet. Then, if it can, it will turn on him.

The True Monster

Kanjen is a true *Orrorsh* monster. He has a *True Death* that he must be killed by a relative (a job Kenji will reluctantly perform) — and he knows and fears this. He is possibility rated but, if he disconnects, he loses the *True*

Death "benefit" and all other *Orrorsh* powers and abilities until he can reconnect. Kanjen will tend to fight using *Nippon* weapons and abilities, however, as he was not long enough in *Orrorsh* to learn spells.

Gamemaster Note

The conflict with Kanjen and the were-tiger is the *Dramatic Conclusion* of the adventure. Flesh out Kanjen to fit your campaign and, by no means, restrict yourself to killing him off immediately, or to mundane abilities and powers. Make him interesting and devious; if he cannot win, he will flee, leaving the monster to cover his tracks.

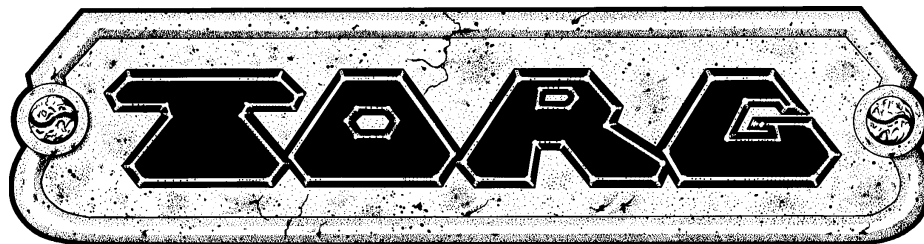
Aftermath

After the Knights deal with Kanjen and the monster, they will have to deal with the consequences. If Kenji or, at least, Chen Low remain alive, they will be able to talk to the security force and convince them that they weren't the murderers that Kanjen said they were.

If Kanjen remains alive, he will, at the very least, try to make life difficult for the heroes and, if he was victorious, he will probably try to kill or blackmail them. Kenji, on the other hand, will be sad but grateful and will reward successful Storm Knights.

Awards

Saving Kenji from the were-tiger and killing it is a success, worth eight possibilities. Killing Kanjen but allowing Kenji to be killed is a partial success, worth four possibilities. If Kanjen wins or gets away after killing Kenji, award the Knights no possibilities. ☒





Dispatches and Rumors

ispatches

1

The Kanawa Corporation's plans to influence the economy of the West Coast are finally coming to fruition. While there has been growing unease over the level of Japanese investment in the newly reclaimed West Coast, the Delphi Council, President Quartermain and Congress have all encouraged this involvement because of the economic growth it encourages. Now, those Japanese yen are even more vital: the First Citizens' Bank of California, the second largest bank in the state, has collapsed under the strain of both the invasion and the Savings and Loan crisis.

None of the other major American banks are strong enough to save the floundering bank, but the Bank of Japan has offered to bail out the bank provided special permission is granted from Congress. Rumors abound in Houston that the Bank of Japan is asking that the rules concerning foreign ownership of banks, investment limits in American businesses and other trade limitations be lifted.

This is where the Storm Knights enter the picture. They learn through a disgruntled First Citizens' Bank of California employee that they can easily get access to that bank's computer system if they are willing to pay the price for the security codes. Once they are in the bank's system, they may be able to plant a computer virus.

If the virus is well hidden, the Bank of Japan may unknowingly take it into its computer system. After a predetermined time, the virus will activate. If the Storm Knights are clever, they will be able to program it to give them all of the access codes to the Bank of Japan's

computer system and prove Kanawa's money laundering efforts, or even move funds around, creating panic on the Tokyo stock exchange.

Of course, that presumes this is not a "sting" operation set into motion by local authorities or even the Delphi Council. The Storm Knights will probably spend a great deal of time thinking that this is "just too easy," especially when the banker, Greg MacDonald, demands that the meeting be held at the Vineyard Avenue Plaza, an upscale, urban, open air plaza.

In fact, MacDonald is being investigated and followed by Kanawa agents, who infiltrated the bank several months ago (they were responsible for a series of bad investments that helped bankrupt the company). The agents have been following MacDonald, and in classic espionage movie fashion, just after the meeting is concluded, the Storm Knights will see MacDonald being roughly pushed into a side hallway by several suspicious looking gentlemen.

The agents plan on putting MacDonald in their car and taking him to a Kanawa business for questioning (the setup for Lunton Biochemical from *Operation: Hard Sell* could be used, or another location could be mapped out).

The agents will also pursue the Storm Knights, thinking that they are government agents (at this point, the Kanawa operatives have no idea that MacDonald has sold the computer system entry codes; they will soon enough however).

Whether or not the codes work is dependent upon whether the Knights try to infiltrate the computer system within one day of the Nippon agents capturing MacDonald. If they do so, the Storm Knights will be able to investigate any company doing business with the First Citizens' Bank of

California, observe the bank's financial records. With *scholar* (*computer science*) rolls against difficulties of ranges 10-18, the Storm Knights will be able to move money around in the bank's system. With a *science* (*computers*) total of 20, they will be able to plant a virus that will eventually give them all of the Bank of Japan system codes after the Bank of Japan takes control.

However, bank security programmers will be allowed to make a *scholar* (*computer science*) roll against the totals generated by the Storm Knights; if their totals are equal to or greater than the Storm Knights totals, then the tampering has been detected, and in all probability, all of the access codes will be changed. They have skill values of 14.

Critical Event: The Knights must prevent the Nippon/Bank of Japan agents from finding out that MacDonald has sold the security codes for a *Good* result (6 or above). If the agents find out about MacDonald's illegal activities, the Storm Knights get a *Bad* result (2 or below).

2

The demons of the Wild Hunt have been turned loose on the Home Guard of London. Wotan has returned to Aysle!

The first attack was staged on a massive Dwarven trading caravan laden with food and headed for London. Over 100 Dwarves were killed, as well as nearly two dozen hired guards.

In the past week, over a half dozen attacks have been staged on wealthy merchants and Home Guard patrols. Ships on the Thames have also been attacked and sunk. Food and other critical supplies are beginning to run short — once again, the people of London are holding out no matter how great the danger, but it is clear that the peoples' spirit has been weakened due

to the huge number of foes that have embattled the city since the invasion. The Wild Hunt is yet another threat, and one that seems far more dangerous and evil than any they have faced since the bridges dropped.

Ardinay has issued a queenswrath against the Wild Hunt, but no one yet has come forward to defend the realm. The Storm Knights will be hired to guard a food shipment, either by road or ship. In any event, there will be the inevitable confrontation with the Wild Hunt.

Once entering combat, the Storm Knights will discover that the demons of the Wild Hunt are much more powerful than they were at the beginning of the invasion. Then come the questions — where did they gain this extra power? Why wasn't the full power of the hunt turned loose? Could there be a new, powerful aide to Wotan leading a small portion of the Wild Hunt?

The Wild Hunt (2 per Storm Knight)

DEXTERITY 16

Beast riding 17, dodge 19, flight 18 (speed value 18), maneuver 17, melee weapons 18, unarmed combat 21

STRENGTH 15

TOUGHNESS 18

PERCEPTION 13

Alteration magic 16, find 15, tracking 18, trick 14

MIND 9

Test 13, willpower 13

CHARISMA 8

Charm (10), persuasion (11), taunt 14

SPIRIT 11

Intimidation 15, reality 14

Note: When in the form of horses, ravens, hounds, or stags add +2 to *maneuver* skill

Possibilities: 4 each

Spells: *polymorphism*

Arcane Knowledges: entity 3, folk

6

Natural Tools: (as raven) beak (damage value STR +2/17); (as hound) teeth (damage value STR +3/18); (as horse) hooves (damage value STR +2/17); (as stag) antlers (damage value STR +3/18)

Equipment: (as squire) enchanted short sword (damage value STR +6/21); (as hunter) enchanted broadsword (damage value STR +8/23), enchanted chain mail (armor value TOU +5/23,

with additional +2 when defending against magical attacks)

Critical Event: Getting the badly needed shipment of food into London is a *Good* result (6 or above). If the caravan or ship is stopped, the Storm Knights get a *Bad* result (2 or below).

3

Through a contact, the Storm Knights gain word of a terrible disaster about to occur in the Les Vosges region of CyberFrance. A renegade Ayslish magician named Devogar has perfected a ward that is deadly to most humans (even Storm Knights). He has cast it on the rail lines running into the city of Epinal. If the trains are not stopped and the mage's plan ruined, hundreds of people will die.

If the Storm Knights go to the local authorities with this information they risk being executed as heretics and magic users. This area is also the source of constant conflict — the people have resisted the advances of the Cyberpope, so the authorities may believe that the characters' claims are a trap. There is a local fear among the people of the region — they claim to be able to feel the imminent danger "in the air." It is up to the Storm Knights to somehow prevent this tragedy.

The characters can attempt the obvious ways — destroy the train tracks or somehow stop the train. Storm Knights with good knowledge of reality rules may be able to figure a way to stop the mage: since such a ward would be a long-range contradiction in the Cyberpapacy, either Devogar is watching from nearby, or he has some other means of seeing the event occur (such as a hidden video camera that broadcasts the signal to him). If he isn't watching the event happen, he can only use his base *reality* skill to beat the effect value (he wouldn't be able to generate a *reality* total), so the spell would automatically fail.

Devogar's motives are simple — he knows that Uthorion is no longer High Lord and believes he would be a suitable replacement. If he can create death on an incredible scale he believes he would be a good choice. Additionally, he would like to see Uthorion eliminated since they have been rivals for

many decades (Uthorion always considered Devogar somewhat of an annoyance). After testing the spell here in CyberFrance and far away from the prying eyes of both Uthorion and Ardinay, he plans on dropping this spell into the heart of Oxford. Then, he will be able to assume the position of High Lord (or so he believes).

Devogar

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 15, maneuver 13, melee weapons 16, missile weapons 16, prestidigitation 15, unarmed combat 17

STRENGTH 8

TOUGHNESS 8

PERCEPTION 13

Alteration magic 24, divination magic 20, evidence analysis 18, find 17, language 19, scholar (Aysle lore) 19, trick 24

MIND 13

Apportation magic 19, conjuration magic 25, survival 17, test of will 19, willpower 21

CHARISMA 11

Charm 19, persuasion 19, taunt 16

SPIRIT 11

Corruption 12, faith (Corba'al) 15, intimidation 17, reality 28

Possibilities: 24

Arcane Knowledges: Death 5, life 1, darkness 3, magic 2, living forces 3, inanimate forces 3, avian 2, earthly 1, enchanted 3, entity 5, folk 2, air 2, earth 1, fire 3, cast time 3, control 3, duration 4, range 1, speed 2, state 3

Spells: Select at least 20 powerful spells from *Pixaud's Practical Grimoire*.

Mass Death

Axiom Level: 13

Skill: *conjuration/death* 30

Backlash: 11

Difficulty: 11

Effect Value: 30

Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 15 (one kilometer)

Duration: 13 (six minutes)

Cast Time: 18 (one hour)

Manipulation: cast time, control, duration, range, speed, state

This **ward** will only affect humans. When activated, the air swirls into a roiling, pitch-black cloud, from which unearthly howls and screams emanate.

The ward detects humans within the spell's 100 meter radius with an

ability of 22. Once the spell is activated, it affects every human within the radius. Compare the effect value to the character's Toughness. Read the result points on the Extended Power Push Table and add 11 to the total. Find the result points on the Combat Results Table to determine the damage inflicted on each character in the cloud.

The damage is inflicted each round the character stays in the cloud.

To cast this spell, the caster must have a human skull and a bucket filled with a mixture of water and black ink. The character must recite a memorized chant while casting, and at the conclusion of the chant, the caster must immerse the skull in the bucket, overturns the bucket and then smashes the bucket and the skull into tiny pieces. The object the ward is to be placed into must then be touched within one minute, and while touching it, the caster must speak aloud, "Death come and claim those who enter."

Critical Event: The Storm Knights must stop the train from passing over the ward and triggering the spell. Preventing these hundreds of needless deaths is a *Good* result (6 or above). Not stopping the deaths is a *Bad* result (2 or below).

4

Finally some clues as to the lingering stories that the Josaltra is still spreading terror in Orrorsh (see Dispatch #3 in *Infiniverse* #9). Depending upon the actions of your group of Storm Knights, either the original Josaltra was stopped or it soundly trounced the mighty heroes; in any event, your Dispatch Responses indicated that other creatures matching the Josaltra's description have been spotted in other portions of Orrorsh. Did the hideous creature somehow reproduce, or were more created through some occult ritual? Now, these questions will be answered ...

They will receive word that a Josaltra has ravaged shipping from the city of Medan. Apparently, the creature (or creatures) has taken up residence just outside of the harbor, but it only attacks smaller peasant boats. The toll has been five boats de-

stroyed, 15 dead. If they venture onto the river, the Storm Knights will be attacked, but if the creature becomes *Heavily Wounded*, three more Josaltra will swim out to join the battle. Obviously, someone has managed to create more of the creatures.

The creatures do have a lair, but it can only be reached by swimming through a series of underwater chambers. Once the Storm Knights reach the lair (a huge chamber completely submerged except for a small ledge and a bubble of air, with a cave entrance running into the caverns of Orrorsh), they will realize that there are nearly a score of the creatures living there, but some are still young and weak.

Ultimately, it turns out that an occultist named Jonathan Shearson has been responsible for creating creatures out of the first. As part of the bizarre occult ritual, each creature is somehow unique, if not in appearance, then in abilities. Fortunately for the Storm Knights, the Josaltra aren't true "monsters" with the powerful abilities of other Orrorshan creatures.

Josaltra

DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 14, maneuver 13, swimming 16

STRENGTH 22

TOUGHNESS 18

PERCEPTION 10

Find 11, tracking 13

MIND 5

Survival 12, willpower 13

CHARISMA 4

SPIRIT 10

Intimidation 14

Possibilities: 4

Natural Tools: teeth (damage value STR +3/25), spines (damage value STR +4/26)

Note: When a Josaltra has been out of water for more than six rounds, the electricity imbued in its spines begins to spark. It may hurl electrical bursts with a damage value of 19 and a range of 30 meters (use *Dexterity* to hit, since it has no energy weapons skill).

The original Josaltra looks like an Other, but very bloated. Its spines appear rigid and sharp, and its mouth is filled with large, razor-sharp teeth. Depending upon your Storm Knights actions for the original dispatch, the

original creature may or may not still be around.

Due to the unusual occult ritual, each Josaltra is different. To determine individual differences, roll a bonus number (rolling again on 10's and 20's) and then apply the bonus as attribute points for the individual creature. Also, each creature's appearance is somehow unique — an extra tentacle, the creature has orange flecks around its mouth, or whatever. Each Josaltra has the ability to generate electricity as per the original creature.

Critical Event: Stopping the attacks on shipping and stopping Shearson's experiments is a *Good* result (6 or above). Not stopping the attacks is a *Bad* result (2 or below).

Rumors

1

The battle of the giant clans of Aysle is escalating. This much is known to be true: the Chamkatt tribe attacked and slaughtered many giants from the Polja tribe. After their "great victory," the Chamkatts moved on to the Tipperary area of Ireland.

Somehow, word of the massacre has gotten over the maelstrom bridge and to the rest of the Polja tribe. The blood feud, which has lasted over 300 years, is now being brought to Earth.

It is believed that a force of nearly one thousand Poljas are gathering and ready to descend on the bridge near Belfast. If the Poljas make it to Earth, all of Northern Ireland could be destroyed in the conflict.

2

Disturbing stories are coming from the Nile Empire. Mobius has moved a small number of his MB11-Nekata heavy bombers from airstrips near Hespera to air fields on the edge of the Israeli front.

While this front hasn't seen much fighting in the past few weeks, surveillance missions by brave Israelis and Jordanians have shown that several of the battlegroups are moving towards the front as well.

It is believed that the MB11's are being equipped with reality bombs. If

this is so, a few quick missions could help Mobius complete his conquest of the Middle East. The Israeli intelligence agency believes that Mobius will try to take the small nation first and sweep up the coast toward Lebanon. However, Jordan, Iraq and Saudi Arabia are massing their forces near the Gaza strip, but obviously an active defense of Israel is not their highest priority.

3

The first "public appearance" of Nippon Tech's fifth generation gospog was a resounding success for 3327. MarSec security agents and the pair of gospog successfully eliminated a group of Storm Knights near the Kanaawa Corporation's headquarters in downtown Tokyo. There was but one

survivor, and she has taken to the underground tunnels beneath the city.

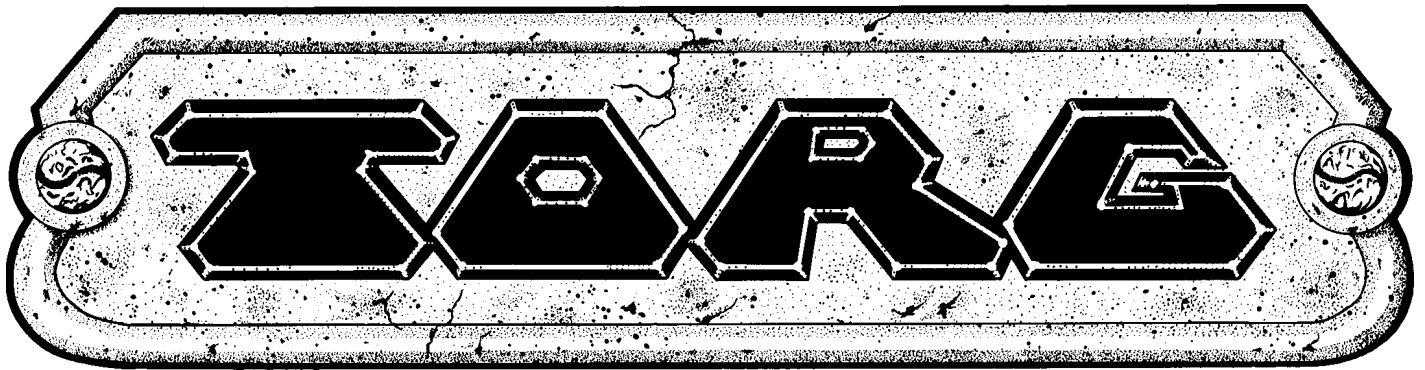
However, is there any truth to the rumor that she was wearing an Allied camcorder built into an earring? If so, she has valuable footage that could help prove that all is not as it appears to be in Japan. This footage, if distributed around the world, would also give groups of Storm Knights a chance to learn about the combat tactics of these creatures before having to face them in combat.

4

Mix marketing and the Living Land and what do you get? "Burger Rex," a chain of new fast food restaurants serving grilled — not fried — giant lizard meat. The cowboys (or "lizboys") of the southwestern U.S. are busy herd-

ing the creatures to slaughterhouses in the Arizona and New Mexico mixed zones. Armed with rifles, two-way radios, helicopters, horses and tra, the cowboys enter the mists searching for large herds of edible creatures. The most sought after creatures are carnol, grotuk, tra and udatok.

Although some people consider eating the Takta Ker lizard meat a distasteful proposition, the lower cost of the meat compared to beef has allowed the concept to become popular. Some supermarkets have even begun selling the meat alongside beef, chicken, pork and other traditional choices. The meat processing companies are downplaying rumors that some people have gotten violently ill after consuming giant lizard meat.



Your Letters

1. What exactly does "Nippon" mean? Who owns the Nippon building and Nippon Steel in downtown Tokyo?

2. Where can I find Baruk Kaah's stats?

3. Is the Aysle realm still draining Possibilities from Earth? If yes, does Ardinay know about it and what can she do to stop it?

4. Are the bridges from Osaka to Marketplace in plain view? How about the bridge from Sacramento to Marketplace?

— Joe Farrell
N. Merrick, NY

1. "Nippon" is the name by which the Japanese refer to their land. Thus a gamemaster character referring to Japan as "Nippon" does not necessarily mean he knows it's a realm now.

By this time, Kanawa probably owns both those buildings. The Nippon Building and Nippon Steel are actual places in Tokyo, by the way.

2. *Infiniverse*, issue #4, page 3.

3. Yes, it is. As long as the stelae are in place and the Darkness Device is active, possibility energy is being drained. To stop this, Ardinay would have to destroy her realm, something she is reluctant to do until the evils assailing this planet are expunged. After that, well, who knows, she may decide Earth people could use some guidance from the Ayslish ...

4. Nippon's maelstrom bridges are in their purest form, without the adornments that other High Lords attach. They appear as thin beams of light, and are extremely difficult to see. They tend to travel through cloud banks into the roofs of skyscrapers, to make them as difficult to spot as possible.

If a person loses a limb in the GodNet, does it affect his or her physical self, i.e., causes a character to limp, trouble picking things up, etc.

Would it be possible for a large group of people to temporarily stop time in a given area if they expelled mass amounts of possibility energy, or possibly slow time temporarily?

— Casey Childers,
Rex, GA

To answer your first question, Casey, probably not. Remember that damage done in the Net is mental damage, not physical damage. While there can be physical effects (a KOed character is unconscious outside the Net, too, and death is both physical and mental), wounds do not appear on the body to match those in the VX image.

As for the second, that sounds suspiciously like a group power, but one we've never heard of before. If it were possible to stop time, how would the characters know it, as they would be affected also? There are Ayslish spells which can temporarily freeze or accelerate time, but as yet no way to do it in the manner you described.

1. If a player or NPC makes a fairly successful intimidation or taunt attack against a foe, will the effect of this attack only last to the opponent's next action? Or will the effect last until the confrontation is over, or the opponent manages to clear his mind?

2. Shouldn't the edeinos be skilled in unarmed combat? The edeinos listed in the Living Land sourcebook do not have this skill.

3. Some of the invading cosms have several types of beings that it is possible to play. Aysle has humans, elves, dwarves, and so on. But shouldn't these races within these cosms also have certain maximum limits? For instance, the stalenger with its soft body and structure would probably not be as tough as a human or edeinos but it might be more dextrous. Dwarves might be tougher than an elf, but the

elf would probably have more charisma and so on.

4. My players think that the max damage on the Strength-based weapons are too low. Even an Ord will escape with only a few shocks if he is tough enough or has enough armor. So I suggest that all Strength-based weapons get their max damage value increased by +5 or so.

5. Some cards do increase the effect total in combat. Can this bonus that the card gives increase the damage of a Strength-based weapon beyond the max damage limit?

— Roger Myhre
Oslo, Norway

Let's start at the top:

1. Effects of *taunt*, *intimidation*, *trick*, *test* and *maneuver* attacks are operational only for the round following the one in which they made. The exception to this is the *player's call*, which can be used to cause an opponent to surrender.

2. Yes, it should (page 83 of the *Living Land* sourcebook). In addition, not all edeinos have the *reality* skill, only those who are Possibility-rated, and those that do would have it at a value of at least 11, not 9 as listed.

3. A very good point. Essentially, the only restriction (beyond general cosm limits) we make on the design of templates is that all starting characters have 66 attribute points. If you want to design an elf template with higher *Charisma* but limited *Spirit*, say, you can.

The main reason we did not do that is so that players can have more freedom in their design of characters. After all, some elven clerics might be very charismatic, while some warriors might not be. In addition, placing limits on various aspects of the characters of assorted races means a good deal more bookkeeping for beginning players to do when designing their charac-

ters.

4. Keep in mind that the max. damage values given for *Strength*-based weapons relate to the *set damage* that can be done with it, barring any bonus. For example, if you are a giant with *Strength* of 18, there's not much point in using a *Strength*+3 club with a maximum damage value of 19.

However, if a Core Earth character with a *Strength* of 9 takes the club and swings, generating a total of 31 for 10 bonus points, he can do damage value 22 with the club.

5. Cards can be used to increase both effect and damage values for any weapon.

I would like to see more information on the Living Land. I would also like to see a new realm based on post-holocaust reality. Finally, have you stopped distributing through Waldenbooks? I can no longer get any of your books anywhere in Great Falls, MT.

— Andrew Garrett,
Great Falls, MT

There are tentative plans for a *Creatures of the Living Land* book, but beyond *Space Gods* and *Tharkold*, no plans for another realm to land on Earth. As for Waldenbooks, yes, we certainly are still distributing through Waldenbooks (and B. Dalton as well). It could be your local store has just sold out, in which case you should speak to the manager about reordering.

If an undead (vampyre, mummy or whatever) disconnects, does it:

- 1) Turn into an inanimate corpse;
- 2) Turn into a living human being;
- 3) Remain an undead but lose its special powers;
- 4) Remain an undead, retain its special powers, but become bound by the axioms and world laws of the realm it's in.

Or what?

— Richard Byers
Riverview, FL

A question we've heard from a number of quarters, so here's the official line:

An undead creature, like a vampyre, which disconnects does remain an undead. However, it is unable to use its special powers (those listed on pages

Herald Messages

Deep within the Land Below, there lies a temple dedicated to Hyperios, a mathematician whom legend states demanded power from Isis — and got it. Legend also states that he will grant that power to anyone who can find the temple ...

— Dominick Riesland,
Milwaukee, WI

Angus Cage:
We need to talk!

— Mahound

I used to be just another bente, but look at me now! Transforming to Nile axioms was the best thing that ever happened to me!

— Captain Amoeba

Disaster! The New Minutemen believed the Machu Picchu sightings were connected with Huitzilopochtli's attempted return to this cosm. They nearly started a war between Latin America and the US. They are now wanted for espionage in almost all of North America.

— Andrew Garrett
Great Falls, MT

Rumors that Heketon has chosen a replacement for the Gaunt Man are surfacing in Orrorsh. But is the Gaunt Man about to break free of the Heart of Coyote, and why is Thratchen scrambling to hold on to power?

Stay tuned ...

— Mario Gintella
Shreveport, LA

Omegatron Destroyed!

In a daring raid on the palace of Dr. Mobius, the agents of the Golden Brotherhood destroyed the satanic device and freed its 63 captives. Also rescued were the Guardian, the Wraith and "Diamond" Jack Murphy. Their captor, the Prioress, was killed. Raid also exposed Deathhawk.

— *The Cairo Clarion*

The southern Virginia Living Land stelae has been replaced and is under heavy guard. Many Virginia and West Virginia inhabitants have gone up in flames after these repeated transformations. The Central City, NE stela was destroyed before it could be planted.

— Christopher Scott,
Windsor, MO

"And we would have gotten away with it, if not for those pesky kids and that darn werewolf!"

— Kibos, commenting on
"High Lord of Earth."

Red Wind is dead, and I have the True Cross. Now get out of my face.

— Orin-La, leader of the
Golden Brotherhood

Ninja Vampires aren't so tough!

— Ensign Egypt,
the Keefee Kommando

Yeah, right ... pass the bandages.

— Colonel Cairo, Scourge
of the Underworld

95-98 of the *Orrorsh* sourcebook). Its severe weakness ceases to apply, as does its True Death (this means that a horror can be truly killed by any means, rather than only using the method of its True Death). The monster also loses the ability to invoke the Power of Fear, as that is an Orrorshan world law.

If a character performs an action using a card from her hand, and then draws a new card that can be applied to that action, can she use the new card for that action? Can she continue to use new cards for this action until she draws a card she can't use for it?

— Daniel Pogoda,
Brooklyn, NY

If I understand your question correctly, the answer is no. Here is how the typical round goes:

1. Ed's character, a Core Earth secret agent, is fighting an edeinos. As *maneuver* is an approved action this round, he decides to try that.

Ed makes his roll and plays an *Action* card, which helps him beat the difficulty for a successful *maneuver*.

2. Having successfully performed an approved action, Ed draws a card, and it is another *Action*. That card cannot be applied to the maneuver he just performed, as that has already been completed.

Remember that cards are only drawn at the end of a scene or when an approved action has been completed. Ed has to have completed the approved action which got him the card in the first place before he could draw one. ☒