

INFINIVERSE™

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CONTENTS

Rumor Report and News	2
Index to <i>Torg</i> : Basic Set, S-Z	3
Dispatches	7
Your Letters	11
Herald Messages	12

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We interrupt this *Torg* newsletter for the following special announcements:

River of God Released

The River of God, the first novel detailing West End's new *Shatterzone* game universe, should be hitting the stores in a matter of days. Five misfits — Marta, the hardened mercenary; Pelking, the ambitious Fleet officer; Taggart, the veteran looking for one last score; Cooper, a scout hiding a secret everyone knows; and Caj, a sociopathic techno — linked by their

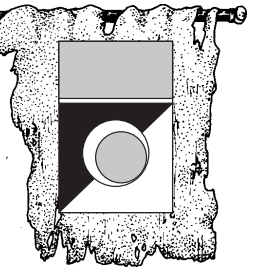
mission and nothing more, no loyalty, no common goals. Their worst enemies are each other, until they encounter ... the shatterzone.

Look for *The River of God* in paperback at your local book or hobby store. If you don't see it, ask the store to order it for you, or you can order it directly from West End.

With this exciting new roleplaying game scheduled for release in July of '93, here's your chance to get a sneak preview of the mystery and danger that lies in wait for you in the universe of *Shatterzone*.



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 #27

1. Yoshiko Nakata attempting to redirect Tharkold's wrath toward Russia by gathering evidence on "Project: Omen." Starts at True (16).

2. Reports that a Lorbaat known as "Kasak't" may have gained some measure of control over the Comaghaz virus. Put away those rubber gloves, it's False (15).

3. The occultist responsible for creation of the necrolepus vampirum has been murdered, and there are fears that a shapeshifting dragon with knowledge of the occult may be loose

in Aysle. It's a mouthful, but it's False (15).

4. Island of Patuar in the South Seas under attack by Pyrian Fire Tamers. Casualties include a CyberFrench naval base and a Delphi Council monitoring station. True (13).

5. Burger Rex salad bar — featuring sentient Living Land plants — lands in court, but only briefly. The jury's still out on this one — it's True (11).

Continuing Report: Issue 26

1. A new cartoon, "Reality Rangers," depicts Japan as the site of an invading realm. Controversy is swirling around it, but it's apparently only attracting viewers, cause it's True (40).

2. Ayslish Corsairs sailing the Mediterranean, sacking Cyberpapal cargo ships and Nile Empire military vessels. A personal favorite, and True (40).

3. Kanawa Corporation exploratory oil-drigging rigs vanishing in the Antarctic. Holding its own at True (19).

4. Yakuza attempting to forge alliances with the Mafia and South American drug cartels. Or not — it's False (19).

The Wrap-Up: Issue #25

1. Techno-demons creating havoc in Surrey, England, while dark mages seek them out for exchanges of spells. Another slight jump to finish at True (19).

2. Rumors of secret rocket launch sites in the Sudan — Martians from Terra are trying to go home "real soon." Nice bump to reach True (25).

3. Storm Knights and an Akashan Monitor have reached Marketplace.

The Akashans are taking an active hand in trying to save Marketplace from an "eco-hell." You folks never cease to amaze — it's True (55).

Contributor News

Response to the "Creatures of Tharkold" contest was overwhelming. You really outdid yourselves, and we had a hard time both picking entries for inclusion in the volume and picking the winners. Overall, about 50 were chosen (in fact, we're giving you one extra creature in this book! Yes, 61 instead of 60 — be still, your foolish hearts).

If things go as planned (and when do they ever?), this will be the first creature book to feature a cover illo based on a reader submission. We'll let you know more about this as it develops.

Anyway, here are the winners for the "Creatures of Tharkold" contest:

First Prize — Clinton Wolf, for the Liquidator;

Second Prize — Jeffrey Hersch, for the Shards;

Third Prize — Pete Venters, for the Priestburner.

In many ways, this was probably the most difficult contest we have run, because there was relatively little reference material to mine for creatures. We were happy to see the number of people who responded, the fact that so many were new to our contests, and the originality of all the submissions.

No decision has been made as yet about what the next contest will be.



Index to *Torg*: Basic Set, A-F

This month: letters S-Z in the final installment of the comprehensive index to *Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars*.

Key

- R□—*Torg Rulebook*
- WB — *Torg Worldbook*
- AB — *Torg Adventure Book*



Saar — R 91; WB 20-21
 sabre — WB 14
 Sabrina — □R 39, 107; WB 1
 Sahara — WB 43
 Samson, Professor — □R 67
 Satan — R 124
 Saudi Arabia — WB 7, 50
 Mecca — WB 7
 scene — □R 20; AB 19
 dramatic — □R 21; AB 9, 18, 39
 standard — □R 21; AB 9, 18, 39
 Science Chart — □R 56
 Scotland — WB 4, 28-29
 Kinnaird's Head — WB 28
 North Uist Island — WB 28
 St. Bee's Head — WB 28
 scripts and handouts — AB 30
 Sebastian, Quin — □R 12-19, 23, 25, 27-35, 42, 44-46, 51-53, 55-56, 60-63, 65-68, 71-74, 76, 80-81, 100, 102, 104, 107, 110, 132; WB 54; AB 1, 13
 Second Sight — WB 28
 secondary item — R 58
 setback — □R 22, 61, 77, 79-81; AB 13
 setback/fatigued — R 80
 settings — AB 19
 setup — AB 18
 Shariff, Professor — AB 22, 31
 diary of — AB 22, 32-33, 35-39, 44
 ShockKnucks — WB 41
 shocktrooper — □R 17, 45-47, 62, 81; WB 43, 49; AB 4, 7, 35, 38-39

Shul — AB 32, 40-41
 simple action — □R 17, 75
 Singapore — WB 10-13
 sisu — WB 29
 skeletal pirates — AB 42-44
 skeletons — WB 32; AB 10-11
 skills — □R 5, 7, 8, 12, 13, 37, 48, 141; WB 2
 acrobatics — □R 48-50, 63, 79; WB 42
 adds — R 5, 8, 10, 12, 48, 88
 air vehicles — □R 13, 34, 53, 58; WB 42; AB 41, 44
 alteration magic — □R 53, 111-122, 141; WB 16, 18; AB 44
 apportation magic — □R 56, 111-122, 141
 artist — R 56; WB 42, 54
 beast riding — □R 48; WB 42
 charm — □R 15, 31, 32, 57, 62, 70-71, 72, 74; WB 52
 character tag — R 8
 climbing — □R 8, 44, 49, 52-53; WB 42
 climbs, timed — □R 53
 conjuraction magic — □R 56, 111-122, 141
 cyberdeck operation — WB 36-37
 defensive — AB 11
 disguise — WB 52, 54
 divination magic — □R 20, 53, 111-122, 141
 dodge — □R 10, 14, 17, 18, 41, 42, 44-45, 47, 50-51, 75, 116, 119-120, 132-133; WB 16, 42
 dodge, passive — □R 50
 energy weapons — R 18, 50; WB 42
 evidence analysis — R 48, 53-54; WB 42
 faith — □R 58, 95, 124-131; WB 15, 18, 24, 35
 find — □R 32, 34, 50-51, 53-54, 64; WB 37, 41
 fire combat — □R 8, 10, 18, 45-46, 50; WB 14, 37, 42
 first aid — □R 10, 19, 54, 76
 flight — □R 50; WB 46
 focus — R 58, 95, 123-131; WB 18
 heavy weapons — □R 13, 18, 50; WB 42

improving — □R 20
 intimidation — □R 16-17, 23, 58, 62, 70, 74-75, 79-80; AB 9-11, 13, 18
 land vehicles — □R 12-14, 55; WB 42
 language — R 55; WB 42
 learning — □R 13
 lifting — □R 53; WB 42
 lockpicking — □R 12, 48, 50; WB 41-42, 55
 long-jump — R 31, 50-51, 119; WB 56
 long-jump, standing — □R 50
 macro — R 49, 51-52, 54, 57
 maneuver — □R 17, 23, 51, 62, 75, 80-81, 132; AB 9-10, 18, 41
 martial arts — R 48-49, 52; WB 54-56
 medicine — R 12, 48, 56, 76; WB 40-42
 meditation — WB 55
 melee weapons — □R 18, 28, 30, 32, 35, 51, 77-78; WB 14-15, 42
 missile weapons — □R 18, 51, 42
 persuasion — R 15, 17, 32, 35, 57, 62, 70-74, 104, 132; WB 52; AB 40
 agreement — R 72
 modifiers — R 72
 negotiated — R 72, 74; AB 40
 vow — R 72
 yes — R 72
 prestidigitation — □R 51; WB 41, 55
 reality — □R 10-11, 19-20, 58, 99, 101, 105-110, 141; AB 8
 round — □R 49
 running — □R 5, 10, 44, 51-53; WB 46
 running, timed — □R 51
 scholar — □R 48, 55, 132; WB 42; AB 44
 scholar (computer science) — WB 36
 science — □R 20, 56-57, 62-63; WB 42; AB 44
 shapeshifting — WB 17-18
 space vehicles — □R 55
 stealth — R 48, 51-52, 54, 121; WB 36, 42, 52, 55-56
 survival — □R 33, 48-49, 57; WB 42
 swimming — □R 52
 taunt — □R 17, 23, 57, 62, 66, 70, 75, 79-80; WB 2; AB 9-10, 13, 18

- test (of wills)* — □R 17, 20, 23, 57, 62, 66, 70, 75, 79-80; AB 9-10, 18, 41
track — □R 33, 48, 55
transferring — R 88
trick — □R 17, 23, 56, 62, 70, 75, 79-80; AB 9-10, 18, 41
unarmed combat — □R 18, 52, 78; WB 41-42, 55; AB 35
water vehicles — □R 56; WB 42
weird science — WB 44; AB 44
willpower — R 15, 57, 70, 74
- skills, narrowing the scope of** — □R 58
- Skill Charts** — AB 24
Skill List — □R 49; AB 26
skill specialization — R 58
skill values — R 48
 parenthetical — R 80
slashers — WB 41
slicers — WB 41
Society of Engineers — WB 49
Sons of the Wind — WB 54
soulstain — R 88-89
sound-gun — AB 36
South Africa — WB 5-6
South America — WB 7-8; AB 34
South China Sea — WB 10
Soviet Union (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) — R 138; WB 5-7, 29; AB 47
 Moscow — WB 5, 50
- Space Vehicle Specification Chart** — R 139
- Spain** — WB 7-8
Spartans — WB 21-22
spear guns — AB 41, 43
speed total — □R 13
spells — R 111-122; AB 9
 active — R 112
altered fireball — R 116
away sight — R 116
 axiom level — R 115-116
bleeding blade — WB 30-31
boiling blood — WB 16
bullet — R 115
 casting — R 113
charm person — R 114, 116
cleanse — R 116-117
conjured fireball — R 117
 designing — R 122
detect magic — R 117
disguise self — R 117
dvergamal — WB 31
earth shield — R 117
extradimensional gate — R 117
floater — R 118
fly — R 118
 focused — R 114
 fog — R 118
 impressed — R 114
gain language — R 112, 118
haste — R 118
increase charisma — R 118
jump — R 119
lightning — R 119
madness — WB 16
mage dark — R 119
mage light — R 119
 manipulation — R 116, 122
multiple selves — WB 31
 noun — R 115
 on the fly — R 113-114
open lock — R 119
pathfinder — R 119-120
possibility shadows — R 120
ritual of mind preparation — R 120
ritual of perception preparation — R 120
 skill — R 115
slow — R 120-121
 spell bonus — R 113-114
 starting — R 113
stay voice — WB 31
stealth walk — R 121
stone tunnel — R 121
strength — R 112-113, 121
sunstore — R 121
sweet water — R 121
thistledown — WB 31
tracker — R 121-122
transmute lead to gold — WB 16
true light — □R 119, 122
turn to stone — WB 31-32
 warding — R 112
water scry — WB 31
water spray — R 122
weakness — R 122
weather control — R 122
- spirits, communication with** — R 129-130
- spiritual struggle** — R 124
- stacks** — AB 20
- stalenger** — WB 23
- Star Wars** — R 126
- stayer** — WB 23
- Stealth Chart** — R 52
- stelae** — □R 66, 83-86, 88-89, 92, 102-105, 107, 110; WB 4-5, 7, 23, 43, 49
 boundaries — WB 4, 21, 29, 44, 49
 Orrorshan — WB 12, 14
 planting — R 84
 removing — R 104-105
- Stelae Distance Chart** — R 110
- Stelae Placement Chart** — R 84
- Still World, The** — WB 3, 7-9; AB 32, 35-36, 38
 climate — WB 8
 four days — WB 8
 one month — WB 8-9
 three months — WB 8-9
- Stone Meeting** — □R 15
- Stormers** — □R 5, 19, 103
- Storm Knights** — □R 1, 5, 14, 19, 65, 84-86, 89, 103-104; WB 4, 7-8, 13-14, 29
- storm multiplier** — R 105-106
- Storm Results Table** — R 40, 105
- story-seed** — R 104
- Stuart, Prince of Worth** — □R 50
- stymied** — □R 22, 61, 79-81; WB 18; AB 13
- stymied/fatigued** — R 80
- Submarine Specification Chart** — R 140
- subplots** — R 25, 66-68; AB 13, 20
 martyr — □R 67; AB 20
 mistaken identity — R 67-68; AB 20
 nemesis — R 67-68; AB 20
 personal stake — □R 67-68; WB 54; AB 20
 romance — R 66-68; AB 20
 suspicion — R 67-68; AB 20
 true identity — □R 68; AB 20
- success, quality of** — □R 39-40
average — □R 39, 51, 53, 55-57, 106, 110, 120, 127
 continuing — □R 71
 failing — □R 41
good — □R 39, 51, 53, 55-57, 106, 120, 127
minimal — □R 39, 51, 53, 55-57, 106, 110, 120, 127
superior — □R 39, 53, 55-57, 62, 106, 110, 120, 127
spectacular — □R 39, 53, 55-57, 62, 106, 110, 120, 125, 127
 temporary — R 71
- Sudan** — WB 5
 Bur Sudan — WB 7
- Sumatra** — WB 6, 13, 17
- Sumeria** —
 dagger — R 64-65
- sun blades** — AB 41, 43
- Super Battlegroup Mobius** — WB 49
- supporter** — R 107
- suppressed tasks** — R 85
- surprise** — R 78-79
 complete — R 78-79
 normal — R 78-79
- Sutenhotep** — See *Mobius*
- Sweden** — WB 4-5, 26, 29
 Mora — WB 4
 Stockholm — WB 4-5, 29
- sweep attack** — R 78

synonymous knowledges — R 112-113
 Syria — WB 7

T

Takta Ker — WB 7, 20-22
talisman — R 99
Tamil — WB, pg 11
Tancred, Tolwyn — □R 20, 110
Tankhanic Corp. — AB 5
Tanya — WB 18
techno-demon — WB 13-14
Teth-net — WB 48
telephone — WB 14
templates — See *character templates*
10-point advantage — AB 9
Terra — WB 43-45, 47-49; AB 38, 40
terrain as cover — R 78
Terrain Chart — □R 57
Tewkesbury, Professor — WB 43
Thailand — WB 6
Thames River — WB 28
Thrachten — WB 8, 10, 13-14, 17; AB 31, 47
three-time bonus — R 104
Throckton, Dr. — □R 56
Time of Nothing, The — WB 1
Tobukai Algorithms — R 106
Torg — R 4, 89; WB 1, 3, 7, 10; AB 31, 44
torpedo pistols — AB 41, 43
Tosida Electronics — WB 52
Tracking Chart — □R 55
trademark item — R 58
transcendence — R 101, 103
transform number — R 104
transformation — R 86, 101-106
Transformation Table — R 86, 104; AB 26
tresir — WB 25; AB 1
Trieridge Mountains — R 127
trolls — □R 42, 62; WB 26, 32
Tunisia — WB 5
Turkey — WB 7

U

Udatok — WB 2
Ulster Defense League — WB 28
undead — R 112
Underground — WB 32
United Kingdom — WB 4
United Nations — WB 7

United States — □R 4, 99; WB 4, 7, 21-22, 50; AB 14, 33, 47
 Army — □R 48; WB 7, 52
University of Kyoto — WB 52
unskilled actions — □R 12, 48, 50-58, 79-80
up — □R 22, 60-61, 80; WB 18; AB 13
up/setback — R 79-80
Uthorion, Angar — □R 1, 4; WB 3-4, 26-30, 32, 34; AB 48

V

Valjean — WB 37
Valley of the Kings — WB 43
vampyre — WB 12, 18-19
Vancen — R 107
Van de Graaf generator — AB 37
Value Chart — □R 39, 41, 43, 130, 141; WB 2; AB 25
values — R 5, 11, 25
 action — □R 7, 77
 armor — □R 18
 attribute — □R 8
 weight — R 5, 41, 52
vampyres — R 131; WB 18-19; AB 10-11
Vancen — WB 1
variables — AB 19-20
vaulting and springing — R 49
Vaulting and Springing Chart — □R 49
vehicles — R 133-135, 138-140
 gliders — R 134
 hot air balloons — R 134
 jet-powered aircraft — R 135, 138
 Boeing 727 — R 138
 Boeing 747 — R 138
 F-15 — R 138
 F-86 — R 135
 Learjet I.24 — R 138
 Mirage III — R 135, 138
 Mitsubishi J5 — R 110
 SR-71 — R 138
 military vehicles — R 138
 Jeep — R 138
 M1 Abrams — R 138
 M113A2 — R 138
 1938 Halftrack — R 138
 tanks — WB 44
 Tiger Tank — R 138
 T-72 — R 138
 piston-powered aircraft — R 134-135
 B-17 Flying Fortress — AB 41
 biplane — □R 73-74; WB 44
 DC-3 Dakota — R 135

Fokker DVII — R 134
 G-21 Turbo Goose — R 135
 ME-109 F-2 — R 135
 PBY Seaplane — AB 38-42
 Sopwith FI Camel — R 134
 Spitfire VB — R 135; AB 40-41
 railroads — R 138
 bullet train — R 138
 1806 — R 138
 1907 — R 138
 1950 — R 138
 steam-driven — WB 14
 rotary wing aircraft — R 135
 Aerospatiale Lama — R 135
 Apache AH-64 — R 135
 autogyro — WB 44
 Avro C.8L Mk II — R 135
 Bell AH-1G — R 135
 Bell H-13 — R 135
 Mi-24 Hind A-10 — R 135
 PA-19 — R 135
 self-powered land vehicles — R 138
 Allentown Roadster — R 99
 Daimler-Benz — R 138
 Ford Taurus — R 138
 Kenilworth Semi-Truck — R 138
 Lotus Esprit — R 138
 Model T — R 138
 motocycle — WB 2
 Peugeot 707 — WB 2
 Suzuki Samurai — R 102
 Thunderbird — R 138
 space vehicles — R, ppg 138, 140
 US Space Shuttle — R 138
 Mitaya Corporation Low Orbital — R 140
 water vehicles — R 140
 aircraft carriers — WB 44
 Carribean Lady — AB 47
 Clipper Ship — R 140
 Coal Steamer — R 140; WB 14
 Diesel Steamer — R 140
 Galleon — R 140
 Los Angeles Class Submarine — R 140
 Luxury Liner — R 140
 Trireme — R 140
 Type 209 Class Submarine — R 140
 zeppelins — R 134; WB 14, 44
Victorians — WB 11-18; AB 19, 45-46
 and Earthers — WB 16
 and magic — WB 15
 in battle — WB 14
 religion — WB 14-15
 technology — WB 14
Victorian Institute of Science — AB 48

Vietnam War — R 138
Vikings — WB 4-5, 27, 29-30, 32; AB 34
Villain Action Chart — R 62
virtual experiences (VX) — WB 35-37
vital blow — R 77-78; AB 41
Void, The — WB 1



Wales — WB 29
Anglesey — WB 29
Caernarvon — WB 29
Pembroke — WB 29
war-stick — R 28
Water Vehicle Specification Chart — R 139
Weapons Specification Chart — R 136-137
weird science — WB 5, 44 (for Nile skill, see entry under *skills*).


Wells, Dr. — WB 12-13
Wells, Jonathan — WB 21
werewolf — WB 11-12, 17-18
weretiger — WB 17
Western Land — WB 21
Wild Hunt — WB 4
will'o'wisps — WB 26
Wisconsin — WB 20
Wold, Eric — R 101
world rules — R 97
Nile — WB 44
World War II — WB 6, 48-49; AB 40
Worth — R 50
Wotan, Master of the Hunt — R 105
wrist guns — WB 41
Wu-Han — WB 5, 48-50

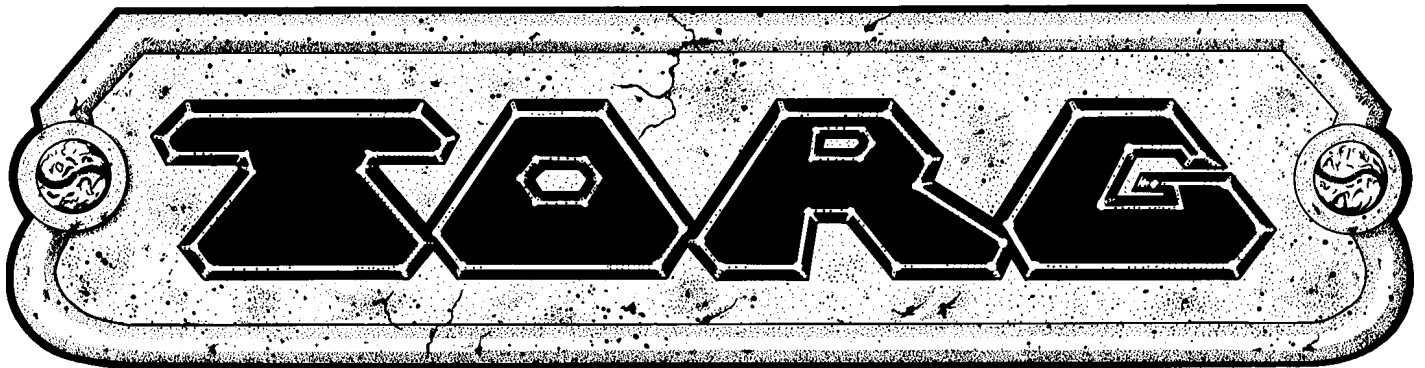


Yakuza — WB 54
Yellow Crab — R 16-18, 20, 23, 25, 42, 44-45, 53, 62-65, 67, 71, 74, 76, 79, 99, 104, 106, 110; AB 1, 13

yen — WB 2
yorosai — WB 5
Yuka, Lady — AB 47



Zaire — WB 6
Zelda V — WB 52
Zimbabwe — WB 5
zones — R 85, 102
dominant — R 85, 98, 102
mixed — R 85
pure — R 14, 85, 98-99, 102
Zoroastrian — R 124 





Dispatches and Rumors

Dispatches

1

The Storm Knights are summoned to the Cyberpapacy to investigate reports of vampyric attacks in Montmarte. There, among the steep cobblestone streets and tiny, candlelit cafes, a creature of the night has been attacking passersby and draining their blood.

Investigation reveals that there is no real pattern to the attacks — the victims were not enemies of Malraux, for example. But a witness to one such attack will relate that the vampyre was apparently able to shapeshift, for it resembled a man-sized beast more than the movie-type monster.

The Paris police do not believe the stories and have stored the bodies of the slain in their morgue. The Knights' first priority should be to put these new vampyres out of their misery. If they do not do so within 24 hours of their arrival in Paris, the creatures will come to life and start attacking policemen. The Knights may soon find themselves being chased through the city by vampyric police.

Once the vampyre's victims have been dispatched, the Knights need to find the monster itself. The Resistance can direct them to an occultist who lives above a tavern in Montmarte. On a wind-swept night, Dr. Frederic Dellier will warn the Knights that they face something more than man or vampyre. He will rummage through a chest filled with occult items and hand them a strange metallic artifact. He cannot identify precisely, except to say that, though not Orrorshan in nature, it might help the Knights against this vampyre. (Any Storm Knight familiar

with the religion of the ravagons will recognize this as a holy symbol.)

There are a number of ways the Knights can approach the adventure from here on out. One of the Knights could act as bait and try to draw the vampyre out; the Knights could attempt to contact ravagon Denyers, who could tell them of Dravekkor, the most famous vampyric member of their species; or, assuming the vampyre must have a human servant, the Knights could spread tales throughout the Parisian underworld that they have something which can destroy the monster, and try to spark an attack.

Given the nature of Dravekkor's True Death, it's unlikely the Knights will be able to visit it upon him. But they will be able to stop him in Paris and will know to be watchful for his doings in the future.

Powers: *life drain, regeneration, darkness, infection*

Corruption Value: 24

Fear Rating: 6

Perseverance DN: 18

Weakness: Ravok holy symbol (severe weakness)

True Death: Pierced through the heart by a metal sword that has been forged by a ravagon crafter, blessed by a tzullat, and carved with symbols from the holy teachings.

Natural Tools: armored skin, value TOU+3/21; talons, damage value STR+2/18; fangs, damage value STR+2/18; wings, speed value 13

Critical Event: The Knights must put a stop to Dravekkor's reign of terror. Killing him, even without his True Death, is a *Good* result (6 or better). Allowing him to escape (as he

The vampyre was able to shapeshift, for it resembled a man-sized beast more than the movie-type monster.

Dravekkor

DEXTERITY 12

Dodge 19, flight 16, maneuver 17, stealth 20, unarmed combat 20

STRENGTH 16

Climbing 19

TOUGHNESS 18 (21)

PERCEPTION 11

Find 17, language 13, tracking 16, trick 16

MIND 14

Test 23, willpower 23

CHARISMA 14

Charm 26, persuasion 21

SPIRIT 9

Faith (Orrorshan evil) 18, intimidation 17, reality (Orrorsh) 18

Possibilities: 2 per Storm Knight

may well attempt to do) is a *Bad* result (3 or less).

2

A shipment of weapons-grade plutonium headed by sea from CyberFrance to Nippon has been hijacked by a Nile villain, the Scarlet Claw. Ship and cargo are currently off the coast of Madagascar, with NATO ships on one side and Nile subs on the other.

The Claw has always been considered a minor villain in the Terran pantheon, but on a recent mission to Berlin, he was stormed to Tharkoldu reality. The transformation has made him

far more vicious, and he rapidly recruited (through domination) a number of techno-demons. He then struck out on his own, with the taking of this ship the first major coup.

Determined to revenge himself on all of those who scorned him, the Claw is holding the vessel for ransom. He is demanding one million royals, personally delivered by Overgovernor Madib Al-Hebspa (the Claw is unaware that Al-Hebspa is actually Dr. Mobius in disguise), or he will blow up the ship and contaminate the waters for thousands of years to come. Normally, Mobius would jump at a chance to get his gloved hands on plutonium for so paltry a sum, but at present he is in Greece overseeing the invasion of that nation.

Although there are no plans to give in to his demands, there are also no plans to bring him to justice. The authorities are uncertain whether the techno-demons might have the means to turn the plutonium into a weapon on board ship and are reluctant to challenge them directly. Efforts by Nile

will take every opportunity to humiliate his guest before turning over the plutonium.

The Scarlet Claw

DEXTERITY 11

Dodge 17, energy weapons 18, maneuver 15, melee weapons 16, unarmed combat 17

STRENGTH 13

Climbing 16

TOUGHNESS 12

PERCEPTION 9

Evidence analysis 14, find 18, scholar (master criminal) 15, trick 18

MIND 9

Test 15, weird science 16

CHARISMA 10

Charm 12, persuasion 16, taunt 16

SPIRIT 9

Faith (Cult of the Dominant) 12, intimidation 15, reality (Tharkold) 13

Possibilities: 20

Powers: *electro-ray, force field.* Adventure cost: 9 See below.

Equipment: Back when he was a two-bit rum-runner, one of the Claw's hands was cut off in a battle with the Crimson Cloak. It was replaced by the

newfound allies, the Claw intends to parlay this hijacking into a small fortune and pour it into the construction of occulttech/weird science devices.

Techno-Demons (5)

DEXTERITY 10

Dodge 14, energy weapons 14, fire combat 12, flight 15 (18), melee weapons 12 (15 defense), missile weapons 12, stealth 11, unarmed combat 15 (16)

STRENGTH 16

Lifting 18

TOUGHNESS 16 (21)

PERCEPTION 10

Alteration magic 13, divination magic 13, find 14 (17), first aid 11, land vehicles 12, tracking 14, trick 12

MIND 11

Apportation magic 14, conjuration magic 14, test 15, willpower 15

CHARISMA 9

Persuasion 11, taunt 13

SPIRIT 11

Faith (Cult of the Dominant) 16, intimidation 16

Possibility Potential: some (45)

Arcane Knowledges: *folk 3, entity 3, inanimate forces 2, living forces 2*

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value STR+2/18; talons, non-cybered limb, damage value STR+3/19; wing strike, unarmed combat to hit, damage value STR+7/23; wings, speed value 10

Critical Event: The Knights must stop the Scarlet Claw and recover the hijacked plutonium before it falls into hostile hands. Doing both is a *Good* result (6 or better); failing to stop the Claw but recovering the plutonium (and the money) is an *Average* result (4-5); failing to do either is a *Bad* result (3 or less).

3

The Greene House is something of a legend among those who live on the outskirts of London. The saga of a mad father, a murderous mother, a beautiful but unstable daughter, and the terrible tragedy that ensued has chilled locals for generations. But despite the legend, the property's owner has never had any trouble in renting it out.

Until now, that is. The last few families to take residence there reported feeling inexplicable feelings of rage,

The saga of the Greene House — a mad father, a murderous mother, a beautiful but unstable daughter, and the terrible tragedy that ensued — has chilled locals for generations.

subs to get in close enough to torpedo the ship have been driven back by Tharkoldu sorcery.

The Rauru Block, fearful of the consequences if this situation is allowed to go unchecked, hires the Storm Knights. Their mission is a straightforward, yet difficult one: one must disguise himself as Al-Hebspa and, with his "retinue" board the ship and give the Claw the money (which the Block will provide).

What no one is aware of is that the techno-demons do know that Al-Hebspa is Mobius, and pushed the Claw into doing this so that they would get a chance to rip the High Lord's face off. The disguised Knight will be in mortal danger every minute he is aboard ship, and the Claw, thinking he has an overgovernor at his mercy,

scarlet claw from which he took his name.

The claw is a melee weapon (damage value STR+5/18) and also provides the Claw with his powers. It can fire electro-ray blasts (damage value 23, range 3-10/25/60) and project a force field (value 22) in a five meter radius around the Claw.

Description: The Scarlet Claw has never been a particularly successful pulp villain. Although his claw puts significant power at his disposal, he has never had the killer instinct needed to use it, preferring elaborate claw-motif deathtraps for his enemies as compared to just killing them outright.

But his transformation to Tharkoldu reality has stiffened his spine and shown him the way to use his claw to bring the world to its knees. With his

and one newlywed wife attempted to murder her husband with a butcher knife. At his wits' end, the landlord has asked the Knights to spend a week-end in the house and see if they can find the cause of this problem. If they cannot, he will simply burn the house to the ground. But if they identify and eliminate the problem, their reward will be a handsome one.

The truth of the matter is that the house is infested with tauntors, Orrorshan creatures who specialize in taunting their victims and driving them to anger and madness. They have taken up residence in the walls, eaves and crawlspaces of the house. Often, they mimic the voices of a victim's companion, watching with glee as the two people turn upon each other. They will attempt to set the Knights against each other while they stay in the house.

Tauntors (12)

Reality: Orrorsh

DEXTERITY 12

Fire combat 13, melee weapons 15, running 13, stealth 15, unarmed combat 15

STRENGTH 6

Climbing 14

TOUGHNESS 10

PERCEPTION 8

Find 10, tracking 10, trick 18

MIND 8

Test (12)

CHARISMA 8

Taunt 18 (12)

SPIRIT 8

Faith (Orrorshan evil) 10

Additional Skills: three at +1 adds

Possibility Potential: some (25)

Natural Tools: nails, damage value STR+1/7

Powers: *blur form*

Corruption Value: 16

Fear Rating: 1/2

Perseverance DN: 12

Weakness: Being unfailingly polite and complimentary toward them

True Death: Trapped for two hours in a cage lined with flowers

Critical Event: The Knights must eliminate or drive out the tauntors in the Greene House. If they do so, it is a *Good* result (6 or above). If they fail to do so, it is a *Bad* result (3 or less).

4

Travelers in the unstable Eastern Land have reported encounters with snake-like men, who are said to be armed and hostile. They do not bear any resemblance to edeinos, nor do they seem to have any love for the followers of Lanala. The Keefee Haroo and the Ohibi have also been victimized by these warriors, whose like they claim never to have seen before.

Storm Knights traveling in this area,

Equipment: knife, damage value STR+3/14; spear, damage value STR+4/15; short bow, damage value STR+4/15. Note that all of these weapons are traditionally coated with cobra venom before use. If the weapon causes a wound, the poison is introduced into the bloodstream, doing damage value 18 per round. A *first aid* total of 10 is required to drain the venom from the wound.

Critical Event: The Knights must capture and successfully interrogate

Is the Spirit of Christmas bringing gifts of M-16s and Eternity Shards to good Storm Knights all over the beleaguered Earth (and dropping coal into the stockings of Dr. Mobius and 3327)?

particularly in the southern sections, may well encounter these beings. Capturing one and obtaining some information (which will consist of its people's name — Serpentor — and the fact that they are from a domed world other than Merretika) would make the Knights eligible for a reward from the Delphi Council.

Standard Serpentor Warrior

Reality: Land Below

DEXTERITY 10

Acrobatics 11, dodge 14, maneuver 16, melee weapons 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 15, unarmed combat 13

STRENGTH 11

TOUGHNESS 11 (14)

PERCEPTION 8

Camouflage 9, find 9, tracking 9, trick 10

MIND 7

Survival 9

CHARISMA 7

SPIRIT 7

Faith (Cobra Cult) 8, intimidation 10

Additional Skills: four at +2 adds

Possibility Potential: some (25)

Natural Tools: scales, armor value TOU+3/14; fangs, damage value STR+2/13

at least one Serpentor. Doing so is a *Good* result (6 or above). Failing to do so is a *Bad* result (3 or less).

Rumors

1

It seems that the Law of Corruption in Aysle has become even stronger — stronger than even its creator imagined possible. The Law has always worked on people of the cosm and the realm, and the land therein, but now it has gone beyond them and entered a new plateau of danger.

Rumors are cascading down the bridges of the Aysle cosm that an eternity shard devoted to the Dark has been discovered. Hushed voices circulate conflicting accounts of Storm Knights of the Aysle cosm, carrying the battle to the home front, being helpless against the evil power of the Dark Shard. But all say it takes the form of the sword with many different powers and frightening abilities.

Among the most popular rumors are accounts that say the Dark Shard has the power to slice through armor, to cause all who are struck by it to explode, or two make the strong of heart quail and faint in fear. But all

descriptions agree on one point: it is a blackened and corroded greatsword of immense proportions, encrusted with skull-shaped gems of a swirling red and blue color.

There are many rumors regarding the wielder of the Dark Shard. Many say that a dark-skinned elf farmer found the blade in a field he had worked for years and was transformed to a creature of darkness by it. Others believe it is the hand of Arthuk himself that holds the pommel. The most popular rumor holds that an Unnamed Demon brought the sword from one of Aysle's pocket dimension and is using the Power of Corruption to carve out an empire of terror on his own.

If this rumor is true, then it is of grave concern to both the forces of the Light and the Dark in the Aysle realm. Imagine the Warrior of the Dark wielding such a blade, or Wotan the Hunter with an Artifact of Power. They already have, and the search for the Dark Shard has begun.

Rumors even state that Drakacanus has taken an interest in the blade ...

—Jamie Lewandowski
Seattle, WA

aliens need to have in their bloodstream to live.

The Akashan High Council has clamped down on this rumor hard, fearing that they will cause a panic among the client races and their allies among humanity — and an almost certain backlash. The Akashans still bear the brunt of the blame over the Comaghaz virus itself, and if this rumor is true, it could began out-and-out warfare against the Akashans.

The biotechnical experts in Macchu Picchu claim that the virus now running rampant in the area is a sub-strain of the Comaghaz itself and not their creation. It is, they say, an infectious virus that acts very similar to the flu — only faster and more devastating. Those who contract it experience diarrhea, dehydration, cramps, and fever. All infected individuals become carriers, and the only treatment so far is rest and consumption of fluids. Any physical activity at all makes the patient extremely fatigued and uncomfortable. Even Storm Knights who have supposedly contracted this new virus have been bedridden — the virus is too strong to fight off.

There are two curious things about the rumored virus: no one who has

3

Since the beginning of the Invasion, there have been rumors concerning the Spirit of Christmas, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, or whatever he is called, appearing around the Christian and Jewish holidays. Many people report having spotted him not only in the air over Aysle (where the *Magic* axiom is high enough to support flying reindeer and fat men in red suits), but over the Living Land, the Nile Empire, and even Nippon Tech.

This year, an organization calling itself the Non-Denominational Organization of Santa Explorers (NoDOSE) is actively seeking out the truth of such rumors.

Does the Spirit of Christmas (or Hanukkah, or "Giving") fly through the air during the winter holidays? Is he (or she) bringing gifts of M-16s and Eternity Shards to good Storm Knights all over the beleaguered Earth (and dropping coal into the stockings of Dr. Mobius and 3327)? Where *did* the Warrior of the Dark get that cool helmet anyway?

NoDOSE wants to hear from YOU! Go outside on the winter nights, especially around the time of the Winter Solstice, and look up at the stars. Is that a ravagon flying overhead or ... something else?

Let NoDOSE know what you see. Describe your visions clearly, as different parts of the world may see different beings. Then again, if you see nothing but the occasional stalenger hopped up on bente-juice (they do look kinda pretty if you stick 'em on your tree), let us know. Only you can prevent the spreading of spurious rumors ... or the censorship of the truth.

—Paid for by the NoDOSE Foundation.

"We believe in miracles — do you?" ☒

The Dark Shard — with the power to slice through armor — is a blackened and corroded greatsword of immense proportions, encrusted with skull-shaped gems of a swirling red and blue color.

2

During a biotech experiment in the Space Gods' "capital city" of Macchu Picchu, a rogue strain of an anti-virus got loose and is coursing its way through human and alien alike.

The anti-virus was designed as a microscopic predator to be used against the Comaghaz, but it had not been perfected when it was accidentally released. The virus has been programmed to kill virtually *any* microbe it detects that is "foreign" to its hosts' body. Unfortunately, there are many benevolent microbes that humans and

caught the virus has died (if they've had the common sense to stay in bed), and only one species of the Star Sphere is unaffected — the Lorbaats. They seem unable to contract the virus, and are making the most of their privileged situation.



Your Letters

What do Tharkoldu stelae look like? Are they pyramid-shaped objects as portrayed in the *Torg* comic, or the cylinder-shaped objects as described in the novel *Storm Knights*?

—Patrick Flanagan,
Freehold, NJ

Go with the pyramid shape, Patrick. That is the current appearance of Tharkoldu stelae. Their stelae were cylinder-shaped when Kranod was High Lord, but Jezrael changed the design shortly after assuming power.

1. Some spells can be disbelieved (i.e., illusions) and some can't, but what happens to characters who disbelieve spells that are not illusions?

2. What happens to Core Earth animals in axiom washes?

—Scott Paquette,
St. Paul, MN

1. Roughly the same thing that would happen to you if you disbelieved a bullet shot at you. If the spell's effect is real, the fact that you don't believe in it won't stop it from pasting you.

2. Most probably transform to something more in line with their new reality.

1. In the demon hierarchy, is Thratchen equivalent to a lord?

2. Since *Spiritual* axiom 23 states "one mythos becomes dominant," would Thrakmoss' possession of Baruk Kaah mean Stalek immediately becomes dominant?

—Pete Venters,
South Glamorgan, Wales

1. Thratchen is a Demon Prince. His updated stats and background will be featured in *Infiniverse Update, Volume II*.

2. Yes, Stalek would become dominant, unless Thrakmoss for some rea-

son decided to lower the *Spiritual* axiom.

When a character disconnects and she is wearing armor with a *Tech* axiom higher than that of the realm she in, what happens to the armor adds?

—Sam Thornton,
Essex, England

The armor would take on the appearance of the best armor the realm's *Tech* axiom will support, and provide that level of protection. If the character takes off the armor and hands it to someone who has not disconnected, it will resume its former appearance and armor adds.

1. What kind of axioms do the aliens of the Star Sphere live under (if they are different from continent to continent on Earth, they must be different from planet to planet)?

2. The word "Martian" means a native of the planet "Mars." Therefore, shouldn't the Terran Martians be called "Horusians?"

—James Kraczez,
Elk Grove, IL

1. Every cosm only has one set of native axioms. The reason axioms differ from continent to continent on Earth is because the cosm has been invaded by other realities. So all Star Sphere aliens live under the same axiom sets, although not all have realized their full potential.

2. An offbeat question, to say the least. No, Jim, "Martians" is correct. Remember, Terra is very similar to Earth in the 1930s, and only on the isle of Khem is ancient Egyptian religion practiced. "Mars" was named there by European astronomers.

How about a pen-pal or phone contact deal for subscribers within the same area, say, the same state? I think it would be great to have more contact with other gamemasters.

—Brad Elliott,
Niguel, CA

The idea has potential, Brad. We've had a few people ask us for info on *Torg* players in their neighborhood — unfortunately, we are not allowed to give out people's names and addresses without their permission.

However, there is no reason we couldn't print a "pen-pal" section where we could print the addresses of people who want contact with other groups.

What do the rest of you think? Send us your names and addresses and a letter giving us permission to publish them, and we'll try to get something put together.

1. Can any character negate the expenditure of a Possibility, or only the one against whom the relevant action is directed?

2. Can a Possibility reduce damage by more than one wound?

—Ben Ehrets,
Allentown, PA

1. We have always played that any character who is aware of what is going on in a given situation can cancel a Possibility spent. For instance, six Storm Knights are fighting a Nile villain in a warehouse. The villain spends a Possibility — any of those Knights who is conscious can cancel it.

However, if three of the Knights were in the warehouse fighting and the other three were outside in the parking lot, those outside could not cancel the Possibility.

2. Yes, you can reduce up to three wound levels with a Possibility.

Herald Messages

Quebec has been exposed as Cyberpapist territory. A team of deckers, priests and mages cruised its way through the GodNet, slicked its way into the Quebec data-fortress and planted a virus in their main core. This will make sure that they can't hide what they are! Three Glory events! The three stelae are neutralized! We will be back and Quebec will be freed.

Tired of the same old spells? Then really shock a shocktrooper with Marlana's conjured flying flaming camel spell! Their jaws will drop to the sand when a camel on fire pinwheels through the air to explode in a fireball on contact. (It's only illusory, so don't worry about the poor camel.) Only 5000 trades per copy.

— Brad Elliott,
Niguel, CA

"Bikers, edeinos, demons and Dagarathov, we fought them all to save the factory ... shame we didn't know how to defuse the bomb."

— Sierra Morn,
standing in the rubble

Sesetek has been deposed by the villainous Dark Masque and languishes in the capital's dungeon. His daughter, Hereteri (seduced to Good), has gathered the Order of the Shard, Deathhawk II, Adam Adamant, Destructo Don, Lois Plane and other heroes to assault the palace in Tripoli and free her father.

— Steve Crow,
N. Liberty, IA

The Cairo Crowd followed Malcolm Kane to the Americas. Slim Spade transformed and was slain trying to seize ultimate power. Almost as bad, the Mage was left drooling in a corner. Shades of Orrorsh! Virtue triumphs, but at what price?

— Andrew Joelson,
Hanover Park, IL

Mantis was not uncovered, though the Tharkold pride and Orrorsh Horror have been eliminated. China now looks to the New Gnomes for trade relations. Kanawa is exposed and is finding China a cold business partner.

— Greg Ray,
Oxford, AL

Oppression is unacceptable whether it be effected by Cyberpapists, power-mad emperors or nether-spawned demons. We fight to restore hope because it is our most powerful weapon. The collective human will to be free has a desire and strength all its own: the desire to win and the strength to succeed.

— Rebel Kyle

A group of dwarves has set itself up in the sewer network beneath New London. Bolstered by *message ward* spells, they are busily feeding information about the sinister realm of Orrorsh to Storm Knights everywhere.

— Dominick Riesland,
Milwaukee, WI

Ninja have stolen Mobius' secret nuclear reality bomb and taken it to Japan — all according to the Pharaoh's plan! "Kanawa will pay for its attempt on Cairo, and pay dearly!" (Maniacal laughter.)

Recently, we were taken to task (albeit humorously) for printing an 82-word herald message, when earlier issues had set the limit at 50 words.

While it's true that we don't want to wade through manuscripts when we're putting heralds together (pithy is good), we're not really interested in maintaining strict word count requirements. The herald messages that are printed each month are selected based purely on what strikes the editor's fancy.

Is it possible for the character inside a reality tree to disconnect in a mixed zone if he does something in direct opposition to both realities, say, using magic in a Living Land/Nippon mixed zone? If so, does the tree switch over, too?

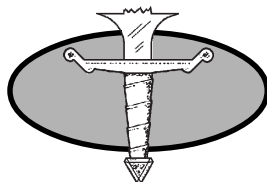
— Greg Detwiler,
Williamsburg, PA

It's unlikely, Greg. The guy inside a reality tree is pretty much out of the picture until he emerges, and isn't taking much of any kind of action. The tree defends itself using two of his

skills, and it's doubtful it would take on something that was a contradiction in the mixed zone it is creating.

We're not sure what you mean by "switch over." Remember, the person in a reality tree becomes possibility-rated, and a possibility-rated person cannot transform simply as a result of disconnection.

I have a concern about the new "eight-card rule" for single players detailed in the *Infiniverse Update, Volume I*. While it certainly does overcome some difficulties in being a single player, I find, having both played and gamemastered in this situation, that the cards stack up fast! Especially when a *Rally* or *Leadership* card is played, refilling the hand to eight cards. In the past few games,



***Drama* and *Hero* cards have stacked so high that "critical moments" have resulted in rolls of 140 and up, with the inevitable *Glory* result that follows. While this may be good for Core Earth, is it good for game balance?**

— Dan Swensen,
E. Helena, MT

An interesting question. Role-playing with only one player is tricky in the best of situations, and one player going through adventures designed for four to six is trickier still.

We settled upon the eight-card rule in the interests of game balance. But if it is not working for your "group," then by all means experiment and see what does. Sometimes what looks right as part of a formula doesn't work as well in certain play situations. Try the two-player rule and see if that works better for you, and let us know. ☒