

INFINIVERSE™

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CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------------|----|
| Rumors and News | 2 |
| Aztec Axioms & World Laws | 3 |
| Dispatches | 7 |
| Your Letters | 11 |
| Herald Messages | 12 |

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We're happy to report that *Infiniverse* continues to grow, with new subscriptions coming in every month. But we still get phone calls and letters from folks wondering if it's too late for them to get involved with the ongoing, interactive campaign within these pages.

Well, it's not. The more people who subscribe and send us their feedback using the *Infiniverse* response form, the better we can do at giving you the kind of products you want. Already, the *Torg* questionnaires that have come back to use have helped us start making plans for 1994 and beyond — which realms to develop and how, what sort of products our players and gamemasters want to see, and a wealth of other data is being evaluated in our offices.

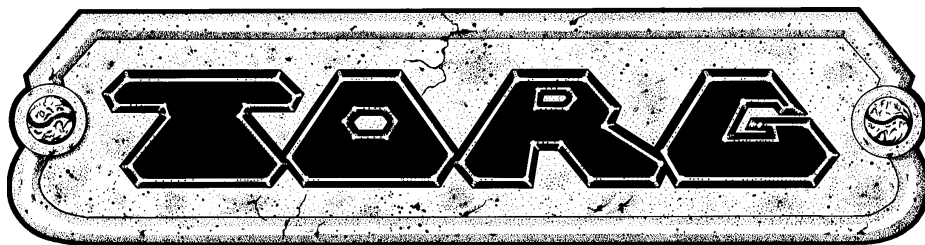
For those of you who haven't sent your questionnaire in yet, please do —

we're anxious to see them. Feel free to copy it and give it to your friends. This is a chance for *Torg* players to make a strong statement about what they like about the game, what they feel could be better, and in what direction they wish to see the Possibility Wars travel.

More than most, *Torg* is *your* roleplaying game — don't miss the opportunity to make your opinions known.

We've also received a good number of trivia quiz answer sheets. (So far, most people are having problems with the Gaunt Man's real name ...)

On this, the second anniversary of *Torg's* release, we renew our pledge to bring you the best, most exciting and most diverse roleplaying products we can. (And if you're really nice, we might even introduce you to the Nameless One ...)



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 that 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 #21

1. Nippon forces planning to seize control of the Cairo underworld (over Storm Knights' dead bodies, if necessary). Get ready for a gang war? It's True (13).

2. Unidentified deckers from the Deep have been spotted, but not captured, in the GodNet. Maybe for good reason — it's False (13).

3. Glowing Nazca lines reported in the Akashan realm — your eyes must be playing tricks, it's False (13).

4. A cyber-enhanced catcher has been reported on the new Quebec baseball

team, part of the Consolidated North American League. Play ball! It's True (16).

Continuing Report: Issue #20

1. Edeinos and other Living Land denizens making a "march for life" toward Akasha. Slight jump to True (18).

2. Nile villains transform in Tharkold reality (eek!) Sure looks that way — it's True (20).

3. Bi-Century Dragon Concordance about to take place in Scotland. Is it too late to cancel the caterer? Flips to False (15).

4. Japanese cars come complete with bugs and self-destruct devices. Objects in engine are more explosive than they appear — leaps to True (25).

The Wrap-Up: Issue #19

1. The half-folk of Aysle have petitioned the British government for full rights, while Pella Ardinay refuses to discuss the matter. London has been the scene of protests and a dramatic increase in the crime right. The more things change, they more they stay the same — ends at True (17).

2. Kanawa Officials displeased with a new competitor, International Investment and Holding Company, which is outbidding Kanawa for land and construction rights. Sacramento officials refusing to investigate. Did we say "surge" last month? Finishes at True (40).

3. Ghazi Rafek, staff reporter for the *Cairo Clarion*, investigating the mysterious Thebes Importers. Mobius also curious about recent goings-on.

Put the paper to bed — finishes at False (16).

4. Seraphim Angels have been injected into Rauru Block computers in Japan. It looks like the Cyberpapacy has begun to strike back against their "friends" in the Orient. Slight increase to end at True (18).

Top Ten Reasons Why Chicks Dig Baruk Kaah

10. In recent *Seventeen* interview, described self as "just a big teddy bear."

9. Darkness Device equipped with lava lamp, rotating wet bar and "Magic Fingers" feature.

8. Back hair? Not a problem.

7. Not like that stuck-up jerk Kanawa who only dates girls for their money.

6. Shotgun wedding unlikely.

5. Can sculpt an ice cube into the shape of a pig with his tongue.

4. Two words: no pants.

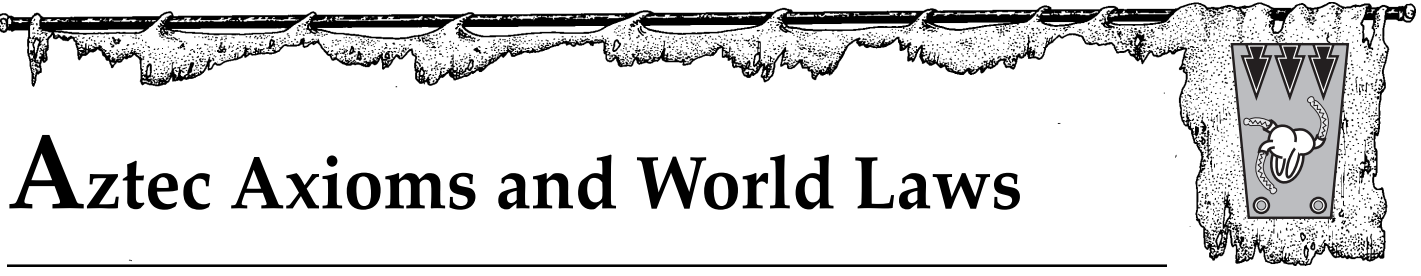
3. Both how he's living and his nose is large.

2. Does not know what a muffler is — therefore, does not have to pay a lot for one.

And the number one reason why chicks dig Baruk Kaah is:

1. That prehensile tail.

Next Month: A realm update! A new *Torg* card! Maybe even an appearance by Bill Smith! ☒



Aztec Axioms and World Laws

Those of you who camped out in your local book and hobby stores and picked up the first few copies of *Infiniverse Update* already know the official results of *High Lord of Earth*. But regardless of how things came out, we have received a good deal of demand for more information on the Aztec Empire. We promised and pledged this more than once, and finally we're delivering — the axioms, world laws, new skills and a smattering of miracles for Huitzilopochtli's realm.

The Technological Axiom: 16

The Aztec Empire's *Tech* axiom is somewhat deceiving — although higher than that of Aysle, it refers primarily to their knowledge of science and architecture rather than equipment and weaponry extant in the realm. The Aztec Empire has access to relatively advanced concepts of engineering, astronomy, and mathematics.

In fact, although musketry is possible at level 16, nothing of the sort is used in the realm. Huitzilopochtli's love for the ancient Aztec culture has limited weaponry to javelins, dart-blowers, bows and arrows, daggers and clubs called *macanas*. An Aztec attack will usually be prefaced by an "artillery barrage" of arrows and spears fol-

lowed by hand-to-hand fighting. The latter tends to be more devastating than the former, as the Aztec *macanas* were commonly studded with sharpened pieces of obsidian.

The Spiritual Axiom: 17

Religion is key to many aspects of life in the Aztec Empire. The realm is a theocracy led by the *chachalmeca* (the high priest/High Lord), with the priesthood and military castes the most important.

Most Aztec residents have some knowledge of the gods and their powers, but few have been gifted with the ability to discern the will of the gods. All accept the fact that sacrifices must be made to retain the gods' favor and consider it an honor to be chosen for death.

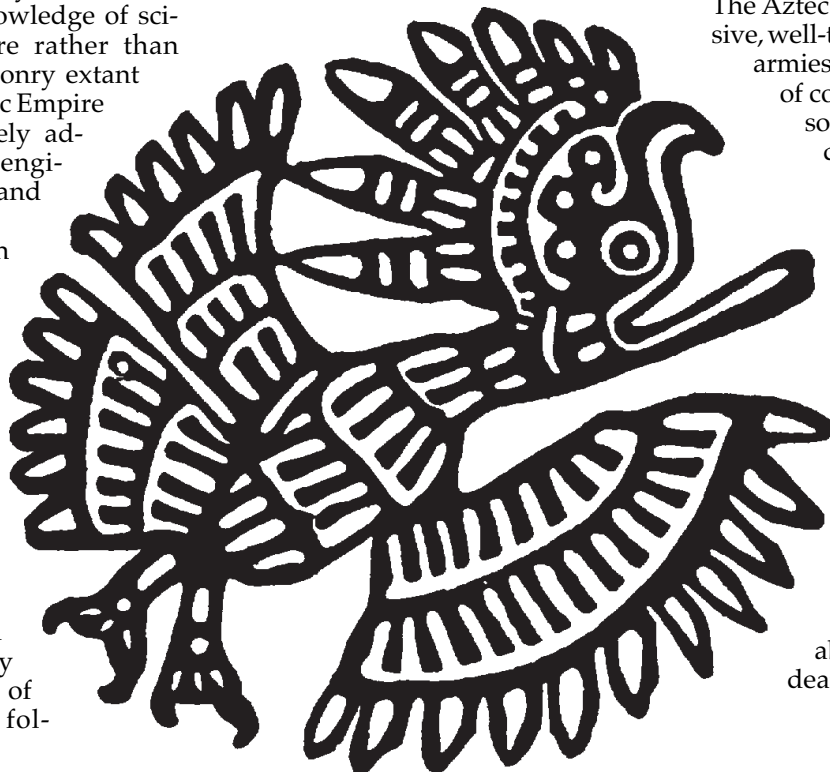
Certain temples within the realm are believed to be imbued with the power of the god to whom they are dedicated. Adventurers who brave the perils of these places may be rewarded with an encounter with a manifestation of the god.

The Social Axiom: 20

A relatively large religious bureaucracy exists within the Aztec Empire to carry out the will of Huitzilopochtli and the *chachalmeca*. Rigid castes exist, and complex trading relationships have sprung up between the Aztecs and those nations foolish enough to believe exchanging goods will stave off invasion.

A huge amount of resources and manpower are poured into making the military machine run efficiently. The Aztec Empire is able to field massive, well-trained and well-disciplined armies and knowledge of the chain of command is all-important. A soldier who disobeys an order does not live to disobey another.

Unlike the Cyberpapacy, not even the pretense of maintaining a civil government is attempted. All major decisions are made by the priesthood, with military operations coordinated between them and the generals. A battle not favored by the gods will not be waged. Warriors who have attempted to bribe the priests to gain favorable omens have been put to death.



There is very little political discontent within the Aztec Empire. Most of the transformed believe that the strong must rule the weak, an excellent argument for expanding the realm. Those who retain Core Earth's reality organize in small cells, but even there, it is difficult to coordinate a mass resistance movement. Too many feel that the Aztec Empire is restoring the glory of ancient Mexico and will punish those who have exploited the nation's people for so long.

The Magic Axiom: 14

Although all four types of magic are possible in the Aztec Empire, the sorcerous arts are rarely used. When they are, Aztec magic is often found to be similar to Nile magic, in that both realms have extensive knowledge of astronomy, mathematics and engineering.

Use of magic is frowned upon in this realm, however, as the High Lord fears anyone with such skill might one day pose a threat to his power. The stated reason for the low esteem in which magic is held is that a citizen who wishes a supernatural occurrence to take place is supposed to ask the gods for aid, not take matters into his own hands.

There have been instances of realm residents blessed by the gods with magical abilities, but these have been exceedingly rare.

World Rules of the Aztec Empire

Huitzilopochtli, like any Darkness Device, exists for the purpose of inspiring destructive acts. It is for this reason that, although its memory has returned, the Device remains enamored of the Aztec civilization. Under Huitzilopochtli's corrupting influence, the original Aztecs turned to conquest and blood sacrifice to impress their gods, something that is being repeated in the modern-day Mexico of the Aztec Empire.

The Law of Sacrifice

Huitzilopochtli demands sacrifices from its followers, as did many of the gods of the Aztec pantheon. Any character of the Aztec reality may gain the benefits of performing such a sacrifice, even if he is not a follower of the High Lord.

There are certain restrictions imposed by this law. A sacrifice to the Aztec gods must be performed with a melee weapon made of obsidian, be it dagger, sword, or spear, and the name of the god to whom the sacrifice is being made must be invoked at the time of the killing (see *scholar (Aztec lore)*, below). Victims must be prone, conscious and unwilling or unable to

If he does not enter into a fight at some point within that period, he will turn on his comrades and attack them.

resist (this applies to human sacrifices only — animal sacrifices must be on an obsidian altar when slain).

Animals, non-believers and believers can be sacrificed for the greater glory of the Aztec gods. The successful sacrifice of an animal bestows upon the worshipper an *up* condition for one round. It must be used within an hour of the sacrifice or it is lost.

Slaying a believer in the Aztec pantheon provides the worshipper with an *up* condition for one round that must be used within the next day or it is lost.

Sacrificing an enemy of the faith (the most difficult type, as they are so rarely willing to be killed) earns the worshipper two *up* rounds that must be used within the next day or be lost.

The Law of Divine Will

It is of paramount importance that the wishes of the various gods be heeded. Failure to do so condemns the

individual to eternal punishment, not to mention helping to bring about the fall of the realm as a whole.

Naturally, one cannot carry out the will of the gods unless one knows what it is. It is for that reason that the most respected members of the priest class are possessed of the *will of the gods* miracle, which allows them to consult with the deities and determine their views on a given matter. Those wishing to take advantage of this world law must consult with such a cleric to learn the his deity's wishes before embarking on a course of action.

Once the will of the gods has been divined (say, the gods think capturing a Nile spy in the area is a very good idea), the character will receive a +2 bonus to any action that brings him nearer to achieving that goal. Any action that runs contrary to that goal suffers a -2 penalty.

This condition remains in effect until the goal has been achieved or the character converts to another faith.

The Law of Conquest

The Aztec Empire is a warlike, militaristic realm, far moreso than even the Nile Empire. Huitzilopochtli has built this trait into the world laws to guarantee a steady supply of death and destruction.

The Aztec Empire must remain in armed conflict with someone at all times — these wars can range from something as minor as raiding nearby villages for food and gold to a massive attack on a neighboring country.

If the Aztecs go three months without going to war with someone, they must enter into "wars of the feather" among themselves. These are mock wars between different Aztec armies, that frequently escalate into large-scale bloodbaths. Too many of these "practice conflicts" could sorely deplete the supply of Aztec warriors and so are to be avoided.

Aztec Empire characters traveling outside of the realm must also enter into combat with someone (be it a fistfight or a firefight — some kind of physical conflict) within a given period of time. Read the character's *real-*

ity skill or *Spirit* value as days — if he does not enter into a fight at some point within that period, he will turn on his comrades and attack them. His fellow Knights must be aware of this and learn not to use lethal force against their comrade — as soon as some blood has been shed (his own or another's) he will return to normal. (Holding out your hand and letting him nick it will not work — there has to be actual combat.)

For example, Itzcoatl has a *reality* skill of 14. That means that, when outside the realm, he must enter into a combat at least once every 14 days. If he does not, he will attack anyone around him to satisfy the requirement of this world law.

Non-Aztec characters entering the realm are subject to the same world law unless they are protected by a reality bubble (the Law of Conquest being a passive world law, one that is present in the environment but cannot be used like a tool). They too must enter into some conflict within a period of time equal to their *reality* or *Spirit* value in days. This requirement ceases when they leave the realm.

New Skills

Perception-Related Skills

Divination Magic (Omen Interpretation)

A specialized type of *divination magic*, this skill can be used only for interpreting signs regarding future occurrences. It requires a *Magic* axiom of 14 to operate.

When using *divination magic (omen interpretation)*, the character attempts to derive from the patterns of stones, the feathers of birds, and other natural objects just what the future holds. The character must inquire about a specific course of action — the difficulty number is based upon how far into the future he wishes to look (see the "Omen Interpretation Difficulty" chart).

Levels of success determine the amount of information derived from the omen interpretation.

Minimal/Average — A general feeling that good or ill will result from a particular course of action.

Good — A more concrete idea of what form the results will take, i.e., "I see death at the end of this path."

Superior — A better idea of just who will be most affected by these results, i.e. "I see death for Marta at the end of this road."

Spectacular — Information on the source of the good or ill results, i.e. "I see death for Marta at the hands of Conundrum."

Divination magic (omen interpretation) cannot be used unskilled.

Scholar (Aztec Lore)

This skill provides the character with a rudimentary knowledge of the Aztec pantheon. When calling for divine aid, seeking the will of the gods, or making a sacrifice, it is crucial that one knows the proper gods to invoke.

Anyone transformed to the Aztec reality while in the Empire automatically receives this skill at one add.

Here are some of the major gods of the Aztec pantheon:

Coatlucue: supposed mother of Huitzilopochtli, cannibalistic goddess of serpents. Clawed hands and feet, a skirt of snakes, a necklace of hearts and hands with a skull pendant.

Huitzilopochtli: Aztec war god, who showed the Aztecs the necessity of blood sacrifice. Many of the feats ascribed to him arose from the powers of the Darkness Device.

Quetzalcoatl: feathered or plumed serpent god, lord of wind.

Tezcatilpoca: one of the most important Aztec gods, god of the night, associated with witches, evildoers and death. Represented with his face painted different colors and an obsidian mirror for a foot.

Tlaloc: god of rain, wind, thunder, lightning, and agriculture. Pictured with tusklike teeth and snakes around his eyes.

Aztec Miracles

Will of the Gods

Spiritual Rating: 17

Community Rating: 11

Difficulty: 14

Range: na

Duration: performance

Effect: imparts to cleric the opinions of the gods on a planned course of action

When successfully cast, the cleric can ask the gods about a single course of action. One of three responses will be received: the gods favor the mission; the gods oppose the mission; or the gods are indifferent.

Should either of the first two results be achieved, apply the Law of Divine Will accordingly.

Earth Swallow

Spiritual Rating: 17

Community Rating: 12

Difficulty: 15

Range: three meters

Duration: performance

Effect: traps target character in a pit

When successfully cast, a pit will suddenly open beneath the feet of the target character. He must generate a successful *dodge* total against a difficulty of the cleric's *faith* value. If he fails, he falls into the pit.

Upon entering the pit, the walls will immediately begin to close in. The victim must generate a successful *climbing* or *Strength* total against a difficulty number of the cleric's *faith* value to escape. If he does not, he suffers damage equal to the cleric's *faith* value.



| Omen Interpretation Difficulty | |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Time Period | Difficulty |
| One minute | 8 |
| One hour | 10 |
| One day | 13 |
| One week | 16 |
| One month | 20 |
| One year | 25 |



Dispatches and Rumors

Dispatches

1

North of the city of Sacramento, just inside the Nippon-Living Land Mixed Zone, a new business, of all things, has sprung up. Called "The Swamp" by its owners, it is a mix between a trading post and a "last stop" for realm-runners going either way.

Located just over the "border," the Swamp takes advantage of the increase in Living Land realm running — especially to and from western Canada and Portland, Oregon. Stormers, Storm Knights, and even adventuresome ords brave the mixed zone to stop in "the last place that knows what money is."

But this strange new business does not meet with everyone's approval. The Delphi Council and the Spartans have decided that this sort of thing is not in the best interests of National Security. While not in the Living Land, the Swamp "promotes dangerous and anti-Core Earth behavior by providing a haven for those who would consort with the alien enemy reality."

Also, certain Japanese "businessmen" are a little "put out" by the new trading post/bar. Not only do they not get their cut of the business, but the Swamp has been attracting unnecessary publicity toward a region marked for "repatriation" by Kanawa forces.

The owners of the Swamp, Nick and Mary Cable, are former realm-runners themselves. Nick is the former Nile hero, "the Night Ranger," and Mary was a photojournalist for the now-defunct *Border Press*, an underground publication for realm-runners,

shut down by the Delphi Council a year into the war.

Both of the owners are well known in the Storm Knight community, but not to the world at large as Storm Knights. But the Delphi Council knows.

They, prompted by Nippon agents, have organized a Spartan raid on the Swamp, hoping to catch it during "the rainy season" in May with fewer stormers than usual inside. The Spartans are ordered to burn the place to the ground and apprehend Nick and Mary.

But Kanawa has different plans. MarSec agents will be on hand and, when the Spartans torch the place, they will open fire on the Delphi Council's operatives. This will prompt the Spartans to fire at the house, hope-

But then a huge winged creature ripped itself free of Douglass Jones' body and attacked.

fully killing the Cables and anyone else inside.

News of this has leaked to the Storm Knights, and they must prevent it. If possible, they should convince a member of the news media to be on hand — with any luck, the MarSec agents will be caught red-handed, and the Spartans will be seen in a poorer light than they are even now.

There will be at least 10 Spartans and 5 MarSec agents on hand for the burning — depending upon how many Storm Knights are in the group, there may be more. Use stats from *The Living Land* and the *Nippon Tech* sourcebooks for them, respectively. Since this is a special assignment, the Spartans are possibility-rated at *some* (30), and the

MarSec agents are *some* (25). At least one of each group is possibility-rated.

Critical Event: Keeping the Cables from being arrested and the Swamp from being burned down is a *Good* (6+) result. A *Bad* (3-) is any other result. Special consideration for publicizing the Spartan's and/or MarSec's involvement is to be taken into account.

2

May 3rd, 1933 —

I have successfully managed to breach the OtherWorld Ether again today. My experiments are nearing conclusion. Using the Apparatus I constructed from my dreams, I have gone from strong visions of other ... realities to actual contact. Tonight, I intend to make a trip to this other world and, hopefully, return with proof.

This will show them I am not mad ...

J. Albridge Kenworth

The above letter was found by an old man who purchased a locked chest at an auction. Fortunately, this old man was Sir Renold Burming, an English Anthropology professor at Oxford, currently assigned to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth's Reality Research Department.

Sir Burming has contacted the Storm Knights in the hopes that they can hunt down either Mr. Kenworth, his heirs, or anyone who knew him. Her Majesty's resources are at their disposal.

The first (and only) lead they have, is a professor, formerly of Edinburgh University in Scotland, who retired in 1928. He is listed in the rolls as "Dr. John A. Kenworth, Professor of Medieval Studies." After the Invasion, most of the information about Edinburgh's students and faculty (most of which had been transferred to computer) disappeared. The Knights will have to go there and search.

This is a purely investigative adventure. The Knights have to track down former colleagues of Dr. Kenworth (he is, by the way, the correct man) and inquire where he retired to and if he was working on such an experiment. *Connection* and *Idea* cards will be important to the adventure, as will patience and investigative skills.

The gamemaster needs to set up a trail of evidence that leads from Edinburgh University to Dublin, Ireland — where Kenworth retired. There, they can find the daughter of his former housekeeper — Maryanne Smythe. She inherited her mother's effects, including a strange car-like vehicle she still keeps in the family garage. This is the "Apparatus" referred to in Kenworth's unmailed letter.

Do not make the investigation too easy, but do not frustrate the Knights entirely. They are competing with certain other agents who have heard the news of the Apparatus — specifically Kanawa agents and Nile villains in the employ of Dr. Mobius — so there will be fighting along the way. Also, each of these agents may uncover clues the Knights miss.

Critical Event: Defeating the other agents and beating them to the Apparatus is a *Good* (6+) result, giving up or having the other agents find the Apparatus first (and get away) is a *Bad* (2-) result. The Knights also need to return the Apparatus to Dr. Burming to complete the mission.

Whether they do or not, does the Apparatus work? Let us know!

3

San Francisco, so far a "free city" on the West Coast of the United States is apparently becoming more involved in the Possibility Wars. Rumors of Yakuza activity combined with the fact of heavy overseas investment have Storm Knights and their allies worried that the city may be being primed for takeover.

Also, this "Eastern involvement" has attracted the attention of the Tharkoldu. Eager to spoil any plans of the Nippon High Lord, Tharkold demons and Race have been spotted (reportedly) within the city. Neither the

Delphi Council nor the city's government will confirm or deny any of the rumors.

The Storm Knights have been contacted by a businessman, John Percen, and his principle shareholder, Debbie Baksi, in the hopes that they can find concrete proof of Nippon Tech involvement (both Percen and Baksi believe the rumors that Japan has a High Lord) and of the Tharkoldu operations in the city. This proof, released to the underground news media, will inform those who are willing to hear that San Francisco is truly a city under siege.

Gamemaster Note: This adventure should be *very hard* on the Storm Knights. The Yakuza are operating "openly" in the city's Asian section (as openly as they do anywhere), but both the Kanawa agents and the Tharkoldu are being *really sneaky*. As soon as the Nippon agents try something, the Tharkoldu try to counter it "quietly" — in a way that is brutal, horrific, yet virtually untraceable — while the Race stalks the Tharkoldu and eliminates them as discreetly as possible. Everything is a cover-up within a cover-up.

Critical Event: The Knights' optimum goal is to get definite proof that either Nippon Tech or the Tharkoldu are operating in San Francisco, and to get this out to the underground media. This will be especially hard, as both groups are good at covering their tracks, and the Delphi Council is interested in suppressing any proof that either group exists. Getting a *Glory* result in a dramatic conflict with either group — in public — would be worth a *Good* (6+) result (and more), while the harder method of actually getting proof to the media is also the same result. A *Bad* (3-) result has the Storm Knights chasing shadows, being held off for a long period of time, or just giving up.

4

New Orleans, the city famous for Mardi Gras, has now got a dark shadow overhead. Strange occurrences have been reported, and there is strong evidence that the homeless, the night people, and foolish tourists have become the prey of yet another

nightstalker. People have been disappearing, dismembered, and driven mad by who-knows-what.

In desperation, the authorities have questioned the local *Bocors* and *Mambos* (voodoo priests and priestesses), hoping that they can provide a lead. Most have been unable to say more than "nameless horror has moved into New Orleans," but a very few — accorded the most powerful in the community — have begun to get horrible premonitions of terror unimaginable. They say "something is coming. Something that will possess us all." Then they fall silent, terrified.

The most recent occurrence involves a prominent banker named Douglass Jones. After disappearing for over a week, Douglass showed up at his bank, bright and early Monday morning. He refused to answer questions, but went right to work.

A few days later, tellers at the bank and customers began catching a strange disease. They began by having insatiable hunger and thirst, followed by constipation and the inability to sweat. Following a brief bout with fever, most were driven mad and the rest died. All except one.

A local Mambo whose son was a customer at the bank said she felt "a strange presence" with him one day when he came home with the cash from his check. She examined him and found what she called "an evil *not-*loa**" (voodoo spirit) on his money and him. Quickly, she gathered together a community of her followers, and they were able to purge the man and his money of the evil spirit before it destroyed him.

But all was not over. Using her voodoo magic, the Mambo traced the evil back to the bank. Informing the now-panicked authorities of her conclusions, she managed to convince the city council to force the police to investigate. They did.

When they got to the bank, they found something horrible. The bank president was standing in the middle of the vault as money, blown on a fierce magical wind, swirled around him. Many of the tellers and the bank guards had already been paper-cut to death by the bills, or bludgeoned with coins. Only a few were alive and they

were in mortal terror. Not knowing what else to do, the police opened fire.

It did little good. At first, the wind stopped and the body of the bank president fell to the floor. But then, like a butterfly shedding a bloody chrysalis, a huge winged creature ripped itself free of Douglass Jones' body and attacked.

Virtually everyone ran. Some were frozen in terror and devoured. The Mambo, however, was witnessed by those few with the courage to watch holding a voodoo charm (*fort*) against the advance of the creature. Using her apparent power, she was able to save the lives of over a half-dozen people before it finally broke through her resistance and killed her. Then it disappeared into thin air.

The creature, dubbed the "Death Fly," has been sighted three times since then, and each time it has killed. Local Mambos and Bocors predict that the next time it appears — the next full moon — it will slay until there are none left to oppose it. True or not, Mambos have predicted the last three attacks, and the authorities have appealed to the Delphi Council and to any and all stormers for assistance. The former body has yet to send aid, the latter ...

Critical Event: The Death Fly has been killing those who could fight it: the voodoo priests and priestesses. The next time it appears, it will do so at a place consecrated to voodoo, a clearing in the woods outside the city. The Knights need to fight the creature but, before they do so, they must find its True Death: it is an Orrorshan creature. To do this, they must win the trust of the Mambos and Bocors and research the occult in the city. They will find that there are other Orrorshan influences in the city, and these will lead to encounters, Perseverance, and clues.

Killing the Death Fly the final time is a *Good* (6+) result. Anything else is a *Bad* (2-) result; the Death Fly will find a new host and start again at the next full moon. Orrorsh has marked New Orleans for horror.

The Death Fly

DEXTERITY 15

Dodge 19, flight 22, unarmed 20

STRENGTH 17

TOUGHNESS 16

PERCEPTION 12

Find 16, trick 18

MIND 8

Test 20, willpower 19

CHARISMA 9

Taunt (25)

SPIRIT 13

Intimidation (25), reality 21

Possibilities: 1/2 Storm Knight Possibility total at beginning of adventure

Power Rating: 4

Powers: *armor defeating attack, dark vision, blur form*

Corruption Value: 19

Fear Rating: 2

Perseverance DN: 14

Weakness: Any holy symbol or ward

True Death: Being killed by submersion in water (5 rounds under water)

Natural Tools: Wings, speed value 16; mandibles (STR+10/27)

Description: The creature is a horror originally bred by the Gaunt Man to invade New Orleans. Unfortunately, he was trapped in the Maelstrom before his plan could come to fruition. Douglass stumbled upon the chrysalis and was possessed by the creature (an enchantment placed on the chrysalis). It is an eight foot tall butterfly with huge wings. It is black and red in color and has a skull head of obsidian. Its mandibles gleam in the moonlight.

If the creature is killed, but not by its true death, it has the power to possess someone — almost always an ord — and continue. For some reason, it is able to give that person the ability to work occult magic at a highly skilled level. This must be a special enchantment of the Gaunt Man's, as it loses all occult ability in its natural form.

Rumors

And yet more submissions from readers! Keep sending them in! We may not be able to publish all of them, but we'll try to at least consider them as possible directions for the *Infiniverse*.

1

Cyberpapal agents operating in and around Paris have reported sighting a formerly Ayslish troll (now trans-

formed to Cyberpapal reality) working against the Cyberpope's forces around the city. Although neither the papists nor the Paris Liberté forces have much information on the cyber troll, Parisians have begun calling him "'Zilla" after the famous movie monster, and seeing him as an underground hero.

It is obvious he doesn't care for the Cyberpapacy — several carrion dogs and a cyberknight died trying to apprehend him. But no one really knows whether he truly favors the Parisians. There are even those who doubt his existence.

'Zilla

Reality: Cyberpapacy (transformed from Aysle)

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 17, energy weapons 12, fire combat 15, heavy weapons 16, melee weapons 17, missile weapons 15, lockpicking 12, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 12 (15)

Lifting 15 (18)

TOUGHNESS 13 (17)

PERCEPTION 8

Divination 9, find 14, first aid 10, land vehicles 9, tracking 12, trick 10

MIND 8

Streetwise 12, test (16), willpower 16

CHARISMA 6

SPIRIT 13

Intimidation 16, reality 17

Possibilities: 18

Arcane knowledge: metal

Equipment: Hollowmesh armor (+5/22), MAS StormGun (damage 22, ammo 12, range 3-16/50/70), GWI God Meeter (damage 20, ammo 30, range 3-12/30/50), power mace (+6/21), 3 medico slap patches; cyberware: NeuraCal (+5), BelleView lowlight (+2), CSI Eyekill Mk. IV (+2), FFO Nightview (+2), the Clamp (+1), Compte's Trilon Tendons (+3), Interdermal Plate (+4), Slashers (+1; STR+4/19) — cybervalue 20

Description: Reports state that "'Zilla," though transformed, still wears the rags of his Aysle heritage — furs and such cover his cybered body. Actual physical descriptions are sketchy, though all agree he is large and ugly. Perhaps it is this that keeps him from the Paris Liberté. Now sepa-

rated from other trolls, he may have become a lonely figure, fighting the Possibility Wars in the only way he can.

Or perhaps not.
—David Scott
East Ridge, TN

2

Even with the war being fought all over the globe, there are still some people who just can't turn down the opportunity for a quick buck.

Rumor has it that a former employee of the Guildmaster — the head of the Hawaii Storm Guild — has left her job to go it alone. But this woman — known only as "Jane Doe" — has begun competing in the weapons market. She has, apparently, been seen in Miami, Brazil, and Germany selling anything from biotech to black powder weapons, to cybergear. A true mercenary, she will sell to anyone.

But she has some fierce opponents. Kanawa's Hachiman Arms division, for example, is not pleased that she has successfully obtained a considerable amount of Akashan equipment (their "representatives" have been continually turned back), and look on her as a minor, but annoying, competitor. Also, it is said that Doe and the Guildmaster did not part on good terms — rumors state that Jane violated several of the Guildmaster's legendary confidentiality agreements to get her initial capital and merchandise, and the Guildmaster is interested in ... setting an example.

So far, Jane Doe has managed to avoid all attempts by those who would reportedly stop her, and she has stayed in business. She mainly sells small, relatively portable, equipment — but always the best and most expensive. Where she gets it, no one is sure.

3

There have been attacks on reality trees in Chile and Columbia. Assaultants have used high explosives and laser weaponry to attack the trees. Fortunately, local Monitor groups have

been able to repel the attacks, and the trees themselves have used their psionic abilities to fight back.

But not without cost. Although no trees have been destroyed, most of the Monitor and local militia groups have suffered terrible losses.

The attackers seem to be of different origins. One group reported being attacked by "flying aliens with high-energy weapons and metallic implants," while another said that "costumed humans fought with strange devices." Almost all the groups were armed with at least one weapon powerful enough to destroy a reality tree, but none have succeeded ... so far.

4

Strange quakes and volcanic activity have been reported in the Eastern Living Land, particularly around New York and northern Pennsylvania. The Jakatts in the area are agitated and are looking for some way to appease the goddess. Resistance communities in the area report (through realm-runners) that many edeinos are considering striking out for "the other land" — the Western Living Land.

Baruk Kaah, however, is totally against this sentiment. He apparently feels that giving the Eastern Land over to Core Earth by default would be a setback from which he would never recover. He is probably right.

5

When Pharaoh Mobius began his march across Africa early in the war, he had no illusions that the area he controlled was totally stable. Like his own personality, power shifted constantly between the Good and the Evil of the realm, and between his own lieutenants, the Overgovernors.

And now it appears that one Overgovernor has switched Inclination and another has been killed. A third may be wavering.

Herunut, the Overgovernor whose fascination with flying has made him known among Storm Knights, is beginning to look for "a way out" of the


Tenth Empire. While he does not wish to simply abandon Mobius (the Pharaoh has always been good to him) and his administration, he is searching for some way to distance himself from the Possibility Wars.

But Herunut may never get the chance. Mobius, a paranoiac at the best of times, is convinced that all his Overgovernors have been in league to betray him. He feels that Wu Han's defection was the signal for all to follow, leaving him to be torn apart "by the dog-heroes of Terra." He has planted spies within each Overgovernor's palace (that is, more than usual) and spies to spy on the spies. He is looking for any reason to begin executing Overgovernors and their administrators, and Herunut could be one of the first to fall.

6

The race for the High Lordship of Aysle is most definitely on! [see *Infiniverse Update, Volume I* for details] And it is heating up quickly. The four frontrunners (besides the Dragon Uthorion): Wotan of the Wild Hunt, the Warrior of the Dark, Simon Carr, and Malekere, all seem to be at least partially aware of the power they are courting. Certainly the Warrior of the Dark is.

Knowing the fate of the previous Warrior — effectively abandoned by her creator and killed by Storm Knights — the Warrior of the Dark has surrounded herself with a larger army of half-folk, giants, and goblins than was first imagined. That much is most definitely true.

But now, it has been rumored, the Warrior has chosen to separate herself from the man who "made" her — the wizard Salbane. Tales tell of a nighttime raid on the wizard's castle and of the torture and death of the evil wizard. Not something the Storm Knights of Aysle or the Army of the Light will grieve about, but now, if this is true, the Warrior of the Dark has access to Salbane's spellbooks and freedom from any geas she had previously been under. 

Your Letters

I have a question of a general nature about reconnection numbers. How did you derive the difficulty numbers for the Link Difficulty Chart on page 100 of the *Torg* rulebook? I would like to know as I want to devise my own brand of trouble for the hapless denizens of Core Earth (as if Orrorsh, Nippon Tech, etc. were not enough).

—Stephen Cawkill,
Norfolk, UK

Okay, here's the formula: to find the reconnection numbers for a character from realm A in realm B, first look at the axioms for both realms. Find the A axiom that exceeds the corresponding B axiom by the greatest number (see the example below). That is the base difficulty number. Now add +1 for each other axiom set in which realm A exceeds realm B.

All right, you have your total. One more piece of addition — if the total you arrived at is 0–5, add +3; 6–10, add +2; 11–15, add +1. (Yes, there are zeros on the "Link Difficulty Chart" on page 100, and yes, using this system they should be 3s. But for reasons of clarity, use the numbers as printed on the chart.)

Here's an example of how this formula works. A Core Earther visits the Living Land. The axiom pairs are *Magic* 7/0; *Social* 21/7; *Spirit* 9/24; *Tech* 23/7. The *Tech* is highest by the greatest margin (23 - 7 = 16). The base reconnection difficulty is 16. Core Earth's *Social* and *Magic* axioms are both higher than the Living Land's, so add +1 for both. The final reconnection number is 18.

Fantastic game! In the past few months, I've gotten several people (both experienced and virgin role players) to convert to the *Torg* system. It has so much more to offer than "single-genre" games.

1. Speaking of converts, if a priest converts to a religion of another realm with a *Spiritual* axiom lower than his own, would he have access to all the miracles of that religion?

2. What if the character above was, for example, a giant attempting to call upon Cyberpapal miracles such as *machine empathy* or *Net damnation*, relating to something with a higher *Tech* level than his own? Would this cause a contradiction?

3. How long does it take to call upon a miracle? Is it instantaneous, or does it take a full round or longer?

—Donnie Blagg,
Fayetteville, AR

Nice to have you with us, Donnie.

1. Yes, if a character converts to a religion whose miracles require a *Spiritual* axiom which is lower than his, he could perform them. Remember that his faith adds will be reduced by -1 upon conversion, and that he will not be able to learn a miracle unless he has seen it performed.

2. No, it is only a contradiction if the axiom level of the miracle is higher than his own (We're assuming that the giant has converted to the faith of the miracle, so we don't have to worry about spiritual struggles here). It wouldn't be farfetched to say that the giant must have at least a rudimentary knowledge of what he's asking the Divine to do for him to be able to achieve the desired effect, but there's no rule that demands it.

3. Miracle casting is instantaneous. There are no "cast times" for miracles.

1. Is L.A. a Tharkold-pure zone?

2. When battling in an invoked reality storm, if an opponent has only six adds left in his reality skill, and I get a "-6 maelstrom" result, does the storm end in a transformation? Or can I opt to gain the six Possibilities and continue the storm?

—Scott Mitchell,
Chicago, IL

1. Sure is, pal.

2. The storm would end in a transformation. The "maelstrom" result does not take effect until the round after it has appeared, so you do not have the option of plucking the six Possibilities from the ether at that point.

Could you please give some details on the Apocularum mentioned in the *Tharkold* sourcebook?

—Sam Thornton,
Essex, UK

The Apocularum is a Tharkoldu occulttech device, the damaged remains of which currently rest atop the Ichi Entertainment building in downtown Los Angeles. This is the device that made it possible for Tharkoldu stelae to teleport, both as a defensive measure and as a means of spreading to their maximum range (no more than 500 kilometers apart). It was sabotaged by Storm Knights Abbas Sombol, Mark Dyer, and Kreya Keena-Three, preventing the initial Tharkoldu stelae triangle from expanding much beyond metropolitan L.A. The Tharkoldu are no doubt working feverishly to repair this device.

Please clarify something: both *Orrorsh* and *Space Gods* refer to Kurst's original cosm as Dairoga. However, the novels referred to it as Kantovia. Which is right?

—Dan Viger,
Bronx, NY

Well, we'd like to say, "We were just testing you," but the simple answer is, we goofed. It happens (more often than we'd like to admit). Yes, the proper name is Kantovia (ah ha, but it could be said to have been called Dairoga, a corruption of the name of

its High Lord! Huh? Huh? No? Oh, well, it was worth a try ...)

If a character's Toughness reduces the damage value of an attack below zero, does the character take one point of shock as a Minimal success or no damage at all?

—David Versace,
Vincent, Australia

No damage is done in such a case, Dave. Otherwise creatures like the Leviathan, (low DEX, high TOU) would be paste.

What relationship exists between Tharkold and the Space Gods? Orrorsh?

—David Huston,
Burlington, FL

The Space Gods regard the Tharkoldu as another threat to Earth's harmony — they have also come to realize that their bio-tech weapons are some of the most effective against techno-demons. The presence of Tharkold on Earth has made the Akashans more willing to share bio-tech arms and reality trees with Storm Knights.

For their part, the Tharkoldu respect the power of bio-tech, but consider the Space Gods weaklings who haven't the courage to challenge them. Sterret has already directed that ten Akashans be killed for every Tharkoldu slain with bio-tech.

Tharkold is maintaining a polite relationship with Orrorsh at the mo-

ment. Heketon is not a Darkness De-vice one wants to anger, especially when your realm is as small as Jezrael's. Naturally, Thratchen is not well-liked in Tharkold, but Jezrael is smart enough to know that the Gaunt Man will be back soon and she does not want to rush into a confrontation with him.

The Gaunt Man, for his part, will probably be willing to work with Jezrael for the time being, since Kranod had proven so incompetent.

I notice the promised maelstrom bridge rules are absent from Storm Knights' Guide. When are they going to appear?

—Pete Venters,
Wales, UK

As far as we know, we never promised maelstrom bridge rules for that product. We do have a few hard and fast rules established for bridges (like their *Toughness* averages about 50), but at this point we don't have any plans to publish extensive rules for them. If you have specific questions about maelstrom bridges, though, send them in, and we'll be happy to answer them.

How come there aren't response forms to Crucible of Pain and Operation: Hard Sell? This makes it difficult to get results to you guys.

Also, when is the next contest for creature books?

—RJ Hodge,
Napa, CA

We would have liked to have had response forms in both of those products — unfortunately, space did not permit it. We try to do it wherever we can.

We have not decided on what the next contest after this one will be.



Herald Messages

Who is the man "Katana?" These were the words on the lips of the Ayslish when the enigmatic Oriental hero engaged — and defeated — Wotan at Oxford as he attempted to claim Drakacanus. Wotan was transformed in a reality storm; Katana employed a powerful eternity shard to save Aysle.

— Dan Swensen,
E. Helena, MT

If the Gaunt Man doesn't come back soon, he may find a certain Horror to be too firmly "enSconced" to be overthrown.

— Greg Detwiler,
Williamsburg, PA

"We found the neighbors. They were displayed in a Tharkoldu version of a butterfly collection."

— Eliza Roma,
Los Angeles, CA

Pitiful stormers. So confident in your power. So smug in your success. Soon you will know defeat. You will feel your mind ripped asunder. You will gaze upon Raites, and you will know true power. You will gaze upon him and you will know your master.

— Tharcyl, High Lord and
Master of Matrix
(Who? Where?)

"I found Dr. Mobius to be most out of balance."

— An Akashan diplomat (and
priestess of Zinatt)

"Orrorsh, Nippon Tech, The Living Land, Aysle, the Cyberpapacy, the Nile Empire, the Akashans, and now, NOW, Tharkold. Geez, it's getting crowded down here."

— Andrew "Aviator" Jones,
Roleplayer, Storm Knight

"And I thought Orrorsh was bad ..."

— David Kraig, CIA,
commenting on the
cosm of Gaea

"Let the streets run red! Tonight we hold carnival, for I have my revenge! The Storm Knight Firestone is dead!"

— Mantooth, on the night of the
Medan massacre

"So! Rebel Kyle has returned from the dead. Sterret, see to it that he has a quick visit and a speedy return."

— Jezrael

"I tell you, I'm *not* the fabulous Frog-Woman."

— An Ayslish witch, after a *jump*
spell and a *Mistaken Identity*
card

"Friends don't let elves drive trucks."

— Dominick Riesland,
Milwaukee, WI

"And why are you calling me 'Arnie'?"

— Res Nu-3, a renegade
infiltrator from Tharkold