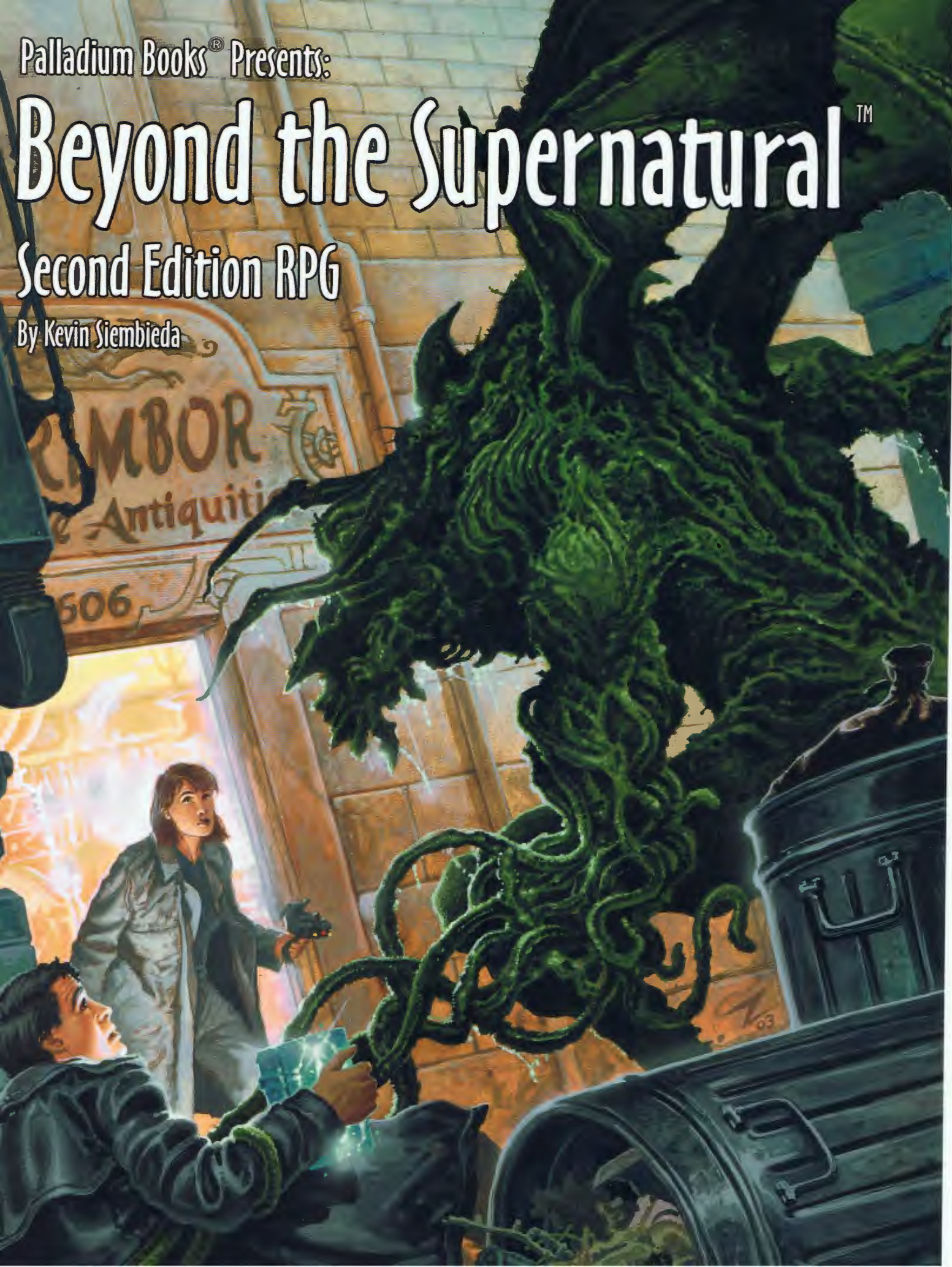


Palladium Books® Presents:

Beyond the Supernatural™

Second Edition RPG

By Kevin Siembieda



Warning!

Violence and the Supernatural

The *fictional* world of **Beyond the Supernatural™** contains subject matter that deals with the supernatural, psychic powers, magic, monsters, demons, ghosts, evil spirits, conspiracy theories, and the paranormal, as well as insanity and violence.

Some parents may find the violence, magic and supernatural elements of the game inappropriate for young readers/players. Likewise, the realistic manner in which the fictional material is presented may be disturbing for some young readers.

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Dedication

I want to dedicate this book to **Randy McCall**. The original concepts that inspired *Beyond the Supernatural* back in 1988 were Randy's. I don't know if I would have ever explored the horror genre on my own, but thanks to Randy's imagination, ideas and enthusiasm over the project, he opened up an entire new world of mystery and adventure for me. Our original collaboration and the book that resulted from it has always been a personal favorite.

With **BTS-2** I have expanded on the original concepts and virtually rewritten every word, but Randy's heart and imagination were my inspiration. I hope you like this new incarnation, Randy. With fondness and warm memories, this one's for you.

And this sentiment from Randy McCall in the original 1988 book still stands as well: Dedicated to our loving parents.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2005

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Palladium Books® Presents:

Beyond the Supernatural™

Role-Playing Game, Second Edition

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But most of all, I want to thank *Wayne Smith* and *Alex Marciniszyn* for their unbridled enthusiasm, creativity, suggestions, support and long, long hours of work on this project.

— *Kevin Siembieda, 2005*

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The Back Story Behind BTS-2

In 1988, before *X-Files*, before *The Sixth Sense* or the *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* TV show, and before *Vampire the Masquerade*, there was **Beyond the Supernatural™**.

The concepts, at the time, were so new and different that many gamers found themselves at a loss when it came to setting up a campaign. Looking back at it, the original needed more background and setting information as well as a template for setting up adventures. It also needed sourcebooks and support material that never came. Despite this, the original **Beyond the Supernatural™ RPG** was a personal favorite of mine and it sold very well, something in the neighborhood of 18,000 copies, and developed a nice, um, cult following, many of whom eagerly awaited its return as BTS-2. I think old fans and newcomers both will like what we've done.

The two central concepts behind **Beyond the Supernatural™** have always been, and still are, 1) magic and the supernatural are real, and, 2) few people accept the truth. This latter part was the most important aspect best presented by the fictional character of *Doctor Victor Lazlo*. That the supernatural – ghosts, vampires, werewolves, demons, and all manner of horrors – is real. That these creatures have co-existed with humankind since the dawn of man. The problem is modern humans have decided that they are not real. Blinded by arrogance, and perhaps fear, and armed with science, such supernatural reality has been pushed away and rejected as superstition, lies, fantasy and wild imaginings, relegating those who suggest they could be real to the pigeonhole of lunatics and charlatans. Anyone who dares to claim “mythical” magic and monsters are real gets chastised, laughed at and dismissed as misguided souls at best, liars, crackpots and con artists at worst.

That pervasive and pernicious denial of the truth has created a shadowy underground world where magic, monsters and the supernatural flourish. A co-existing reality where the holders of arcane knowledge and beings as far removed from humanity as one can imagine roam freely without the constraints of society, morality, the law or retribution. This means our modern world is inhabited by demonic predators and makes us humans the prey. Only characters who have experienced the supernatural or magic first hand and those who possess paranormal abilities are willing to accept the truth, but only because it has been forcibly thrust upon them. Thus, our heroes, the player characters, are reluctant champions of light who have stumbled into the eternal battle between good and evil, human versus the demonic and monstrous.

This leaves only one question: Are *you* brave enough to enter this realm, knowing that it will open your eyes to wonders and horrors denied to exist in the “real” world? Are you ready to accept the impossible and the inexplicable?

If the answer is yes, gentle reader, there is no turning back. Welcome to **Beyond the Supernatural™ Two**.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2004

Reality Check

Beyond the Supernatural™, 1st & 2nd Editions, are *fictional* horror games built on the premise that magic and the supernatural *are* real, and that society adamantly refuses to accept the so-called truth. Working on that premise means magic, monsters, demons, myth and horrific elements are all presented as “real,” but they are **NOT** real. This is a work of *fiction*, make believe, spawned from the fertile imaginations of the authors.

None of this is real. Not the magic spells, psychic abilities, ghosts, monsters, secret organizations, Victor Lazlo, the Lazlo Agency, the book *Worlds Within Worlds*, or any plausible sounding theories about the supernatural and the paranormal. This game is entirely make-believe. Fake. Fiction. Not real! And no one at Palladium Books encourages the practice of the occult, magic, or witchcraft. Nor do we believe it is real.

Am I overstating the obvious? Maybe, but I don't want any readers to be confused or frightened just because it is set in the real world and draws upon real world places, mythology, and urban legend. This is a game. It is meant to intrigue and entertain. Nothing more than *what if it were real*. Only it's not.

In the past, there has been some question whether some people who play role-playing games cannot tell what is real and what is fantasy. This Reality Check is intended to make that distinction very, very clear. The material in this book is **NOT** real. None of it.

Beyond the Supernatural™ is a game. It is meant to be fun. A brief respite from the ordinary, humdrum routine of daily life. It is a fanciful entertainment that lets its players build a story around fictional, heroic *characters* they have created in an elaborate version of cops and robbers. All role-playing games are rather like the “let's pretend games” we played when we were children, and silly fun. Role-playing games should be like playing Monopoly or Yahtzee: A gathering of friends to share a few laughs, devour some munchies, guzzle soft drinks, and have a good time playing. That's right, *playing*. So if you find yourself turning out the lights and burning candles, wearing a robe, casting spells from this book, or seeing spirits, toss this book in the corner and talk to somebody quick. Talk to your Mom or Dad, a good friend, a priest, a counselor, a therapist, or someone who cares, because this isn't normal behavior and the stuff in this book is fiction. Remember, this is only a **game**. It is not real. Now let's play and have fun.

– Kevin Siembieda, co-author and publisher



The Setting

"So, what can you tell me about Victor Lazlo?" Asked the young reporter.

"Well, he was a pioneer in the field of a parapsychology. He wrote nine books on the subject, published numerous articles and put forth several theories about the supernatural and how it all works."

"Yeah, yeah, I got all that from the website. You knew the guy though, right?"

"Yes . . . I knew him."

"Personally, I mean?"

"Yes, personally," drawled Robert Mach, head of the Lazlo Agency. He disliked reporters. They never seemed to get the facts straight and always put their own pedestrian slant on things or worse, wrote an article dripping with sarcasm and whimsy. He especially disliked rude, snot-nosed beginners who got stuck with an assignment they obviously didn't want in the first place, like this guy, Thomas Sheridan.

"What is it you'd like to know," asked Robert, "that isn't on the website?"

"I don't know, dude. What makes this guy such a guru? I mean he went missing, what? Back in 1984, and he's still considered like one of the top guys in his field? What's up with that."

"I always saw Victor Lazlo as part Gandhi, part Sherlock Holmes, part Einstein and part Huck Finn – visionary, detective, and thinker with a child-like sense of wonder that never faded. He marveled at the world around him and conveyed that sense of wonder in his writing. Most importantly, he was never afraid to ask how or why. How do things work the way they do? Why do people fear the unknown and hide from the truth? Why do parents tell children there are no monsters hiding under the bed when there very well might be?"

"See, that's what I mean. If this guy was such a thinker and visionary, why did he, um . . . and you, just now . . . say crack-pot things like there could be monsters under the bed?"

To get a rise out of you, thought Robert Mach to himself with a touch of regret. It was never wise to rattle the rafters of a narrow mind, it's just that he didn't have the patience and tolerance for this type of rhetoric. Not like Victor, who could look past the condescension and antagonism of non-believers without so much as a flinch, and press on with cool conviction.

"Can I ask you a question, Mr. Sheridan?" asked Robert.

"Sure. What is it?" said the reporter.

"You don't believe in the paranormal, do you?"

"You mean like, ESP, bending spoons with your mind, ghosts, witchcraft and boogeymen? No, can't say that I do. Of course, I don't believe in UFOs, Santa Claus or the Easter Bunny either."

"I see," said Robert with a bit of a groan. "So you're stuck with this crappy assignment and just trying to get through it?"

"Um, well . . . nah, I wouldn't characterize it as crappy, but you know, I don't believe in this stuff."

"Yet I'll bet you or someone you know has at least one ghost story to tell, or has experienced something that defies explanation. A premonition? Deja vu? A flash of insight? Am I right?"

"Um . . . not really."

"No? Seriously, Mr. Sheridan. Stop and think for a minute. There has *never* been something you personally experienced that fits the bill? What about a friend or relative? Be honest."

"Okay," grinned the reporter, "my mom says she knew the exact moment my sister gave birth and that it was a little girl with red hair, even though they were two thousand miles apart. But that's, you know, like . . ."

"A coincidence?"

"Yeah, exactly. A weird coincidence."

"No other *weird* experience?"

"Um, well . . . there was this time in college, okay. We were in this cemetery and . . . but you know, we were pretty drunk."

"What did you see? A ghost?"

"Yeah. I mean, no. I mean, we thought we did. Scared the bejeezus out of us, man. But like I said, we were pretty trashed, you know. And we were just a bunch of stupid college kids being wise guys and scaring ourselves silly."

"Mr. Sheridan, you've just helped to prove the point Victor Lazlo tried to make his entire life. The supernatural and the unexplained happen every day. Every single day, Mr. Sheridan. And not to freaks, weirdos and charlatans, but to ordinary people like you and your mother. Yet even the people who experience the paranormal event often refuse to accept it. You dismiss your mother's clairvoyant flash of insight as just a 'weird coincidence.' You've chosen to disbelieve your own eyes and convince yourself that your encounter with a ghost wasn't real at all, but a booze-induced hallucination. Apparently a hallucination you and your, what, three, four, five buddies also experienced? Let's see, that'd make it a mass hallucination, wouldn't it? Do you know how rare a mass hallucination really is?"

"Yeah," smiled the reporter, "I did a piece on it last year. It's about as rare as real amnesia. You're more likely to get hit by lightning than experience either one of them in your lifetime."

Now it was Robert Mach's turn to smile. "Thank you for your honesty, Mr. Sheridan. Now let me ask you this: What if your experience in the cemetery was *real* and had nothing to do with the alcohol you and friends had consumed? You did see a ghost. How would you explain that?"

"I couldn't, and I don't even want to think about it."

"Why not?"

"I don't know. It gives me the willies. Creeps me out."

"You'll be glad to know you are a typical American, Mr. Sheridan. Approximately eighty-two point three percent of people surveyed in the United States basically responded the same way. It 'creeped them out.' It was too unnerving to think about."

"Here are some other statistics you might find interesting," said Robert Mach. "While 82.3% of the people find the idea of ghosts to be frightening and refuse to believe they are real, 95% believe in a supreme being, 91.5% in some kind of an afterlife, 72% in angels or some sort of a spiritual guardian whether it be a benevolent ancestor or a guardian angel, and 36.7% admit –

admit, mind you – to experiencing a ghostly encounter, whether it was a visitation of a deceased loved one in a dream, hearing a phantom voice or smell, being sent a sign or message from beyond the grave, or an actual apparition. That's more than one third of the people in the United States willing to *admit* they, on some level, have had an encounter with a ghost. These aren't superstitious people from a third world country, but the USA, bastion of skepticism and home of technology, science and the Internet. By the way, our research shows those numbers go up or down by only about five percent with people in other countries around the globe."

Robert waited while the young reporter scribbled down the numbers on his electronic notebook.

"So what you're saying," summarized the reporter, "is on one hand, people claim they don't believe in ghosts, but on the other hand they believe in a god, angels, and an afterlife, all of which fall into the auspicious category of the supernatural."

"There may be hope for you yet, Mr. Skeptic," said Mach with a smile. "That's exactly what I'm saying. And it's a worldwide phenomenon. Can every one of these hundreds of millions of people be drunk, crazy or misguided? Was your mother?"

"Um, yeah," countered the reporter in a playful tone, "they can. After all, didn't everyone think the world was flat at one point? They were all wrong."

"Not quite everyone."

"Okay, a few guys . . ."

"Like Victor Lazlo," interrupted Robert, "had the insight to see the truth and dare to express their unpopular views though it brought them ridicule and humiliation."

"Hey," chuckled Mr. Sheridan, "you're smooth, changing the direction I was heading. I like that."

Robert Mach just smiled.

"I get the point," said Mr. Sheridan. "But where's the rest of the scientific community on this? Why isn't anyone else exploring the supernatural or the paranormal?"

"A good question, and one that haunted Victor Lazlo and frustrates me to no end."

"Well?"

"The scientific community hangs its hat on hard facts and results that can be quantified and replicated over and over again. However, even men of science have their prejudices and colored outlook. The paranormal doesn't fit convention. It challenges the accepted rules of nature and physics. In short, it functions outside our current boundaries of scientific understanding. Magic, other dimensions, demonic beings, ghostly entities – they all seem impossible and defy the laws of science. And since the science we know says they are impossible, such things can't possibly exist and, therefore, they are discounted. End of story. Except it's *not* the end of the story. The supernatural does exist and may even work within the laws of nature, but in different ways than we currently understand."

"That was something else Victor Lazlo tried to make people understand, wasn't it?"

"I see you did a little homework after all, Mr. Sheridan, or was that from our website too?"

"A little of both," he grinned.

"Yes, it was," replied the head of the Lazlo Agency. "People seem to have forgotten that much of what we hold as scientific

truths are *theories*, good ideas about how things *probably* work and fit together. These theories are tested, tweaked and modified all the time. Our understanding of DNA has been greatly expanded over the last ten years and there have been some radical discoveries that have expanded our *beliefs* and *understanding* of the human body, but there still remain many mysteries to be uncovered. When science finds a new piece of the puzzle, it increases our perspective and modifies, expands or confirms the original theory. However, rather than following the information to see where it might lead, people, including some scientists, all too frequently try to make the information conform to their pre-existing notions, dismissing puzzle pieces that don't seem to fit, and in so doing, blind themselves to the broader truth."

"That's kind of harsh, isn't it?"

"I don't think so. Let's face it, Mr. Sheridan, the other reason you don't tell people about your ghostly encounter is because they'd laugh at you. If science was serious about uncovering the truth, there would be a ghost-sighting hotline and research teams to investigate, but there isn't. There's no person or organization within the scientific community where you, or anyone, can turn to with your questions about the paranormal. There are few scientific theories on the subject. No board of supernatural investigation. No government funded research. Nothing. When a mass murderer says that a dog told him to kill people, there's no investigation into the possibility that either the dog or the man may have been possessed by an evil supernatural being. The media labels the killer a madman, the State convicts him, locks him up and throws away the key. In fairness to these social institutions, the knee-jerk reaction of most people is to believe the man is insane, and everybody breathes a collective sigh of relief when the maniac is locked away. But should they? What if the man was manipulated, mind controlled or actually possessed by an evil supernatural force?"

"Are you saying the Son of Sam was innocent?" asked the reporter. "That he was, like, the victim of supernatural possession?!"

"No, I'm not. What I'm trying to say is that we don't even consider the possibility. There is no *accepted* scientific theory to apply or science-based investigative agency to examine the facts in the case or anything concerning supernatural phenomena. Instead, the crimes and claims are all wrapped together neatly in the blanket of insanity or desperate lies, and accordingly ignored. The scientific community's refusal to even address the *possibility* makes it impossible for us to accept any answer except that the killer is crazy. So one madman is imprisoned, we convince ourselves the terror is over, and we sleep better at night. But what if the man really was possessed by a monster? That means the real killer, the true, inhuman perpetrator, remains at large, unshackled, invisible and free to work more of its terror. There is no policeman looking for it. There is no one trying to stop it. The creature is free to do as it will. Hiding in plain sight, because science says it is not real, and the media, you, and Joe Average turn a blind eye and fabricate whatever lies are necessary to shield yourselves from the truth."

"That's one hell of a conspiracy theory you have going there Mr. Mach. And I don't mean that as a smart-aleck. It gave me chills, but that's some pretty paranoid thinking. If I believed any of it, dude, I couldn't sleep at night. On the other hand, if you wrote that up right, you might give Stephen King a run for his money."

"You're doing it again."

"What?"

"Dismissing the possibility behind the mantle of insanity and jokes. All I said was 'what if' – I didn't say it was true."

"Yeah, but that's the kind of stuff you believe, right?"

"Victor Lazlo taught me to question and wonder, Mr. Sheridan. To look past scientific prejudice and social dogma and ask the scary questions in order to find real answers. If I can get any part of Victor's message across, it's that nobody is asking the questions. It's all swept under the rug, mocked and dismissed as a joke."

"I get the point, but it's hard to . . . um . . ."

"Keep an open mind?"

"I wish you'd quit finishing my sentences for me."

"Sorry, it's one of my personal foibles."

The two men chuckled for a moment, relieving some of the tension that had grown from the serious conversation.

"Many of Victor Lazlo's theories actually have a scientific basis," continued Robert Mach. "He believed, for example, that he had discovered a type of energy science refused to recognize. Something he dubbed *Potential Psychic Energy*, or P.P.E. This energy fuels what you would call ESP or psychic ability. It also fuels magic and many of the powers possessed by so-called demons and supernatural monsters."

"So-called demons?"

"Oh, that's one of my pet peeves. I have often wondered if the paranormal might not be taken more seriously if these *inhuman beings* were labeled as something other than 'demons and monsters.' Hollywood, comic books and societal perception have colored our views about demons and monsters. We're taught as children they aren't real, then movies and fiction characterize them to the point of ridiculousness. The same is true of magic – the stuff of fairy tales and children's books. But they're both real, all right. The problem is, science doesn't recognize the existence of P.P.E., dismisses the paranormal, and ignores all the anecdotal evidence, even though we could fill the Pentagon building with millions of examples from just the last thirty years."

"If that's true, how can they get away with it? This would be the biggest cover up in history."

"They who, Mr. Sheridan? There's no cover up, because none of it is real, remember? Besides, who looks for something that people don't want found? The truth is too scary."

"Come again?"

"Fear. Fear is the great motivator. Not to pick on you Mr. Sheridan, but let's take you as an example. You refute your own personal experience. Not more than one minute ago you were making jokes. It's scary. Scary and mysterious. You said it yourself, if you thought any of my 'paranoid' rantings were true, you couldn't sleep at night. That's your answer. Everyone wants to sleep easy, Mr. Sheridan."

"Yeah, but . . ."

"But what? You saw the paranoia after 9-11. People in small town America were buying duct tape and bottled water by the truckload as if they could be the next likely target. We don't want our children to worry about the boogeyman or demons. We have enough to worry about. Besides, mom, pop, our educators,

our clergy, our scientists and Uncle Sam all insist monsters, psychic ability and magic aren't real. That's the answer most people *want* to hear, so it's the one we accept and hang on to for dear life. After all, would you like to come face to face with a demonic horror? Of course not. And besides the terror of the incident itself, it would force you to question everything you've believed in your entire life. That, my friend, is more scary than anything. We humans like to feel sure and confident. We like our comfort zone. If the supernatural is real, the world is a very different place than what we currently imagine."

"Is it real, Mr. Mach?"

The head of the Lazlo Agency leaned back in his chair and thought for a moment.

"I'm afraid so, Mr. Sheridan. You'll probably call me paranoid again, but we at the Lazlo Agency suspect millions of people encounter the supernatural and paranormal every day. Most are minor incidents that are easily ignored and dismissed, others are terrifying and some are downright deadly. Here's a terrifying and paranoid thought: we believe millions of people fall victim to . . . let's call them monsters, every year. And that's just in our country alone."

"Come on, millions?" said the reporter with an uncomfortable tone as he squirmed in his seat. "I think someone would notice millions of people being eaten by monsters, Mr. Mach."

"Would they? I wonder. Where have the millions of missing people gone, Mr. Sheridan? They can't all be lying face down in a shallow grave somewhere or living a secret life somewhere. Why can't we find the tens of thousands of children whose faces haunt us from the sides of milk cartons and posters at Wal-Mart? What about the invisible people we barely notice? The homeless, the illegal aliens, and prostitutes that go missing or are found dead. You're a reporter, do you pay attention when a hooker, junkie or street person is reported on a police blotter as dead or missing?"

"No, or if I do, they're forgotten ten seconds later. I only take notice if the person was important or there was something unusual, I mean really unusual or a celebrity or politician is linked to the deceased or the disappearance."

"Exactly, and every major city has thousands of these invisible people die every year, and thousands more go missing. And I don't mean gone missing due to foul play. I mean thousands of indigent people, transients, junkies, hookers, and the mentally ill roam the streets and come and go without hardly anyone noticing them in the first place. When one drifter is suddenly gone, it's assumed they must have gone someplace else, to greener pastures, home, rehab or jail, but we don't actually know where they've gone at all."

"And don't care," added the reporter. "Those are the kind of people we like to keep at a distance."

It was Robert Mach's turn to be surprised, as Thomas Sheridan continued. "And nobody's going to believe a wino or a coked up whore even if they have the stones to try to tell the cops they saw a monster or something weird. Burnouts and losers don't have much credibility even on the streets. Hell, you expect them to be seeing glowing lights, monsters and Elvis in the alley. There's not a reporter in TV or print who's going to waste their time on those people, unless they smell a real story. Something big."

"Mr. Sheridan, you surprise me."

"I'm not stupid. I get the point, and it makes sense. I've worked some stories on the street. I've seen the police push street people aside and reporters run from grimy bums and crazy homeless people. You barely notice their faces let alone get their name or take a statement. I've seen what you've said a hundred times. People don't listen to street people. They don't even want to get near 'em. And when the homeless and drifters move on, nobody knows where they've been, where they've gone, and don't care. When a hooker or junkie or poor slob buys it, their passing doesn't make the news unless a gunfight was involved, and sometimes not even then. Do you have any idea how many people get killed, hurt or go missing in a city like Detroit or Chicago and never make the evening news or grab a sentence in the newspaper?"

"Yes, I do."

The reporter stopped writing and switched off his notebook. Robert had clearly touched a nerve.

"You know I can't write any of this for the paper," announced Mr. Sheridan. "At least not without making you and anyone involved with the Lazlo Agency look like whack jobs."

"I know."

"Dude, this sucks. I hear what you're saying. I mean, okay, it sounds crazy, but sitting here talking with you . . . I know you believe it, and you make it sound plausible. I hate myself for saying this, but I believe you, and that scares the hell out of me."

"Thank you, Mr. Sheridan."

"For what?"

"For not labeling me a 'whack job.'"

"Yeah, well, it's not like I'm doing you any favors, dude. And I *am* going to have trouble sleeping tonight, thank you very much."

"It will pass."

"Has it for you?"

"No, but then as you said, I'm a believer. You'll either decide I'm one of the best con artists you've ever met or that I'm full of it, or that I really am a whack job. And if you don't, you'll just push it out of your mind, focus on other more immediate and personally important things. It's easy. Most people do it."

There was a moment of silence before anyone spoke.

"Yeah, maybe, but I don't think so. You've given me a lot to think about."

"You know, if you wanted or needed to talk . . . off the record . . . I'm here. I didn't mean to upset you. This is intense. Most people can't handle it."

"Thanks. I appreciate that. Maybe I will. I'm certainly going to look into it some more."

"I mean it. Anytime, day or night. Here, let me give you my card. It has my private cell phone and e-mail address. And if you're serious about looking into the world of the paranormal, I can put you in touch with some people."

"Yeah, that's cool."

"Okay, dude," teased Robert Mach, "like if you need to talk or see another ghost, give me a call."

The young reporter smiled, but his mind was clearly distracted.

"Count on it. Seriously, I hear and see a lot of stuff, you know. If I come across something . . . you know, like . . ."

"Weird."

The reporter gave him a look.

"Sorry," said Mach, "personal foible."

"Yeah, well it's annoying. Work on it, dude. But if I come across anything I'll give you a call."

"Sharing information, observations and helping each other out is what the Lazlo Agency is all about."

"Yeah, I see that."

"What about your story?"

"You've given me plenty of material for that."

"Oh?"

"Don't worry, I'll make it a fluff piece. That's what my editor wants anyway. I'll talk about the web site and how you guys network to gather weird stories about, you know, the paranormal and ghosts, and how you speculate on their, um . . . uh . . ."

"Validity and relevance?"

"Yeah, validity and relevance."

"You're okay, Sheridan. You'd better be careful though, or you might find yourself . . ."

"A nut job like you?"

"Something like that."

The setting is our modern world. Today.

You'll soon understand the meaning behind the title of Victor Lazlo's book, *Worlds Within Worlds*, as you leave behind the world you know for one filled with mystery and danger without ever passing through a dimensional portal.

You'll also explore the question of "what if" in such a way that it will take our comfortable world and turn it into something strange and frightening. Even as we walk down familiar roads we'll be taking some twists, turns and back alleys that will take your characters on a journey into the macabre and unknown.

With a little luck, your characters will survive with their sanity intact to tell the tale.

The Secret World of the Supernatural

People take their lives for granted. We busy ourselves with life's everyday chores and pleasures, and gleefully accept everything we see on the surface. When a question arises, we turn to men of science and learning, or politicians or clergy, and even celebrities. We don't question or challenge the status quo. For us, life is good. Very good.

Unlike our ancestors, our perception of reality and science lets us sleep unafraid and free to dream of sugar plums and prosperous futures wrapped snugly in the comfort of scientific dogma.

We no longer see spirits riding the wind or demons lurking in the shadows. We don't converse with ghostly ancestors nor fear our children might be stolen in the night by malignant fairies or soulless monsters. We don't see signs of demonic possession behind the face of madness or the sinister working of evil spirits behind some inconceivable act of violence or depravity. There are no monsters under the bed. Science and our strident belief in it has slain all the monsters. There

are no Boogeymen prowling the streets nor ghosts haunting our homes. Science declares ghosts, demons and monsters and ancient gods to be the stuff of dreams and ignorance or childish fantasies, and we agree wholeheartedly.

Superstition has been erased, and with it our fear of the unknown. The darkness holds no sinister secrets nor cradles nightmarish monsters. If it can't be proven – if it can't be replicated in a laboratory – it's not real. That is the unwavering demand of science.

Science pronounces magic to be impossible, illogical, preposterous, and we accept it. Science says psychic phenomena cannot be proven, so we deny its existence.

Science insists these things never were, and so we accept they have never been.

Science decrees that all things can be explained, so we accept whatever labels, theories and explanations science hands us, even when the explanation is contrary to what we have seen with our own eyes.

But what if science is wrong? What if science has rewritten history and distorted reality to fit its own dogma? As my dear, sweet mother was wont to say, 'The road to perdition is paved with good intentions.' And, my dear readers, science is very busy paving roads over the truth, at least when that truth is the paranormal.

– An excerpt from Victor Lazlo's controversial book,
Worlds Within Worlds

This is the premise of BTS-2. Science, for all the good it has done, is wrong when it comes to the paranormal. Psychic phenomena, magic, the supernatural, and demonic creatures are all very real. Yet science rejects the very premise, for to do otherwise would require them to re-imagine the world and force them to rewrite the laws of physics.

Ironically, the old myths, legends, superstitions and ghost stories of the past frequently contain much more than a kernel of truth. They are all part of a frightening history that reveals a dark, hidden world of demons, monsters, magic and evil that has always co-existed with our own and continues to thrive, only modern people have been taught to ignore it. To disbelieve. So it is that the paranormal, the psychic and the supernatural has been relegated to the realms of fiction, fantasy, madness, chemically induced delusions, dreams and swamp gas.

Modern people have arbitrarily selected science to represent the accepted view of reality in such a way that most have closed their minds to all other possibilities. Any claims that challenge or threaten that world view are ridiculed and branded as "hoaxes," "lies," "chicanery," "impossible," "insane," and "unreal."

People have convinced themselves that the world is safe, familiar and predictable. They have chosen to live a quiet, safe, humdrum existence that combines a little school, a little work, a little love, and a little playtime with a little television, the Internet and self-gratification. Every new day is basically the same safe drill like everyone and everything around them. This helps people go to sleep at night feeling snug and happy, awakening to a new dawn free of fear and worry. At least, until someone comes face to face with a living nightmare or spell casting madman that science says doesn't exist. Then their reality is

shattered and science is nowhere to be found, except to plaster a convenient label or contrive a ridiculous cover story about mass hysteria, hypnotic suggestion, trickery or some other *explanation* to mask the truth. It is a pattern of behavior that has allowed monsters to roam the streets unchecked and unchallenged except by a tiny number of outcasts, oddballs and psychics working outside the normal confines of society and the law.



The Secret War

Believing in the impossible and fighting what is said not to exist

As Anderson and Pietrowski put the last of the Nightblood demons down, they could already feel the creature rapidly discorporate underneath them. Its body turning into a thousand reddish-black bubbles rising right through their fingers, into the air and vanishing in a rapid fire of soft pops that sounded like popcorn popping in the distance. And then it was gone. Even the creature's blood on their hands and clothing bubbled, popped and vanished.

"God," groaned Sheriff Mitchell. "How many was that? Five?"

"Six actually," replied Michael Anderson standing next to the sheriff.

"Six?"

"Yeah, six of the damn things."

"And now they're gone like they never was."

"Yeah, that's how it goes."

"It makes no sense." The Sheriff grumbled as he slapped his hand down on a Louisiana mosquito the size of a June bug. "I don't care whatcha all say, it don't make no sense to me. Monsters from another world or dimension or whatever. Why invade the Earth?"

"It's not an invasion Sheriff. This isn't War of the Worlds, and these aren't aliens."

"I know, they're some kinda demons that feed on people, ya said. Still . . ."

"Look, from our point of view there's not much difference between these creatures and that mosquito you just killed. They're predators driven by instinct to do what they do. You wouldn't call a swarm of mosquitos invaders, would you?"

"Hell no, but a mosquito ain't some god forsaken . . . I don't

know what the Hell them things were, boy. Demons from the #@% pits of Hell!"

The Sheriff was shaken and Anderson knew he should probably stop, but he went on anyway; a bad habit from his days as an academic, always trying to teach and inform.

"I know it probably seems that way, Sheriff, but creatures like the Nightblood are as much a part of our ecology as the mosquito. They've lived on Earth, among people, preying on humans since as long as mankind has existed, maybe longer. They're predators, and they prey on people, other mammals too, actually, but humans are their favorite . . . um, food source. Like a mountain lion or a wolf, only, well, they're supernatural creatures. And . . ."

"Save it, man," grouched Joseph Pietrowski as he walked by and plopped himself on top of some crates as a makeshift chair. "You're wasting yer breath, brother."

Sheriff Mitchell knelt over the place where the last Nightblood had been slain. He felt the air and ground where the thing had lain only moments ago, and made the sign of the cross.

"Not a trace. Nothin'." said the Sheriff. "You'd never know what we went through tonight unless you'd been there and seen it yerself."

"That's the way it always is, Sheriff. There's seldom any conclusive evidence."

"People need to know about this. People need to know what's out there."

"Yeah? And what are you going to report tonight?" asked Pietrowski in a snide tone. "How is your report gonna read, Sheriff? 'On May 27th, I led five psychics to raid a nest of Nightblood demons by the railroad tracks. The creatures had been preying on the skanks and street people of New Orleans and the neighboring suburbs for a few months. They were responsible for at least seven deaths, probably countless missing people and God only knows how many household pets. All six of the creatures were dispatched without casualties to our team of advisors. Our thanks to the five intrepid souls who helped put an end to these heinous crimes.' Something like that, huh? Then what? You gonna call the families of the deceased and tell 'em their loved ones were killed by a pack of monsters?"

"Enough," Growled Anderson.

Sheriff Mitchell looked at Pietrowski and then Anderson with sad, embarrassed eyes.

"It's alright, son. He's right. If I write what really transpired here tonight, people would say I was plum crazy. I guess I haven't figured out what to report yet . . . if anything at all. Folks will be happy enough that the murders and disappearances have stopped. It'll all be forgotten before the next Mardi Gras." The Sheriff's last words trail off into a soft whisper.

The three men were silent for a moment, catching a well-deserved breath. It had been a long night. Pietrowski lit up a cigarette and took a long drag before turning away and mumbling an apology at the Sheriff's direction.

"It's okay, man," he said. "There's nothin' to tell. No bodies. No evidence. As far as the world is concerned, what took place here tonight never happened. Not to the real world, understand? Trust me, people don't want to know about this. Don't complicate your life by tryin' to tell them. It's not worth the grief."

"I here ya, son," said the Sheriff.

"It's been a long night, Sheriff," said Anderson. "We're all tired, beat up. I've got some people who need medical attention up on the hill. If you could help us with that so there aren't any questions or media, we'd be grateful."

"Grateful? I'm the one who's grateful. Consider it done. Wish I could do more."

"That'll do just fine, Sir."

"Don't seem fair," said the Sheriff, regaining his composure now that the monsters were gone and the crickets sang along the tall grass of the tracks. "What you boys done . . . you coulda been killed. A couple of you dang near was."

"Has nothin' to do with fair," said Pietrowski.

"You know you did good tonight yourself, Sheriff," said Anderson. "You know you did the right thing?"

"Yeah. Helluva thing, though. Hope I never have ta deal with such again."

"Let's hope," said Anderson.

"Let's get going," piped in Pietrowski. "I'm sick of this place and could use some breakfast and three days of sleep."

The world – our world – is infested with evil. Not just self-serving, sinister, and murderous people, but monsters. Creatures from some dark, alien dimension. Supernatural beings that have haunted, preyed upon and toyed with human beings since our ancestors first climbed out of the trees. As impossible as it may seem, these malignant creatures walk the streets of our cities and towns. Like a forest predator, most people never see one, but they are there, lurking in the shadows, watching and waiting for the right moment to pounce upon an unsuspecting victim. When such a monster is spotted, or its gruesome handiwork is discovered, the authorities and the media deny its existence and find or fabricate a palatable explanation that doesn't involve ghosts, ghouls or demons.

Truth be told, it seldom goes that far, because most people who experience a supernatural encounter seldom report it to the authorities. They seldom speak of it at all, to anyone. Others keep silent to avoid social suicide and being labeled and ostracized as a weirdo, freak or lunatic. In either case, most people find it easier to convince themselves of anything rather than accept the horrifying truth. Why? Because the truth is impossible to accept. It threatens everything they know and understand. It shreds the comforting veils of science and screams that they are living a lie and that no one is safe from the things that go bump in the night. And that's more frightening than any monster. They want things the way they have always been: logical, definable and safe. And so a sort of conspiracy of disbelief and silence is born from fear. Better (and easier) to doubt oneself and even one's own sanity than open Pandora's Box to the world of the supernatural, leaving an ignorant and unsuspecting public vulnerable to the denizens of night.

As for the creatures themselves, they are the stuff of nightmares spawned in some alien dimension. Strange and terrible life forms beyond human comprehension, and whose very existence seems to defy our understanding of life and reality.

Though there is talk of angels and creatures of light and goodness, we focus our attention on creatures of darkness. Demonic monsters and specters that seem to be the embodiment of evil and chaos. Ghosts, predatory beasts of instinct and superhuman ability, and creatures so wicked, cruel and depraved that only the word "demon" does their descriptions justice. Debased and vile, these loathsome beings are attracted to humanity's vices and dark nature, and despise love, compassion, virtue and all that is beautiful and good. Although some of these beings can take the appearance of elegant and attractive people, their true form is almost always disfigured, hideous or monstrous, as if their physical bodies reflected the creatures' true, repugnant nature.

Supernatural beings come in a variety of shapes and sizes, but all are inhuman and share few, if any, traits with humankind. For many it is their nature or instinct to hunt, hurt and feed upon humans. Just as a cat preys on mice and birds, these supernatural monsters prey on *humans*. Many are nocturnal hunters, some take the form of humans or animals, and others are actually invisible. None are native to our world or our reality, though they have been coming here to hunt us for millions of years.

The Supernatural Enemy

"So if demons and evil supernatural beings exist all around us every day, how come nobody has ever seen them?"

"A lot of people have seen them, honey. They's just reluctant to speak of it.

"I've never seen any."

"Then maybe you ain't been lookin' with yer eyes an' yer heart open."

*— An exchange between Thomas Sheridan and Angel King,
renowned Psychic Medium.*

Strange and terrible, supernatural creatures come in all shapes and varieties, but there are five basic categories of beings: Haunters, Supernatural Predators, Demonic Servants, Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences.

Haunters and Pranksters — things that go bump in the night. Many supernatural beings are *spirits* — ethereal beings made of energy. Upon entering our world they must anchor themselves to it, lest they lose their hold and vanish in but a few hours, returning to whatever Hell spawned them. For some, like Poltergeists, Haunting Entities and others, that anchor is human emotion or memories burned into the psychic fabric of the Megaverse. Others must assume physical form made from worms or insects, or rubbish, or bones, or rotting flesh. Still others seek refuge inside the living, taking possession of innocent people and either cohabiting and influencing their victim to do evil, or usurping control of the body entirely, the true fiend hidden inside mortal flesh and free to walk among us unrecognized.

Other Haunters and Pranksters may seem as solid as a rock, but even for them their link to our plane of existence is tenuous and when that link (often the physical body they have assumed) is destroyed, they vanish as if they never were.

Haunters include creatures that frighten and cause mischief to trouble and torment mortals. They may work alone, in pairs, or in packs or swarms, like jackals or bees, but seldom serve a greater power. Nor do they have a personal agenda or master plan. Most are simple-minded spectral beings of habit and instinct who do what they do with little thought about how it might adversely affect humans. The more powerful and malevolent Haunters are malicious pranksters or tormentors who deliberately target and afflict humans for their own sadistic amusement. Their motives are selfish and personal, and though Haunters and Pranksters may be forced to serve a greater power, human or demonic, they don't like it, and often do as they please despite the wishes of their masters. Such beings include



Gremlins, Grave Ghouls, Stealers, Scurriers, Possessing Entities and other mischief makers and tormentors.

Supernatural Predators – slobbering monsters. Supernatural Predators are usually savage beasts who hunt and feed on humans. They are feral, primordial fiends that are more bestial than human. They may prowl the forests or the cities, or both, stalking prey in the parks and avenues, or the sewers, abandoned buildings, darkened alleys and brightly lit neighborhood streets. Most come out at night, and though they may eat other animals, human flesh and blood are usually their favorite or preferred food. While most Supernatural Predators are animalistic hunters, some, like the Nightblood, exhibit human intelligence and cunning. Many play with their “food” (i.e., their human prey) before making a kill. Some like to terrorize their prey first, others engage in cat and mouse games, still others use seduction and trickery or playful antics to attract and toy with their prey, but in the end, they all slay their victims for food and pleasure, either devouring them whole or eating some specific part (e.g., eats only the head, hands, brain, heart, internal organs, or drinks their victim’s blood, or eats their bones, or eyes, etc.). The bottom line is, Supernatural Predators are hunters who may kill for pleasure, fun or revenge, but like animals, ultimately hunt for food. *Some* have a favorite prey, i.e., children, women, virgins, prostitutes, the elderly, practitioners of magic, clergy, thieves, drunks, junkies, lechers, strong men, weak men, etc., but for many, any human will do.

Examples of Supernatural Predators include Werebeasts, Loup Garou, Nightblood, Malignous, Hell Hounds, Boogey Men, and the Nacarant, among others.

Demonic Servants – tempters, schemers, seducers and enforcers. Supernatural beings that most humans think of as (lesser and greater) demons or devils fall into the category of Demonic Servant. These beings are usually intelligent and humanoid in appearance, or can assume a humanoid or human appearance. Some, like the Dybukk, can even assume the appearance of a very attractive human, but underneath its facade of beauty is a gruesome monster. Although each of these beings may, and often do, act of their own accord, their kind are regularly subjugated and forced to serve Ancient Evil (Demon Lords and Dark Gods) and Alien Intelligences. In fact, they may also be made to serve humans via magic, cursed objects, and demonic pacts. (The latter is a pact between a human and an Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence who sends the human a demonic servant or advisor. Witches and demon worshippers, for example, may command a Demon Servant.)

The Dybukk, Death Weaver, Sowki, Imp, Vampires and many other Lesser and Greater Demons fall into this category.

Ancient Evil – Lords of Darkness, Death and Chaos. Ancient Evil includes Demon Lords and Gods of Darkness known, forgotten and unknown to humankind. They are among the most dangerous of all supernatural beings and often secretly work behind the scenes to inspire and promote cruelty, evil, chaos and destruction. They are the movers and shakers – the masterminds – of the supernatural world, and the Earth is their playing field. These malignant kings and queens and gods command a host of Demonic Servants, Supernatural Predators, and Haunters as well as manipulate human servants and pawns in elaborate schemes, games and wars between themselves and for their own amusement. (Chess or solitaire on a cosmic scale, if you will, with hu-

mans and other creatures as their living playing pieces.) Beings that defy human comprehension, Ancient Evil draws both pleasure and sustenance from the emotions and torment of mortals, preying upon humankind’s most base desires and emotions. They are diabolic creatures who can reach out from the void and touch mortals to corrupt and empower them. They are evil beings who take delight in the corruption and suffering of others, and breed hatred, terror, death and chaos. Most play human beings like puppets, and manipulate them for their own amusement, strange machinations and inspired cruelty or depravity, but often Ancient Evil do the wicked things they do for evil’s sake. To call them the embodiment of evil is an accurate description, but the words themselves belie the true range of horror and pain Ancient Evil can inflict upon others. The brave humans who dare to defy them would do well to remember that there is nothing good or redeemable about these dark forces, and any sign of compassion, mercy or benevolence is nothing more than a means to an end or a cleaver ploy, even if it is only to cause confusion or doubt. These maleficent beings don’t do anything without a reason, whether that reason be a personal whim or, more often than not, part of some elaborate scheme to promote suffering and wickedness.

Alien Intelligences – evil incarnate. Alien Intelligences are hideous supernatural beings who have absolutely nothing in common with humans, except they share their most base and vile emotions. Alien Intelligences are more powerful and more terrible than Ancient Evil. Even their physical bodies are monstrous mounds of pulsating flesh and slime covered tentacles. It is said they more resemble something you’d scrape off your foot than any living being that walks the Earth. Gargantuan in all magnitudes, Alien Intelligences range in size from that of a house to an office building. These god-like monstrosities can straddle dimensions and send fragments of their own miserable life essence into the worlds of mortals to inspire fear, hate, murder and madness. In fact, *Ancient Evil* and *Alien Intelligences* can send splintered fragments of themselves into the physical plane where they possess living beings and create living avatars (monstrous or beautiful) with the power of a demigod and a heart of darkness.

If there was a sixth category for “enemies” it might be us humans, for we are often responsible for bringing the five into our reality. There are only two ways supernatural horrors can come to Earth. *The first* is a quirk of nature on a cosmic scale. Victor Lazlo identified lines of magic energy running across the face of the planet. Druids and Diviners called them “ley lines,” the ancient Chinese Geomancers called them “dragon tracks,” but both are the same thing with different names. Where two or more ley lines cross, a nexus point is created. A nexus is a junction point where the energy level is increased, and where two or more lines cross, portals to other dimensions can be opened. Among the dimensions to which our Earth is connected, are those of the supernatural realms. The ebb and flow of energy along ley lines changes with heavenly events and surges during planetary alignments, eclipses, the full moon, certain times of the year (solstices and equinoxes) and even certain times of the day (like high noon and midnight). At these moments, a doorway to the supernatural world may also randomly open, and while it is open, *things* may slither out into our physical plane.

The second way the supernatural comes to Earth is being called; summoned by us. That's right, at least half the supernatural monstrosities that plague humankind were brought to Earth deliberately by a *human*. This can be done by opening a dimensional portal via magic ritual (which may require human sacrifice), the misuse of magic, the manipulation of ley lines, and sometimes simply by opening oneself to Ancient Evil or an Alien Intelligence and making a pact (offering body and soul). Without a dimensional portal, demons and supernatural monsters are trapped beyond the mortal veil, thus they *require* someone from the physical plane to create a doorway through which they may enter. Humans craving power, wealth or revenge are all too happy to oblige. One of our human failings is to exaggerate our own capabilities, thus arcanists familiar with the occult frequently try to summon forces beyond their control, and even beyond their understanding. Such beings are not easily tricked or controlled, and more often than not, the monster turns the tables and uses the human for its own sinister purpose. Other people accept the Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence as their master or god. Demon worshipers serve the horrid thing as willing agents to work its evil and make its presence known. While this usually takes the form of corrupting and hurting others, it may also involve bringing demonic minions to Earth and they may even seek to open a portal to bring their Master to Earth. Many are the legends and prophecies of events and forces capable of bringing about the end of the world or a demonic reign of terror.

Establishing a link to the supernatural is appealing to black-hearted mortals as a means of garnering power. In return for their loyalty and service, the powers of darkness are likely to give their *mortal servants* special "gifts" of inhuman power. Likewise, evil priests, sorcerers and psychics find that close proximity to demonic beings dramatically enhances their level of power.

However, just as often, portals and links to the supernatural are established by accident through foolish curiosity, dabbling with magic, toying with forces not understood, super-intense emotions/desire and just plain stupidity. Likewise, *Demonic Servants*, *Predators* and *Haunters* may be deliberately summoned for the purpose of terrorizing, tormenting or murdering enemies or extracting a terrible revenge.

No Tangible Proof

Sheridan frowned and continued questioning the elderly psychic. Robert Mach from the Lazlo Agency had arranged the meeting, and the more he heard, the more the hairs on the back of his neck rose.

"Okay," said Sheridan, "if 'evil spirits' are part of our everyday life, why isn't there more physical evidence – photos, video, blood, slime . . . I don't know . . . stuff?"

"That's an easy one, boy. 'Cuz the worse of them use human vessels."

"Come again?"

"They work their evil through us. Use us, manipulate us like puppets to do all kinds o' heinous things."

Sheridan frowned. "Well, that's convenient."

The woman only smiled at his sarcasm, and continued. "See here," she said. "Love, hate, fear, envy, lust, an' all the Seven Deadly Sins, they's like physical things to these creatures. They

can smell 'em, feel 'em . . . taste 'em a mile away. An' they use 'em like weapons agin us. Trust me sweetheart, a jealous or angry man is every bit as dangerous as a loaded gun. As a reporter, you should know that."

"So you're saying what? That the devil makes us do bad things? Not a very original premise."

The woman leaned back in her chair and chuckled, then said, "I ain't sayin' every bad deed in the world involves the Darkness, honey, but I'm sayin' plenty of it is. 'Specially the deeds that come as a complete surprise or seem senseless or depraved. Iffen it makes your skin crawl, it's a sure bet dark forces was behind it. Like I was sayin', these evil beings can smell despair, an' longing an' hate like a dead pig festerin' in the sun. It attracts 'em like flies to a carcass. Dark emotions, hot desire, or an unsettled mind from madness or drugs makes it easy for 'em to reach out an' touch yer soul. Makes a person open an' vulnerable to 'em. Ever stop yer self, honey, an' ask, 'oh God, what am I thinkin'? That's them."

"Yeah, right."

"Believe what you want, boy, but if you've had a moment like that, then chances are you was touched by the Darkness, only you didn't let it take hold o' ya. Or did you?"

"And if I had?"

"Then . . ." She took his hand, paused for a moment as if lost in thought, then looked him square in the eyes and said, "you might've done something terrible. Beaten or kilt yer fiancé when you found out she'd been cheatin' on you with yer ol' college buddy. Or maybe torched his sports car, maybe with him still in it. You know you thought about it that night. You got yer self liquored up an' you entertained some scary thoughts. That was the Dark puttin' its touch on you."

Sheridan jerked his hand away and looked at the old crone in disbelief.

"Frightenin', ain't it? An' you didn't even have a clue, did ya? What would you have told the police when they'd come for you, had you done it? That the devil made you do it? No, honey, you'd have said, you was angry, got too drunk outta yer mind an' done somethin' terrible. Somethin' you regretted, only it was too late. You'd have no idea that something dark an' comforting had wrapped its arms around you an' had whispered in yer ear. You was strong an' didn't relent, but other folks is weak, or already a garden for evil waitin' to bloom. They's the ones who give in, an' some oh them likes it. They like the power it brings. They enjoy the killin' an' embrace the Darkness. They become lost in it an' continue to do more an' more wicked acts till they's pretty much devils themselves. You see what I'm sayin, honey?"

Sheridan sat dumbfounded. His mind raced in search of a snappy retort while struggling with how she could have know any of this about him. He'd never told a living soul about that night.

"Ain't nothin' to be ashamed of, honey," the wizened psychic continued. "All o' us been touched by the Darkness at some time or another. Probably more times than you'd like to believe. A loss of faith, sorrow, hate . . . these emotions make it easier for 'em to reach us, so does using substances that affect our emotions an' minds. Drugs, booze an' dark thoughts makes us malleable to evil suggestions an' gets us to consider things we might not otherwise do. Not only that, but when a person is in

such a state o' mind, they don't remember half of what they was thinkin'. It's all a blur an' you's likely to 'tribute it to the drugs, the booze, the sorrow, an' the heat of the moment. An' let's say you did know you were dealin' with dark forces ta work yer evil. You knew an' you embraced it, an' the Darkness gave you strength an' power to do the unthinkable, so what? Even if that's what you tell 'em, the police is gonna chalk it up to drugs or booze anyway, or that yer crazy. There ain't gonna be no discussion about demons or monsters or magic, only about you an' whatcha did."

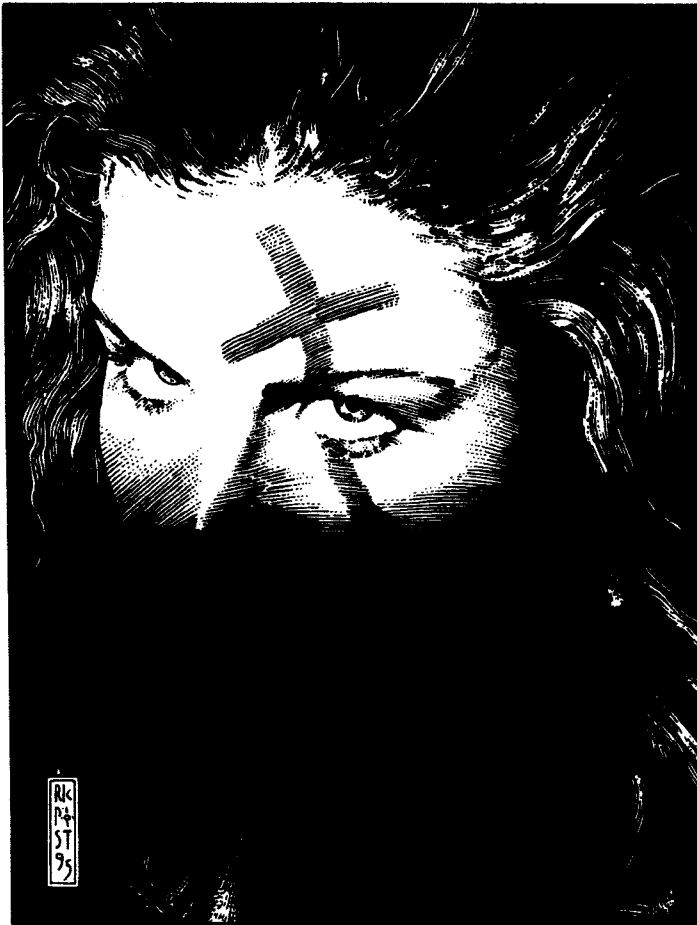
"So are you saying that every crime is caused by demons?"

"Not hardly. People is just plain stupid an' mean. Get 'em riled up an' who knows what they's capable of doin'. We don't need no demon to make us do wrong to others, but a good twenty percent of crime, yes sir. An' the ugliest, most terrible an' most senseless crimes, oh yes honey, they's inspired or even perpetrated by beings not of this Earth. Maybe as many as a third o' them is my guess."

"When you say perpetrated . . ."

"I mean done by their hand, though they may have taken human form or possessed somebody, or ordered it done from the shadows."

"And we can't see these forces, this Darkness?"



"The most cunnin' an' powerful know its best when they ain't seen or they show something that ain't their true form. They know if you seen the real them, what they really look like, then the illusion is broken. It shocks you outta their control an' is likely to send you screaming into the night. But if alls you see is a shadowy figure, or you only hear a soft voice in yer mind or

see a handsome face in yer dreams, then you ain't payin' attention to the source, yer listening to their seduction, an' that's what it's all about. The only 'ception is those lost souls what's given themselves over completely. You know, disciples an' witches an' such, they so embrace the Darkness that they's likely to see the hideous thing as something impressive an' maybe even beautiful in its sublime horribleness."

"So where the . . . um, where do they come from, these . . . dark beings?"

"First off, they's always been here. The history an' myths of every land talks about demons an' evil spirits."

"Yeah, but you just said it, 'history and myths.' History from a simpler time where people didn't understand science, and myths are just fairy tales and fables."

"So tell me, honey, is that crucifix 'round yer neck jewelry or a symbol of yer faith?"

"Huh? Oh. Yes, I'm Catholic."

"Then look to yer own Bible. It speaks exactly to the nature of evil. The good Lord done his share of dispellin' demons an' resisting temptation."

"Okay. The Bible's full of metaphors representing . . ."

Laughter burst from the psychic in a roar.

"What's so funny?" grumbled the reporter.

"I love that 'bout you modern churchgoers, you's just pick an' choose the parts of the Bible you like an' discard the rest."

"I don't appreciate my beliefs being ridiculed, okay?"

This made the woman laugh even harder. "It ain't just you or the Catholics, honey," she said between stifled laughter, "It's all of you. The way I see it, either the Bible is the word o' God an' truth, or it's a book o' fables an' metaphors. You can't have it both ways. An' if it's the word of God an' truth, what more evidence does you need? It's all right there."

"I'm not going to make this a theological discussion and I'd like you to leave religion out of this."

"Just seems a matter of commonsense an' faith is all I'm sayin', honey."

"Please."

"Alright."

"So these monsters, they've always been here?"

"Or brung."

"Brung? You mean called here by, what . . . cultists?"

"Well, cultists an' demon worshipers, sure, but most are brung by foolishness."

"Okay, you lost me."

"The world ain't as neat an' orderly as people think. You see in books an' movies all these brilliant masterminds an' everything has rhyme an' reason to it, but I've lived long enough to know that most of what happens just kinda happens to us an' we just kinda respond the best we can. Too often folks just do things without thinkin' an' others pay the price. Well, somebody does something foolish with magic an' all Hell breaks loose."

"I'm still not sure . . ."

The woman let out a long sigh and said, "Foolishness. You know, when younguns an' folk play an' experiment with things they oughtn't be. Forces they don't understand, like tryin' to use magic or playin' with a wee-jee board on a night when spirits

are afloat or the moon is full. More bad things have been brung into our world through games an' foolishness an' curiosity than any 10,000 cults. The deliberate bringers of evil, they's just the most dangerous because they's got an agenda. They have a reason for what they's doin', but even half of them is pawns to forces they don't truly understand."

"And you? You understand these forces? Being psychic and all?"

The Medium smiled and stood up to stretch her legs. "Ain't nobody understands the Darkness, honey, or the supernatural. Not truly or completely. Not even close. Those of us with 'gifts' have a little better grasp of such matters is all. We know the face of evil an' the many forms it takes. If we're sharp, we recognize the signs of its presence an' we better understand the dangers an' how to fight the Darkness when it comes. But understand it? Only enough to be scared, honey, only enough to be afraid for us all."

— An exchange between Thomas Sheridan and Angel King,
renowned Psychic Medium.

Vanishing Evidence

Supernatural beings must somehow *bind/anchor* themselves to our plane of reality in order to remain in it. For some, that means *linking* itself to powerful psychic memories, places of power, or people. For others, it requires possessing another living being and using the host body as its own. Likewise, some beings are anchored to our world by the worship of mortals (cults, covens, demonic churches and societies, and sometimes even only one lone devotee or madman), and for many supernatural beings they must actually construct a physical body to inhabit, made of Earthly materials or living beings, in order to function in the physical plane. Even those supernatural beings, such as predators, who *appear* to be whole and independent beings are more the stuff of the ethereal plane than our mortal realm, thus, when they are slain even their bodies vanish as if they never existed at all.

This "vanishing act" is called *discorporation*. For most supernatural beings to function in the physical world they must a) be summoned to Earth by a mortal (or find some other dimensional portal) and b) anchor themselves in some way to stay here for any length of time. Regardless of how the creature arrived on Earth, in all cases, the supernatural being's presence in our mortal plane is a tenuous one at best. Consequently, when demons and other supernatural beings are slain – physically killed – their link to our reality is *shattered* and their physical manifestation (their body) *vanishes*, turning to dust or sludge or bubbles or insects and quickly dispersing as if it had never existed at all. No bones, no blood, no snot or goo – nothing.

Discorporation is a weird phenomenon that confounds the efforts of paranormal investigators in their quest to *prove* the supernatural is real, and, in some cases, to prove they are not insane, quacks or criminals. This is yet another big reason paranormal investigators and psychic warriors must conduct themselves with considerable thought, diplomacy, and subtlety, because to do otherwise is likely to land them in jail or a mental institution.



Secrecy

"Why doesn't somebody stand up and tell the truth?"

"Honey, the looney bins are full of people what told the truth."

— An exchange between Thomas Sheridan and Angel King, renowned Psychic Medium.

The long and the short of it is that people at large simply refuse to believe in the paranormal. Call it what you will: denial, willful ignorance, conspiracy, fear, brainwashing, or any number of other things, but most modern people simply *choose* not to accept that ghosts, demons, and the supernatural exist. That means that making a public spectacle of oneself in some attempt to change people's minds or insisting they do exist only leads to ridicule and trouble.

One of the things that will make life difficult for the player characters is that they are very much *unsung* heroes operating in a shadowy underworld of night, secrecy, magic, cultists and monsters that co-exists with our own modern world, yet remains a secret. As a result, our heroes must not only consider what the monsters and practitioners of the Dark Arts might do to them, but also the media, the police and other authorities, not to mention society at large. Operating in secrecy is not by choice, but out of necessity.

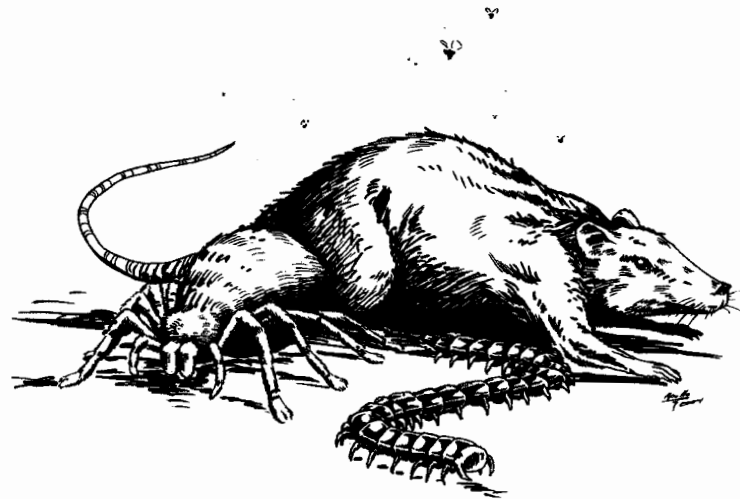
And even if the heroic characters could tell someone, who would believe them? Only fellow psychics, paranormal investigators, practitioners of the magical arcane, people who have had the misfortune of encountering the supernatural, and, well, the bad guys (the demons, creatures, cultists and evildoers) they're trying to stop. Society and the law will brand them as dangerous lunatics, quacks, publicity seekers and con artists.

Why do people react this way? There are a lot of reasons. The easy catch all is, "it's human nature," but for those of you who'd like something a little more substantive, consider the following.

Fight or flight response. We destroy what we fear or don't understand. It is human nature to fear what we do not understand, and what we humans fear, we destroy. It's part of our survival instinct. Whether that response is "instinct" or learned is another matter of debate, but it is an undeniable human reaction.

Think about it for a minute. How many times have *you*, as a knee jerk, reflex action, squealed and struck out to stomp or squish a centipede, spider, ugly bug, or mouse that was minding its own business but happened to cross your line of vision? It didn't represent any genuine danger. It didn't attack. It didn't threaten. It just *wandered into your line of vision*. Yet your knee-jerk reaction was first, fear (scream or jump), and second, to flee/get away from it or to kill it. I can't imagine any animal less dangerous than a two or three inch long (plus tail) field mouse. In fact, if you take a good look at one, they are really very cute, yet I've seen grown men and muscle bound jocks, yipe and leap back from one. Even the most loving and gentle of our mothers, sisters, and girlfriends will shriek bloody murder and jump onto chairs or run, sometimes in a herd like buffalo, at the sight of a little mouse (heaven help us all if it is a *rat* or a

bat). The same often holds true of the even tinier spider. And though they wouldn't do it themselves, the women folk shriek for the nearest man to "Kill it! Kill it!!" And the man, or a group of men, usually try to do so, often in something of a panic themselves. Funny scenario? Yes. One we've all witnessed or participated in many times. Stupid, but true. Now, when the laughing subsides, ask yourself why? Why do we have a strong (dare we say, violent) reaction to a teeny weeny spider, a cute little mouse, a disgusting rat or slithering snake — and why do we find these last two animals even more repulsive?



Victor Lazlo has speculated that the answer lies in human-kind's past and the supernatural. That this silly *overreaction* is, quoting Victor Lazlo, "*An instinct arising out of millions of years of mankind being plagued by demons and supernatural horrors. It may even be a scream from a subconscious racial memory. A deep rooted emotional response that has evolved within the human psyche over millions of years as a defense mechanism to our ongoing battle with supernatural evil and monstrous predators. I don't think it is coincidence that many supernatural beings have characteristics of the very animals and insects that we find so frightening or revolting. Nor is it coincidence that many of the greater demons, dark gods and sorcerers can summon and control insects, rats, mice and other creatures related to the night and pestilence.*"

"We see a similar reaction toward people who appear to possess psychic or magical powers; to wit, the Salem Witch Trials and the European Witch Hunt period of the Inquisition that spanned several decades of panic, torture, book burning and murder. Unfortunately, since people no longer believe in the paranormal, and without a true 'spiritual advisor' (the days of consulting a clan elder, shaman, soothsayer, mystic, or demon slayer are long gone), there is no one we modern people can turn to for advice about 'unnatural' occurrences or trouble with demons. And because men of science insist psychic abilities and the supernatural are not real, when people with 'special gifts' are encountered, we also tend to have a negative view of them, too often jumping to the conclusion they must be villains, witches, demon worshipers and other nefarious people up to no good. I suspect our instinct or racial memory once again smells 'the supernatural' but without context, it mistakes gifted humans as demons to be feared. As a result, we see the fight or flight knee-jerk reaction: At best we distrust and distance ourselves from these 'dangerous' people, and at worst, we assume the

most terrible things about them and drive them away, lock them up or destroy them.

"This 'villain/danger' reaction to psychics and practitioners of magic makes most ordinary people peg anyone with preternatural powers as charlatans, confidence artists, lunatics or much, much worse. Anyone who appears to possess 'unnatural powers' is likely to feel the heat of fear, hate and suspicion, and be attacked as a freak, evildoer or a monster himself. If a display of paranormal ability should happen out of the blue, without warning, the 'normal' people around the psychic or sorcerer are likely to freak out, panic and run from the very person able to protect them, and possibly race to their own destruction. Or they might attack the individual in a blind panic or a misplaced sense of self-preservation. At least that is the likely scenario in the 'civilized' world. That is not the case in most so-called third world or primitive cultures, or even modern China, for that matter, though the Chinese don't speak of the supernatural world in front of foreigners.

"Let's not forget that the human mind is an amazing but contrary machine, capable of withstanding incredible trauma one time and being incredibly fragile the next. What one person can accept or cope with may terrify, confound, enrage or paralyze another, and even the strongest of us can snap under the pressure of stress and trauma."

— Victor Lazlo, from a speaking engagement at Duke University.

The enemies among us. As Victor Lazlo points out, modern society is *conditioned* not to believe in the supernatural or paranormal, yet something in us makes us react strongly to the paranormal. Consequently, most people witnessing a supernatural "event" (battle, confrontation, magic, monsters, ghosts, etc.) are likely to respond in terror and run for their lives. At the same time, they are unlikely to be able to tell "friend" from "foe," and *anyone* exhibiting weird powers or who seems to be associating with sorcerers and/or freaks and monsters (including psychics) will be seen as *the enemy*. And people afraid for their lives or responding under the *fear of the supernatural fight or flight instinct* are likely to strike out in panic, terror and deadly force. Suddenly the friendly psychic, mage or paranormal investigator becomes part of the terrifying supernatural world and something "weird, terrible and dangerous" themselves. Depending on the situation and the level of fear, a well intentioned psychic investigator could suddenly find fingers pointed at him as the cause of trouble, or worse, he may be pushed into the arms of a demon, captured and delivered to an attractive human-looking shape changer, or simply attacked, beaten, stabbed, run over by a car, maimed or killed by the very people he was trying to protect, let alone face potential criminal charges and imprisonment. Likewise, a terrified and confused mob or wild-eyed individual unable to handle the truth or distinguish between friend or foe, may kill those trying to help or do crazy things to save themselves — leap out of a five story window, drive a car into the player characters' group, shoot at them, throw bottles and debris at them, run exactly where the heroes tell them not to go, unwittingly help a monster, hurt or endanger other innocent people by their/his actions, create more trouble and danger (start a fire, block an escape route, etc.) and on and on. The larger the group, the greater the level of mass hysteria, panic and danger. Terror

can turn peace-loving, civilized people into an angry, blood-thirsty mob or a terrified herd of stampeding cattle. Oh, and your characters are suddenly the terrifying little mouse responsible (in whole or in part) for the panic, and like the mouse, the target of extermination.

Characters who accept that the supernatural is real in the world of **Beyond the Supernatural™ Two** must always remember these things and conduct themselves with discretion and secrecy. They should play dumb, pretend to be powerless and never use their abilities in public, but act behind the scenes and confront supernatural evil when there are no or as few eye-witnesses as possible, and then go with any improbable explanation that might be offered. To do otherwise threatens their own safety and freedom. Not only from the authorities, but characters who become too notorious may find themselves targeted by supernatural beings, secret societies and those who would prefer the world to remain ignorant about the supernatural. Individuals and groups who make it well known that they oppose and battle supernatural evil may be marked for death by villains and organizations afraid they'll come after them next. Conspiracy theorists believe that's exactly what happened to Victor Lazlo. That his fame gave him a voice people were starting to listen to and so dark forces conspired to make the man *disappear*. His death might have made him a martyr (at least in the psychic community), but if he disappeared, his tragic fate would remain unknown. There would be no enemy to blame, no crusade to be launched, and without a (relatively) respected and personable figurehead to champion the cause, the world of the supernatural would again fall silent and get pushed out of people's consciousness, just as the denizens of darkness like it.

There is an up side to the fear factor. Careful and cunning characters can use people's disbelief to their advantage. The average person does not *want* to know about or believe in the supernatural. It is too bizarre and scary. They'd much prefer to ignore and forget about it, even when they come face to face with it. Consequently, most people will accept the flimsiest rationalization to explain the inexplicable regardless of how many holes the explanation may have, and try to forget it ever happened, which means they won't press charges, won't talk to the media, are less than truthful to the authorities, and happy to cling to any openings the characters may offer for them to get past it all and move on with their life of denial. This means even people who absolutely *know* they have just experienced a real supernatural event do not take it any farther, don't want to learn more, and seldom, if ever, speak about it again. It's easier to put it behind them and try not to think about it (except for the nightmares). When pressed on the matter, most will deny all or many of the elements (especially their involvement), claim to have no memory of the event, have no comment to make (neither confirming nor denying the event), and/or get angry and stomp away, or threaten violence (or the involvement of the police, lawyers, etc.) if they are bothered any further.

In short, this "flight, deny and forget" aspect of the flight response works to conceal the truth and cover up the player characters' identities, abilities and involvement. Player characters will be amazed at how readily plausible denial is embraced by the victims, witnesses and authorities involved in a paranormal incident. And it will happen over and over again. Unfortunately, it also perpetuates concealing the truth and prevents educating people about the supernatural world around us.

The authorities and the supernatural. Even (or especially) the authorities are willing to accept a plausible explanation rather than have to deal with the supernatural. In addition to human nature, disbelief and denial, the authorities – the police, other law enforcement agencies and the military – are all bureaucracies. That means they *like* things to make sense, go by the numbers and make them look competent at doing their jobs. They *hate* red tape, paperwork, questions and explanations out of the norm or which make them sound out of their league or incompetent. Having to use words like “the unknown,” “inexplicable,” “demonic,” “magic,” “psychic” or “paranormal” makes their skin crawl and can only lead to trouble, more questions, more paperwork and more trouble. They could tarnish their reputation, be denied a promotion, get themselves transferred to a less desirable post, get reprimanded, become a scapegoat, etc. Since their superiors all harbor the same fears and human nature, they aren’t going to like hearing that a spell casting wizard, coven of witches, self-proclaimed psychic, ghostly entity or supernatural monster was responsible or involved in any crime or incident. To them it is crazy, ridiculous, and impossible. Trying to prove the story is true is not a solution, because it makes trouble, questions, more paperwork and creates competency issues for the superiors. Commanders may even become enraged. Why? For one thing it shakes up their beliefs and they (and the public) don’t want to reexamine their beliefs. For another, it scares them, because they don’t want to believe such things are real and they don’t know how to handle them. For another, because the public, politicians and other higher ups don’t believe in the supernatural and deny its existence, they begin to question the authority’s competency and sanity. (“How could you even suggest such an outlandish thing?! Now get to the bottom of this or I’ll have your badge!” The *bottom* being a plausible explanation that does not involve the supernatural or psychic phenomena.) They want simple answers that don’t threaten the status quo or cast aspersions on their reputation or credibility.

Lastly, if the truth frightens the authorities and they don’t know how to respond, they don’t want to panic the public who has put their faith and trust in them, so it’s better and easier to bury the truth. Heck, most leaders can argue that it’s their civic duty to cover the truth in order to *protect* the public, and it’s their job to protect the public! Consequently, the authorities are quick to pigeonhole a crime or incident involving magic or the supernatural under labels like “madman goes amok,” “mass hysteria,” “swamp gas,” “prank,” “psychological problems,” “drugs,” “alcohol,” “inaccurate initial reports,” “freak accident,” “military testing,” “national security secrets,” and other similar labels to explain almost anything rather than admit the involvement of demonic forces, magic, the paranormal or the unknown. And, as is so often the case, if it sounds plausible or is reported by an important enough figure of authority, it is accepted, nobody investigates any further, and the incident is forgotten, at least by the vast majority of people. Anyone suggesting supernatural phenomena or conspiracy to cover up the truth are largely ignored as kooks.

Again, there is an upside to this for the characters involved in the incident, mainly that unless there is clear evidence of a crime involving them, the incident is not investigated any further, the case is closed and they are off the hook. The characters may not even be implicated and there is no follow-up to hound them (or if there is, it is an “unofficial” warning), and no charges are filed against them.

On the other hand, one or more of the psychic investigators may be charged with a crime they didn’t really commit – anything from trespassing and vandalism to harassment, stalking, home invasion, extortion, confidence schemes, robbery, assault, destruction of property, murder and even terrorism. Though such a charge may be trumped up or made in malice, most of the time it’s made because the heroes *seem* to be the obvious culprits responsible. How’s this for a scenario: The police arrive to find one of the player characters standing over a dead body. There’s blood and signs of a struggle everywhere, they don’t live in the home, so they must have broken in, and the rest of the group is standing around amongst the carnage or make a run for it the minute the authorities arrive. Who else could be responsible? Not demons or cultists. These characters must be some kind of gang, or lunatics, or both. Telling the police that they just battled one or more supernatural monsters and it was the monsters who killed the man and wrecked the place (or they had to kill him, because he was possessed and about to do something terrible, etc.) will only confirm they are indeed a bunch of *lunatics* responsible for the murder and destruction. What would *you* think if you heard such a story? That these guys are nuts. End of story. And just think how it will look if the heroes are caught staking a vampire or found untying someone from a sacrificial altar.

Likewise, if the authorities are desperate for a scapegoat, one or more of the characters may be charged for crimes they never committed, by mistake or as the result of a deliberate frame job. Cased solved: “Delusional man kills four believing they were demons,” or “Gang goes on a rampage,” or “Psychic goes psycho.” Another scenario could also involve one or more of the player characters being unofficially threatened or harassed by the police or an interested third party (attorney, family friend, rival organization, vengeful associate of the true culprit, the culprit if he managed to escape, etc.), and since the incident/crime never happened and the authorities won’t investigate “the supernatural,” our heroes are in a tough situation and may have to grin and bear it, or take matters into their own hands.

Evil Science. The player characters also have to worry about certain segments of law enforcement, the government and private industry. Military and governmental “Black Ops” organizations (NSA, DIA, etc.), rogue scientists and unscrupulous private companies may all have an interest in people who “claim” to have psychic powers, wield magic or can harness the supernatural. While such organizations might hire the characters for special operations, research and formal laboratory experiments, such groups may also try to manipulate and use our heroes for their own gain. Psychic ability is of great interest to the world governments, especially in the application of espionage and security. Most want to know, a) is extra-sensory perception (ESP; particularly Precognition, Telepathy, Clairvoyance, Remote Viewing, Astral Projection, and See Aura) real, b) can it be truly harnessed and controlled, c) can it be learned/taught to others, d) how can it be used against the enemy, and e) how can the military defend against enemies using similar extraordinary measures?

If you don’t think the world governments give ESP a second thought, guess again. The US military, under the auspices of the National Security Agency (NSA) and Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), spent millions of dollars on remote viewing (a term, by the way, coined by the US military) and developing

agents with psychic abilities for the purpose of spying on Russia and other foreign nations. When their operation “leaked” to the media in the 1980’s the government had little to say and contradicted itself regarding the purpose and extent of such “research,” and claimed it was never able to develop psychic spies. Really? Then why spend more than two decades and tens of millions of dollars on a program that, allegedly, bore no results? Seems unlikely, and many believe similar secret, psychic spy operations continue to this day within various US defense agencies, perhaps including Homeland Defense. Russia and other countries have also engaged in similar government/military sponsored operations involving psychics and the use of “remote viewing” (Astral Projection, Precognition and Telepathy) for the purpose of spying and defense.

This means the military and intelligence communities may see psychics involved in public incidents as potential recruits or pawns for their own operations. Others may be seen as “specimens” and “test subjects” to be captured, interrogated, and recruited or leveraged into cooperating with the agency, or isolated and studied like a guinea pig.

More often than not, however, covert government agents and agencies quietly observe paranormal investigators and reputed psychics to learn more about that person and his associates, exactly what abilities they possess, and what sort of vigilante operations or research they are conducting. Tapping into the “independent’s” database to “share” their information as well as tailing and observing them, might provide insight, data, clues, and ideas for their own psychic operations. Once tapped in to the psychics, the agency can feed our heroes clues and information to entice them to go on missions and tackling (or testing the strength of) supernatural threats without the government having to get directly involved themselves. In short, the “civilian paranormals,” as they are designated by such agencies, become unwitting pawns of the military or government defense/security agencies. However, there is a more sinister reason to secretly keep tabs on psychics, practitioners of magic and investigators of the paranormal, and that’s to make sure they don’t stumble onto any government operations or compromise national security. When they do, it’s time for government intervention, which could mean almost anything: misdirection to get the group focused on other matters, getting them in trouble with local authorities, getting them in trouble with evildoers or supernatural beings to distract or confuse them, framing an enemy to appear to be the one responsible (not the government, therefore eliminating a problem and tricking the psychics), or manipulating events to tear the group apart, get them imprisoned or get them killed. Frame jobs, disappearances and assassinations are also options available to these agents in the name of preserving national security, but they much prefer manipulation and using others to do their work than termination of such useful individuals. Obviously, this is another good reason to keep a low profile and to beware of faceless online “buddies” and web sites that seem to know too much or regularly offer reliable and helpful information involving the occult and the paranormal. Some conspiracy theorists have gone so far as to suggest Victor Lazlo and his legacy, the Lazlo Society and Lazlo Agency, are actually fronts for government operations.

Private industry can be just as dangerous and ruthless. For them the motivation is not a misguided sense of extreme patriotism, but the almighty dollar. They want to learn how psychic

abilities work, how to replicate and control these powers, and the best way to exploit them for their own gain. This may include anything from industrial espionage to developing and offering “psychic operatives” to the military, government and other corporations. Think about it, psychics who could predict market trends, elections, disasters, and so forth would be priceless advisors. Likewise, representatives who could read minds, manipulate emotions, and uncover secrets would make great political lobbyists, salespeople and activists, not to mention security officers and industrial spies. The most brazen and heartless corporations might even go so far as to grab “subjects” off the street, imprison them in some secret lab, and study and experiment on them like a caged animal before turning them loose or silencing the subject and dumping the body. The latter is extreme, but it could happen.





The Characters

Game Designer Notes: Gamers are more sophisticated these days, and seem to wonder about the construction and logic behind certain game mechanics, rules and design choices. In an attempt to address such pondering, I'm lacing **BTS-2** with *asides*, like this one, that I'm calling *Game Designer Notes* to share my thoughts and reasoning on why things are the way they are, sort of like the Director's Commentary on DVDs. I hope it helps context and clarify the rules, and makes the players and Game Masters feel more comfortable with the game.

When I started Palladium Books back in 1981, I wanted to create a set of rules in which any game character, setting or idea could be easily slipped into place. I had the great fortune of learning my gaming and design skills in the hothouse environment of the *Detroit Gaming Center (DGC)* from 1978-1983. Hundreds of (sometimes close to a thousand) gamers would gather every weekend to play games, share ideas and show off their latest game purchases. That meant virtually every new role-playing product showed up at the Gaming Center within hours of hitting the store shelves. That also meant a dozen to several dozen people would read it, play it, and critique it in a matter of days. A common complaint of those halcyon days: "Great ideas, great setting, cool characters, *BUT* another *new* game system to learn. I don't want to learn another game sys-

tem. How can I adapt this to what I already know and like?" Yep, even the big, established companies seemed to come out with a new set of rules for every new game or setting. It was maddening, and I thought to myself, "If I ever had a game company, I'd do one set of rules where anything was possible. Where every genre and any character could be played." Of course, people said it couldn't be done, so I went and did it.

The DGC also allowed me to play in and observe every style of play imaginable as well as the opportunity to wax philosophical about game design theory, storytelling, game mechanics, G.M. techniques and a whole lot more. And we had some pretty amazing minds and impressive Game Masters at the Gaming Center, including Erick Wujcik, Rene Vega, Julius Rosenstein, William Messner Loeb, Matt Balent, Johnny Hill, Pete Rogan, Brian Garwood, and a host of others.

We gamed like demons back then and tried everything. My regular Saturday night group had 26 players, and our game sessions ran from 8:00 in the evening till 8:00 in the morning. (Hey, we were crazy college kids.) Firsthand experience showed me that too much attention to detail and reality in the rules bogged down game play and made it slow and boring. On the other hand, too little made the game too light and lacked long-term gaming appeal; it might make a fun, one-shot night of

gaming or a mini-campaign, but not anything people wanted to stay with for any length of time. Games where the characters were quick to roll up but died just as quickly were also games the players soon lost interest in playing for the long term.

The *best games* were interesting and challenging “campaign” settings where the Game Master seemed to focus on the “characters” and the adventure. I immediately saw correlations to comic books: Stories revolving around a continuing roster of heroes who moved from one adventure to another in a fantastic, but plausible setting. A succession of events where the heroes – the player characters – pitted their talents, powers and ingenuity against new villains, returning villains and new challenges that kept them guessing and intrigued. The more cunning, tricky and despicable the villain, and more challenging the adventure, the more fun it was to play. The more details, character and personality that was given to the world/setting and the Non-Player Characters, the more fun the game. Continuity, reappearing villains, plot twists, puzzle solving and surprises all made for a better story and a richer gaming experience. But at the center of it all were the *player characters*. In a way, everything revolved around the characters. The characters were the playing pieces – the principles – in the ongoing drama, the alter-egos the players assumed like actors in an ongoing TV series. These were the “days of *their* lives.” The adventures were *their* stories. The triumphs and accomplishments *their* successes!

So when I sat down to create my own game system, *characters* came first, setting second, villains third, and the rules . . . ironically, the rules needed to be subtle and as invisible as possible so the story, the conflict, the villains, and our *heroes* took center stage. Yet the rules are the most crucial part of a role-playing game. The foundation on which everything else is built. Without a strong, but flexible foundation, the rest of the structure becomes too rigid and either it falls apart when challenged by imaginative players or its narrow structure severely limits the possibilities for game play. Sometimes narrow focus and rigid rules are good. For example, one probably doesn’t need or want rules for spell casting or psionics in a cowboy game, but I wanted a base set of rules that could accommodate anything and allow multiple genres and infinite possibilities. A game system where the players and the Game Masters were truly limited only by their imaginations. Maximum flexibility, raw excitement and fun. One game system, endless possibilities.

The Palladium game system was built around the *player characters*, setting and story. To my thinking, *characters* in an ongoing saga, much like the characters in comic books and television shows, had to be well defined, memorable and a joy to watch and play. The game system is devised to create characters we quickly come to *know and love* as they embark on a string of (potentially endless) adventures. The number of, and choice for, attributes, alignments, skills, powers, bonuses, background, the level based experience system for advancement, *everything* is

designed and calibrated to create those strong, memorable and beloved characters, and in so doing, enrich the entire gaming experience. I tried never to forget these are “role” playing games. Games of storytelling and adventure where the player takes on the *role* of a fictional character.

Consequently, Palladium characters, and certainly **BTS-2** characters, are NOT one- or two-dimensional stereotypes the player whips up in a few minutes, plays callously, kills off and quickly rolls up “John Doe Replacement Hero” to rejoin the game. No. They are vivid, colorful characters with a depth of detail and personality that brings them to life. Characters that players know intimately and care about deeply. Characters the players love to play and desire to explore. Characters that grow and change with experience.

If there is a downside to this character and story driven system, it’s that the character creation process takes time. I make no apologies for that, because it is intentional and important to create the vivid gaming experience I want to impart.

Players have a lot of choices to make in building their characters: Which Psychic Character Class (P.C.C.) to choose, rolling up the physical and mental attributes, the selection of an alignment (the character’s moral compass), occupation and skills (which adds to the character’s personality, interests and background, as well as raw ability), education, psychic powers, Hit Points, optional background details, and so on. Moreover, these aren’t easy choices, which means reading a big chunk of the book to make an informed choice and a lot to think about in order to make a character that really appeals to (and fits) the player’s interests. (That having been said, we would like to think that *all* the characters have their merits and are fun to play, so we recommend experimenting a little and try playing a character you might not ordinarily select. The experience might surprise you.)

A lot of choices means it takes time to create a **BTS-2** character. Heck, just jotting down all your character’s skills and other stats is a pain the neck, ah, but it is worth it in the end. When the character is finished, it feels good, solid, fleshed out, and individual. After a few game sessions, the character starts to take on a life of his or her own. Don’t take my word for it, see for yourself. Ask most any Palladium fan about his current (or heaven help you, his favorite) character and you’ll get an enthusiastic response full of lush detail, history and personality. So much detail, personality and enthusiasm that you might think he’s talking about a favorite Uncle or a real life person, not a fictional game piece. Warning, if this is your first time playing the Palladium system, you’re likely to be joining that legion of gamers who gush about their characters and adventures. Welcome to the fraternity, enjoy.

– Kevin Siembieda, Game Designer



The Psychic World

Psychic abilities are powers of the mind. The name comes from the 23rd letter of the Greek alphabet – *psi*. Psychic or psionic powers may also be referred to as *paranormal abilities*, *supernormal*, *preternatural*, *sixth sense*, *mind over matter*, and *extrasensory perception* or *E.S.P.* Since the beginning of human existence, stories of seers, wise men, and prophets have told of individuals who could see the future, read minds, and talk to spirits. These exceptional powers are thought to be mental phenomena that science considers to be *outside* the range of the normal five physical senses, hence the often used term, “sixth sense.” Sixth sense, ESP and paranormal abilities typically refer to abilities of the mind such as Clairvoyance, Precognition, Telepathy, Empathy, communicating with the dead and sensing supernatural forces. Scientists have recorded some incidents of psychic energy at work, but substantive research is minimal, existing analysis is inconclusive, and skepticism runs extremely high. The paranormal world has proven to be elusive and unquantifiable. Much of the “evidence” is anecdotal, and scientists need hard evidence that can be replicated under controlled conditions before they are even willing to consider psionic abilities (let alone the supernatural) to be real. Psychics have trouble replicating their abilities on a consistent level, and the things they “claim” they can do defy the laws of physics, at least as we understand them, which has a great deal to do with why the scientific community and skeptics have trouble accepting the idea of them. The fact that these psychic abilities enable those who possess them to see the supernatural world and communicate with ghosts, see demons and sense things that defy accepted scientific theory only makes their claims seem all the more fantastic and hard to believe.

Psychic abilities and the supernatural *are* real in the world of **Beyond the Supernatural™ Two**, but they are not commonplace nor commonly accepted as real. Most rational people and men of science argue, in fact, that the paranormal is not real, and reject any “soft” evidence (i.e., anecdotal stories and reports, or claims that cannot be replicated in a lab) as a likely hoax, mass hysteria or hallucination. Science has closed its mind to such fanciful nonsense as E.S.P. and mind over matter, and the suggestion that magic, ghosts and supernatural monsters might be real is regarded as ludicrous. The men and women involved in paranormal research are generally regarded as being on the fringe of science, and most are looked upon as the black sheep, misfits and social outcasts of the scientific community.

With this shameful bias prevalent in the revered halls of science, it is no wonder that truly gifted psychics prefer to remain anonymous. They have little to gain from public admission, and much to lose. Self-righteous arrogance and the fear of the unknown have prompted science to turn a blind eye and a deaf ear to the very real existence of psychic and supernatural phenomena. So if science is not ready to embrace such ideas, how can a less informed, less prepared public respond to the idea? How would most people react to such a monumental change in their perception of reality? And it would be a monumental change. The existence of psychic energy, magic and supernatural forces – evil monsters – would turn most people’s outlook of the world upside down. Or would it?

Professor Victor Lazlo observed:

“So-called ‘Primitive man,’ past and present, recognized and lived daily with supernatural and paranormal forces. All pre-industrial cultures throughout the world have their goblins, ghosts, demons and evil spirits, alongside their angels, saints and gods. They all had their shamans, mystics, seers and psychics; people who could see the supernatural better than others and helped the tribe to survive supernatural interference.

“The art of ‘Feng-Shui’ shows us that the Chinese have understood Earth Magic – Geomancy – for thousands of years. They recognized that lines of natural magic run through the earth creating places of magic and portals to other worlds. Places where the natural world collides with the preternatural and mortals may come face to face with the supernatural. The enigmatic builders of the stone megaliths that cover the British Isles must also have known about these lines of energy, or why else would the megaliths and stone circles mark the places where these ‘ley line’ energies converge? Yet with the advent of science and the industrial age, the paranormal and supernatural has been dismissed and shuttered away as nonsense, superstition and children’s stories.

“With much fanfare, civilized man publicly chastises the superstitious foolishness of his ancestors. Most men of science categorically insist the supernatural does not exist. Period. And yet, gather any small group of people, get them comfortable and at ease with one another, and raise the question of the paranormal, and, eventually, somebody will dare to relate a story about ghosts. Another will tell of how a parent or sibling sensed a tragedy or had a clairvoyant experience, or was rescued by a guardian angel. With a nervous, quiet intensity, another person may share a similar story, and another and another, until somebody dissents loudly, or there are no more ‘personal’ accounts

to tell. Then with a laugh, it is all dismissed as weird or silly, and pushed away.

"These stories don't come from spiritualists or New Age evangelists, but from ordinary people like you and me. It's as if buried in the subconscious of civilized man we know the truth. A racial memory, perhaps, that will not let us forget the reality of the preternatural no matter how hard we try. Deep down, we know the supernatural and paranormal are real. They do exist. Only we dare not admit it, even to ourselves. The idea that demons, ghosts and monsters might walk among us is too frightening. So we take solace from the wise men of the modern age, our scientists, who give us a hundred excuses why we should not believe in such ideas. And we clutch to those rationalizations like life lines and deny our own firsthand experiences.

"Well I, for one, refuse to close my eyes to the obvious. I believe the supernatural and the paranormal are real. I believe the supernatural and paranormal have always coexisted with the mortal and normal. We have shared this planet with inhuman and spectral forces since the dawn of humankind. Our ancestors knew and accepted this fundamental truth, just as we know it, but refuse to accept it. And therein lays the danger, for though there are benevolent forces at work, evil walks among us and haunts the shadows of our modern world. Many are terrible beings who do not share man's capacity for good 'and' evil. Beings who are accurately described as demonic and evil incarnate. Supernatural monsters – demons if you will – that have tempted, tormented and stalked humans for eons. Others among the denizens of the supernatural see humans as their playthings or chattel, while hungry predators hunt us like animals. Westerners scoff at talk like this. They brand it as sheer lunacy or kook literature. In the East, the people of the Orient pretend to concur with the West while they quietly tend to shrines and make offerings to dead ancestors, mischievous spirits and evil forces in every home, temple and business.

"I have no wish to be branded a quack or crackpot. I don't speak or write about these things for fame or money. I do it because I want to help people. Because some of us hold within ourselves a great energy and power to see beyond our five senses. Because the monsters I speak of are out there, waiting, hunting, and working their evil on innocent people without a clue or a prayer of defending themselves. We need to open our eyes and at least accept the possibility and investigate."

– Doctor Victor Lazlo at a Conference on the Paranormal in Belgium, 1979.

Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.)

Everybody has Potential Psychic Energy, but very few people recognize that potential, and fewer still learn to develop any kind of *psychic ability*. Most people are too stubborn, fearful and fragile to willingly embark on a journey into the unknown. The fact that they have developed psi-abilities makes *psychic player characters* unique all by itself. Psychics are among the few who have, throughout history, been able to tap into their inner strength and Potential Psychic Energy. An energy that can be molded and directed by the mind and human spirit in a variety of ways: as talent, genius, psionic ability and even magic. For psychic individuals, however, it proves to be an energy that

draws them into the mysterious and dangerous world of the supernatural and beyond.

Victor Lazlo described Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) like this:

"Every living thing has P.P.E. – Potential Psychic Energy. It is a part of our very essence and woven throughout the fiber of our being. While a cricket, ant or spider has P.P.E., as do plants and simple animal forms, the energy level is so slight that it barely registers to those who can sense such things. In higher life forms, like dogs, cats and horses, the P.P.E. level is higher, and in people, the levels are at their greatest, especially at a young age. The thing is, like any energy, it is used and burned up. The average person has never heard of Potential Psychic Energy and doesn't even know he or she is using it, so it is ignored and burned up on frivolous amusement.

"The monks of Tibet and other enlightened sects focus their untapped Potential Psychic Energy into self-awareness and the power of the mind. That is how they are said to discover their 'third eye' – a metaphor for what Westerners might call the sixth sense or E.S.P. This Third Eye makes them aware of the spiritual and supernatural world around them. They use their P.P.E. to develop their untapped psychic potential and develop into Master Psychics with the abilities to see, sense and feel the spirit world. They possess powers of mind over matter, resistance to fire and cold, and some are able to see the future and read minds.

"The seers of Tibet close themselves off from the outside world for two reasons. One is to escape the distractions of the world at large, especially when young and first developing their psychic abilities. Two, because they know the world is not ready for the things they see and know. For without being enlightened, without having your own 'Third Eye' opened, people cannot understand or accept the larger world of the supernatural. Or so the wise ones say.

"Personally, I reject that assertion, which is why I speak out. I want us all to open our Third Eye, even if it is a narrow squint, and see the larger world around us. And even if we cannot, we can understand on an intellectual level.

"In theory we all have potential psychic ability, which begs the questions, 'Why don't I have psychic powers?' 'Where has my potential gone?' 'Why is it so rare?'

"I think I may have the answer.

"It has been my observation that we each use our Potential Psychic Energy in different ways without ever realizing it. Everyone has some measure of Potential Psychic Energy. Everyone. If the mystics, seers and wise folk around the world are correct, this Potential Psychic Energy, this P.P.E., is at its greatest level during our youth. This makes sense to me, because this is when our minds are most open to any possibility and we try to grasp everything around us. It is also when we start to exhibit natural talents and shape our view of the universe. This is when we learn what is possible and what is not.

"If I am right, a portion of our potential – our P.P.E. – is spent on every avenue our young minds travel down. I theorize that every path of learning that stimulates our imagination spends a bit of our potential. The more time we spend on any one subject, be it art, music, automotive mechanics, writing, math, sports, or whatever, the more P.P.E. is spent on it, especially if we find the subject exhilarating and personally rewarding. When we become drawn to one or two particular interests our focus unwittingly taps into our psychic potential, drawing upon the energy and focusing it into that one or twenty-one different interests. Beyond DNA, genetic predisposition, and environment, I

think P.P.E. is the unrecognized final piece in the puzzle that determines who excels at what. The person with the grasshopper mind who is interested in twenty different things, which I dare say is probably most of us, spreads his P.P.E. out too thin. While that individual may do well at several things, he is not exceptional at any one of them. Our society and education is such that it doesn't matter and everyone can, for the most part, get along on whatever level of talent and skills we have. However, it is my theory that those individuals who become sharply focused on one or two or three areas, for whatever reason, unwittingly focus their P.P.E. to become adept at it on a scale that transcends the norm. If that focus is music, the individual becomes an amazing composer like Mozart or Beethoven. If that focus is art, he becomes Michelangelo, Rembrandt or Picasso. If that focus is sports he becomes Babe Ruth, Jim Thorpe, Hank Aaron or Doctor J.

"I find this theory thrilling, because it would seem to explain so much. Why certain people, some of whom are not particularly bright or well educated, possess an impressive 'aptitude,' 'natural talent,' or 'knack' in some particular area that may seem unlikely or even contrary to their upbringing. It explains the growing 'superstar' phenomenon in sports where a handful of athletes stand head and shoulders above the rest, as well as explaining every type of true genius. It also explains why so many geniuses seem to be out of step with the rest of us and often lack social skills and even common sense – they didn't go down those avenues, and without any P.P.E. spent on them, they are devoid of them – all or most of their P.P.E. was spent sharply focused on the one or two areas where they are geniuses, leaving many other areas underdeveloped or completely lacking.

"The application of Potential Psychic Energy is seen at its most dramatic among autistic savants. Children whose neural pathways are cross wired and short-circuited, leaving their minds scrambled. To most observers, these children are mentally disabled and incapable of conventional learning. Many have no response to physical contact and show little emotion or awareness on any level. Without constant supervision and care, they would hurt themselves, waste away, and die. So how is it that a child, sometimes as young as three years old, who cannot feed or dress himself, can cipher numbers on par with the greatest mathematicians in the world? Or after hearing it once, can remember any music played on the piano and play it back with the skill of Mozart?

"Those who are lost to autism are locked in a mental prison that shuts out the world as we know it. They are incapable of learning as we do and don't have the capacity to communicate, so where do these amazing talents and genius level skills come from? I believe the answer is Potential Psychic Energy. Something on some conscious or subconscious level catches the autistic child's attention. It focuses their mind with laser precision and turns them into super-geniuses in one or two specific areas while the rest of the world remains closed to them or is a raging sea of sight and sound beyond their ability to comprehend.

"I think the autistic savants are the purest evidence of P.P.E. at work, for it eliminates intangibles such as environment, education, nurturing, self-gratification and training. These tragic, handicapped savants don't recognize the world or feel the love of a parent or the warmth of the sun the way the rest of us do. They have no ego to sate or desires to satisfy. They have nothing to prove or reason to pretend. And there is no rational, scientific reason they can do what it is they do. They are what they are, and do what they do as if by magic or miracle. It defies logic and science, yet it is a documented fact. Proof, I think, of P.P.E. in action. The untapped psychic potential released in dramatic fashion. What other explanation is there?

"Of course, this example raises some questions. Why don't all autistic individuals exhibit a special genius? What is the trigger that focuses their P.P.E. expenditure? And if P.P.E. is ultimately the means to open one's Third Eye, then how many autistic people possess psychic abilities and what do they see? Is the gift a comfort or curse for them?

"To these questions, I'm afraid I have no answers, but they do give us some clues about psychic abilities. Isolation and focus are important in developing exceptional ability, and nobody is more isolated than the victims of severe autism. It brings us back to the Tibetans who shut themselves off from the world and create an environment of controlled isolation. For most of us, the world offers too many distractions and opportunities. If there are too many avenues to explore, we spread our Potential Psychic Energy too thin and lose our psychic potential.

"So how do psychics develop their abilities? We know it has something to do with P.P.E., and we can guess that the individual must experience something during his youth to trigger an interest in opening the mind or delving into the supernatural. Here again, I can only postulate and guess, but it is my suspicion that the trigger can be positive or negative. Positive reinforcement might involve enjoying the visions and insight a flash of psychic ability might provide, or getting kudos or laughs over something the child spoke of via precognition or clairvoyance. The budding psychic may become fascinated with the experience and want to learn/see/feel more. This desire and determination then drives the focus and development of paranormal abilities.

"On the other hand, negative emotions of fear, hate, inferiority and most certainly isolation and revenge may also direct P.P.E. to help a child reach out in a different way and inspire psychic development. For example, feeling helpless, alone or confused, or sad for others, or a desire to understand and help, might develop Empathy, Telepathy, Clairvoyance or Healing abilities. A fear of the dark and a sense that something dangerous lurks within might trigger other extra-sensory abilities or physical manifestation in order to escape or fight back. In both cases, positive reinforcement provided by the successful use of the psychic abilities themselves (knowledge, comfort, protection, and even a sense of fun or the excitement of feeling special) are likely to be the impetus to open one's mind further and explore more possibilities.

"The budding psychic is helped along further by the child's imagination and sense that anything is possible. During the teen years, the desire to be unique, different and special can keep the development of extrasensory abilities going strong, though distractions from, and involvement in, social activities, academics, and sexuality may stunt a budding psychic's development. Likewise, the desire to be special may only carry one so far, and the pressure to conform and the need to be accepted by one's peers may also work to diffuse, stunt or even reverse psychic development. This may be why many people seem to have 'flashes' of what can only be called psychic insight in their youth, but lose the gift as they achieve adulthood, or enjoy psychic flashes, but have no ability to control or summon them at will.

"Genetic predisposition and environment almost certainly play a role in the development of psychic ability. If the youngster is encouraged to explore his imagination or reads about the paranormal and experiments with expanding his consciousness, he may be more prone to develop them. The appearance of a Spirit Guide, an encounter with a ghost, witnessing a demon or other psychic phenomena, to something as benign as a grandparent, Aunt, Uncle or cousin who believes in the mystical and speaks about it openly, without fear, may all contribute to the birth of a psychic.

"Of course, in the end, all we know for certain is that the Third Eye of some people is open, but for most others it remains closed tight."

P.P.E. & Psychics

(**Note:** The concepts of how psychic abilities work in **BTS-2** are so integral to the characters that some rules and game mechanics are presented in the pages that follow. This should provide players and Game Masters with a clear picture of how psionics works and how to handle their characters.)

Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) is key to the creation of a psychic character. ALL characters have potential, but it is only the “focus” of that energy that brings about special psychic abilities. Each Psychic Character Class (P.C.C.) has a different focus and a different range of psionic ability. Each P.C.C. has its benefits, strengths, limitations and drawbacks.

Potential psychic energy is an the X-factor in human development. In the fictional game context of **Beyond the Supernatural™ Two**, everybody has some degree of Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.). This means everybody has the *potential* for developing psychic (or magic) abilities, however, that potential is unrealized in most people, making true psychics rare and unique.

Most people have forgotten how to draw upon the secret energy reserve that is P.P.E., or are too afraid to do so and reject it, or don’t even recognize that they have psychic potential. As a normal person physically matures with age, their P.P.E. is syphoned off and displaced into skills, hobbies and talents. By the time the person becomes an adult, the psi-energy has been spent and/or locked away as part of the person’s permanent P.P.E. base. This is what accounts for tiny flashes of psychic phenomena, such as an unreasoning hunch that pays off, or that nagging feeling that your little sister needs you right now. These are examples of brief instances where an ordinary person, unintentionally, draws on their P.P.E. with psychic results. However, most people who experience such flashes of insight dismiss the occurrence as luck or coincidence, and go about their normal business. The older they get and the more rigid their thinking (“That’s impossible,” “ridiculous,” “terrifying”), the less likely they are to ever draw on their P.P.E. or develop psychic ability. Besides, by the time a person hits their early twenties, they have already spent their P.P.E. and there’s nothing left for psychic development. Of course, once one has developed psionic powers, they are with that person for life, though an individual may refuse to acknowledge or use them.

As Victor Lazlo pointed out, one of the most dynamic examples of focused P.P.E. is the *Autistic Savant*: A mentally handicapped individual who possesses an unbridled skill that goes far beyond the person’s limited capabilities. An adult who may have the mind of a four year old child and can barely manage to dress himself, plays the piano like Mozart, or is a human calculator solving advanced mathematical problems within seconds, without benefit of paper, pencil or computer, but can’t remember the alphabet. This is Potential Psychic Energy at its most mysterious, but uncontrolled.

P.P.E. is as natural and fundamental as electromagnetic waves and light frequencies, but somewhere along humankind’s development, we have forgotten how to tap into it. Ancient Zen masters and their Hindu cousins recognized and understood psychic energy and used it to merge the mind with the body, to direct and focus their inner strength or “Chi.” Once the inner self was conquered, they learned to control and direct their mind in a

variety of ways that defy conventional logic. So it is that we have the legendary Zen Masters, fighting monks, martial arts masters, mystics, oracles and seers, each with a different focus and ability.

The key to using and directing one’s P.P.E. is *focus*. That focus usually comes in the form of a goal driven by great personal desire, need or unbridled emotion/passion, sometimes concern or fear. Like most things for humans, personal reward and satisfaction helps keep the person on the path to their goal. In the case of psychic development, P.P.E. is (accidentally) spent on psionic awareness (most normal people end up spending their P.P.E. on work skills, hobbies and other interests, or just let their psychic potential flutter away). Random flashes of insight or awareness is the stirring of psychic Inner Strength stimulated by powerful emotions. The *Autistic Psychic Savant* has unwittingly focused on something that is pleasurable or amusing. The *Genius or Natural* has focused on one or more areas of skill or aptitude that provides great satisfaction and accomplishment, whether it be baseball or quantum mechanics.

Today, the ancient masters who once seemed to have unlocked the secrets of the mind, are gone. Their secrets lost, blurred and muddled by the passing of time and the advent of science and rational thinking. Consequently, most modern psychics develop their abilities independent of each other, without a *teacher* to guide them and often by accident. They inadvertently stumble onto their psi-abilities and manage to find their own focus to sustain its development. Thus, each focus will be deeply personal and may even contradict the orientation of other psychics with the same or similar abilities. Likewise, because of the independent development, each psychic will possess a range of different abilities, even though they may fall into the same general psychic category (or P.C.C.).

Determining the character’s Permanent P.P.E. Base: Each Psychic Character Class (P.C.C.) will indicate a die roll to determine the character’s Permanent P.P.E. Base. The Permanent P.P.E. Base is the amount of Potential Psychic Energy *left* after the majority of it has been spent on special abilities. For most Psychics their P.P.E. number is very low, because most of their P.P.E. has been *spent* on the development of psychic abilities and I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points) to power their psychic abilities. For psychics, the P.P.E. base never increases, but it remains with them for the rest of their lives.

Note: Arcanists and other practitioners of magic, as well as some demons and supernatural beings capable of performing magic, will have higher levels of P.P.E. to fuel their magic spells and rituals. They may also draw P.P.E. from ley lines, places of power, ancient artifacts and even people and other living creatures. Magic will be touched upon a bit elsewhere in this book and explored in great detail in the **BTS-2 Arcanum Sourcebook**.

Inner Strength Points

The P.P.E. of psychic characters is transformed into *Inner Strength Points*. I.S.P. is the way we measure and define psionic mind over matter abilities. A certain amount of Inner Strength Points (I.S.P.) is required each time a character uses his psychic abilities. In a game context, this is a simple process of keeping

track of spent and recovered I.S.P. as one uses his abilities. Each psychic power/ability will indicate the number of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points) needed to activate and use that ability. Each ability will also indicate how long it lasts (the duration of the effect), range, damage (if any), saving throw, I.S.P. Cost and other vital information.

I.S.P. is recovered with sleep and/or meditation.

Proximity Equals Power

One of the new elements and game mechanics in **Beyond the Supernatural™ 2**, is the relationship psychics and practitioners of magic have with the supernatural world. While even the psychics and mages do not fully understand the relationship themselves, they understand and accept that they are somehow linked.

Victor Lazlo noted the following: *"I must wonder if human psychics and practitioners of magic, but psychics in particular, are not evolution's answer to combating the supernatural. Perhaps psychic ability developed as a natural defense or counter-measure to protect ourselves from supernatural beings and the forces of magic. Since humans were 'pack animals' not every member of the pack or tribe needed this defense mechanism, just enough to protect the tribe, say 10-25% of them. That might explain why psychics and magic users see their power levels increase when in the presence of supernatural beings. And according to most, they can feel their Inner Strength rise proportionately higher based on the level of the danger. Regardless of how or why psychic abilities work this way, psychics seem to 'respond' to threats from supernatural forces with a sustained rush of energy that increases their power levels. When the danger is gone, their energy levels returns to normal. In that regard, it is rather like a metaphysical adrenaline rush."*

It's true, away from the mystical or paranormal, psychics possess a minimal level of power. This explains why they can't perform well on demand in public or under laboratory conditions, and why some academics make the mistake of assuming that if psychic abilities do exist, they are insignificant and unimpressive.

Under ordinary conditions, I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points) is minimal, and measured in the single digits or low double digits. The minimal I.S.P. available means a Physical Psychic might be able to spin a pencil or levitate an egg for a minute or two, but little else. In short, their psychic abilities are unimpressive and severely limited.

In the presence of serious danger, particularly in the presence of magic or the supernatural, the character's powers increase exponentially.

While some psychics and parapsychologists have compared this to a "psychic adrenaline rush," it is actually something more. A combination adrenaline rush and symbiotic link in which close proximity to the supernatural or magic feeds or fuels the I.S.P. of psychics and the P.P.E. of spell casters. It is an automatic response that kicks in whether the character is consciously aware of the danger or not. Some have argued that this makes psychics the natural enemy of supernatural evil, or the *yang* to supernatural evil's *yin* in a cosmic balance of good and evil, mortal vs immortal.



Left on their own, away from the influence of the supernatural, both psychics and practitioners of magic have only a few points of available energy with which to use their abilities. In fact, without the boost from supernatural forces, many of their powers (or spells in the case of mages) may not even be accessible to them. This means in an ordinary setting the character is basically *ordinary* too. When face to face with the supernatural or magic, however, the psychic's Inner Strength boils with increased energy (increased I.S.P. to be spent on psychic abilities). The greater the threat, the higher the energy level.

I.S.P. (and P.P.E. for spell casters) also increases at places of power, like Stonehenge, ley lines and similar locales. However, in this case, the character is syphoning ambient energy that radiates from lines of mystic power or from ancient artifacts imbued with mystical or psychic energy. This is also why Witches, cultists, Demon Worshipers and others denizens of evil choose to associate and link themselves to supernatural beings, because close contact increases their own powers.

The same phenomenon may explain why certain psychic abilities and most magic spells have impressive results against supernatural beings and creatures of magic, but little or no effect on mortal humans and the so-called *real world*. For example, a Pyrokinetic fire blast or magical Fire Ball inflicts stunning damage on a demon, but if a human or mortal animal gets caught in the same blast, he is bathed in a shower of sparks and ash that fizzles into nothing and does little or no damage (suggesting it's all a trick to skeptics).

Proximity to the Supernatural = Power

– When I.S.P. Power Boosts Come into Play

x1 – Under the Microscope

When a psychic is being investigated or studied/observed *themselves* by fellow mortals (the authorities, military, scientists, scholars, skeptics, captors or any situation where the character is placed under any kind of scientific scrutiny or laboratory conditions), the stress and anxiety of being “placed under the microscope” makes psychics (and Arcanists) spiritually impotent, holding them at their base power level.

Not only that, there is a 01-50% chance that the ability will function at only 25% its normal level (reduce all stats – duration, range, damage, etc – by 75%); roll percentile dice. A roll of 51-00% means the ability functions as it should with no impotency penalty.

x2 – Investigating the Supernatural

Double the character's Base I.S.P. when a BTS-2 character is *investigating* the supernatural and/or magic at a physical site/location where the supernatural has been alleged to be present or is known to have visited; i.e. is using psychic abilities to sense, discover, unearth, locate and learn more about events, places, people or items that are linked to the supernatural, paranormal and/or magic that occurred at a particular location (haunted house, church, burial mound, site of a battle or arson, etc.).

I.S.P. also doubles when dealing with very minor supernatural beings such as *Poltergeists*, *Scurriers*, *Stealers*, and similar creatures, as well as minor magic items, low level spell cast-

ers/cultists/Witches (first and second level), and mortal henchmen or pawns. The psychic also gets a x2 boost when on a ley line, nexus, or place of power (like the Bermuda Triangle or Stonehenge). **Note:** These adrenaline style “bumps” in power happen automatically. Whether or not the psychic uses the increased I.S.P. is up to the individual and circumstance.

Facing the ordinary. Psychic abilities do *not* usually get a boost from ordinary, mortal threats, i.e., humans, animals, natural disasters and accidents. Even threatening humans waving guns around don't elicit a psychic energy boost of I.S.P. Why? Because they are not a supernatural threat, and if Victor Lazlo is correct, psychic abilities are an evolved defense against the supernatural and magic, not the ordinary or ourselves.

However, in life and death situations (especially if it involves a loved one or oneself), a large scale catastrophe (i.e., the lives of hundreds of people are threatened) or something sensational (the sinking of the Titanic, the assault on the World Trade Center, a presidential assassination, etc.), a threat rooted in the ordinary *may* cause an I.S.P. boost, but seldom more than **x2**, no matter how terrible it is. This, for example, might allow a Physical Psychic to tear a locked or crumpled car door from a vehicle, or a Psi-Healer to perform Psychic Surgery to save a life, or a Psychic Sensitive to get a precognitive vision of the disaster minutes, hours or days before the event (and a chance to prevent it?), but not much more. On the other hand, if a supernatural being is secretly behind the crisis, and the psychic comes face to face with it, and/or its minions or henchmen, then the I.S.P. shoots up accordingly.

x4 – Lesser Demons & Supernatural Predators

Quadruple the Base I.S.P. number when *in the presence of or battling* lesser supernatural beings and creatures of magic. This includes low level threats like minor Entities (i.e. two or more Poltergeists, one or more Haunting Entities, or Syphon), lesser beings like Burrowers, Gremlins, Imps, a cult member or three who is more than a flunkie or first level acolyte, 1-12 Demonic Predators or Demonic Servants and similar creatures (sub-demons, lesser demons, Hell Hounds, Ghouls, Dimensional Ghouls, Burrowers, Dar'ota, Tectonic Entity, Possessing Entity [or person *known* to be possessed], Garkain, Dybbuk, and similar low level threats). Again, the energy is only available as it *directly* relates to dealing with the supernatural or magical threat and as soon as it is vanquished or leaves, the available I.S.P. drops appropriately.

x6 – Greater Demons & Demonic Servants

Increase the Base I.S.P. number by six times when engaging greater demons and beings, i.e., the more powerful of the *Predators* and *Demonic Servants* (Boschala, Sowki, Death Weaver Spider Demons), and others that would fall into the category of Greater Demon, the avatars/splintered essence of an Ancient Evil/God or Alien Intelligence, and powerful creature of magic, such as Elementals and Dragons.

This multiplier also applies when dealing with a powerful practitioner of magic or Witch (8th level or higher), an entire cult, a large group/gang/pack/herd of monsters, and similar dangers.

x10 – Ancient Evil & Alien Intelligences

Increase the Base I.S.P. tenfold when engaging a super-powerful or god-like supernatural threat. This includes Demon Lords, Demigods, Gods, an Alien Intelligence or a couple dozen Greater Demons, an entire church (hundreds) of human cultists, a few dozen Witches or mages, or a small army of Lesser Demons or demon worshipers.

I.S.P. Variation

A few P.C.C.s (Psychic Character Classes) may have *different* multipliers than those listed above. They work the same, only the multipliers are different (lower or higher), usually indicating something unique about the character.

I.S.P. Recovery

Recovering Spent Base I.S.P.: Base I.S.P. is automatically restored by *sleep* at a rate of two Base I.S.P. per one hour of uninterrupted sleep.

Normal Meditation recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per hour of meditation at no I.S.P. cost. Some P.C.C.s, the Autistic Savant and Physical Psychic for example, have the ability to recover a greater amount faster.

Advanced Meditation (considered a Psychic Ability) restores four Base I.S.P. per 30 minutes of meditation, but requires two I.S.P. to initiate.

Using the I.S.P. Multipliers

First of all, a multiplier is used every time a *new threat* manifests. However, once I.S.P. is boosted, if the appearance of a new threat falls into the *same level* or a *lower threat level*, the currently available I.S.P. are unchanged. If the threat is *greater*, the “Base I.S.P.” number is applied to that new multiplier, but **ONLY** the Base I.S.P. number is multiplied, not the currently available boosted amount.

This makes maintaining one’s I.S.P. Base crucial at all times. If the Base is reduced, then the available I.S.P. to be multiplied later is also reduced.

For example, an onsite investigation is underway, and a psychic’s I.S.P. is doubled from 9 points to 18. The psychic can use all 18 I.S.P., but if a greater threat appears he has **NO** I.S.P. to multiply. Likewise, if all that is left of the I.S.P. Base is, say, 3 points, then that’s the number to be multiplied: $3 \times 2 = 6$, $3 \times 4 = 12$, $3 \times 6 = 18$, $3 \times 10 = 30$ vs the maximum I.S.P. that could be available from the full I.S.P. Base (in the case of this example, the number $9 \times$ whatever).

Note: This means psychic characters should be careful not to deplete their Base I.S.P. and/or to regularly restore spent Base I.S.P. via meditation or sleep.

Most psychics automatically regenerate *four Base I.S.P.* for every hour of meditation or *two Base I.S.P.* for every hour of uninterrupted sleep. All psychics acquire some from of *Meditation* as one of their learned or intuitive skills. Note that a few P.C.C.s, like the Autistic Savant and Physical Psychic, get superior I.S.P. recovery.

An Example Using I.S.P. Multipliers

Fred the Psychic Sensitive has a *Base I.S.P. of 11*. He is part of a group *investigating* an incident involving the supernatural (or magic) at a physical site. At the location his Base I.S.P. is doubled, going from 11 I.S.P. to 22 points.

Just the adrenaline surge involved in investigating the paranormal boosts Fred’s energy level, making him, **a)** able to use a larger range of his psychic abilities, **b)** better able to sense the supernatural, and **c)** better able to defend against and handle very minor supernatural threats, like one or more Poltergeists or Haunting Entities/Ghosts, a Scurrier or two, etc.

This is *all* the I.S.P. available to Fred under this circumstance. If he uses up all the available I.S.P. he is powerless for the rest of the day until he manages to find time to *meditate* or *sleep* a sufficient amount of time to recover spent I.S.P.

When the investigation is over, any of the doubled I.S.P. that is unspent (i.e., any I.S.P. above 11, the “Base”) vanishes. However, should another investigation occur an hour or more *later*, Fred’s Base I.S.P. of 11 will be *doubled* again for that new adventure or avenue of research. **Note:** One hour must pass before the *same* Threat Level/adrenaline-like surge can generate *new* levels of increased I.S.P. Any event/occurrence of the same magnitude (in this example, that would be continuing investigation or encounters with minor beings) that happens within that hour is considered the *same* experience/investigation, and only whatever unspent I.S.P. remains from the original doubling is available to the character.

Here’s where things get a little tricky. Fred may spend more I.S.P. than the 11 doubled points. He can dip into his “11 Base I.S.P.” and spend as much as 22 I.S.P. total during the investigation, but that’s *ALL* his I.S.P., the amount triggered by the adrenaline-like boost and his Base I.S.P.

Spending *Base I.S.P.* means those “Base” points will **NOT** be available later for another investigation or a more dangerous encounter with the supernatural. Every *encounter* with the supernatural, paranormal or magic triggers a reaction in psychic individuals. This reaction is measured by the *Threat Level*. The greater the *threat*, the greater the *I.S.P. Multiplier*, and the more I.S.P. available to deal with the threat/problem. **HOWEVER**, the I.S.P. number multiplied is whatever amount of “Base I.S.P.” is currently available. If the psychic has (temporarily) used up all his I.S.P. there is no energy to get boosted; *0x6 or any number is zero!*

Let’s say Fred has only three *Base I.S.P.* available when a Greater Demon appears! Only the three points are multiplied. In this case, threat is high because it is a Demonic Servant: $3 \times 6 = 18$. However, that number would have been 66 if Fred had all of his Base I.S.P. in reserve ($11 \times 6 = 66$).

Remember, although *meditation* and *sleep* restore spent I.S.P., circumstance may not allow time to do either one, thus, it is always a calculated *risk* for a psychic to dip too deeply into his Base I.S.P. This means frequent *meditation* to restore spent “Base I.S.P.” is a wise move, but the psychic will be unable to participate in anything going on while he is meditating, and most psychics will need to meditate for at least one hour to recover four or six Inner Strength Points.

What happens when the threat level changes? When the threat level changes, the previous I.S.P. amount is forgotten and

gone, and the new amount of available I.S.P. is the *Base I.S.P.* number times the appropriate modifier for the new threat.

Let's say in the middle of the onsite investigation a trio of Hell Hounds (Supernatural Predators) appear. Fred had seen his I.S.P. boosted from a base of 11 to 22. The investigation had barely gotten underway, so he had only spent six I.S.P., leaving him with 16 I.S.P. when the Hell Hounds come sniffing around the corner. Forget the 16 I.S.P., they are gone, replaced by *more*.

What's important is that Fred had not used *any* of his 11 Base I.S.P., so now that the Threat Level has risen to *Supernatural Predators*, the player takes Fred's base 11 I.S.P. x4 for Predators, to get a total of 44 I.S.P. available to deal with this higher threat level. Whatever I.S.P. he may have had just moments ago are gone – forty-four is the number we're working with now. Had the creature been a Demon Lord, the threat level would have jumped from x2 to x10, and Fred's base I.S.P. of 11 would have been multiplied by ten (11x10 = 110). **Note:** Any I.S.P. from the previous Threat Level is abandoned, do NOT add it to the new amount.

On the other hand, if Fred had dipped into his Base I.S.P. as we had suggested earlier, and only had 3 Base points available when the Big Kahuna appeared, he'd have only 30 I.S.P. (3x10 = 30) to use against the villain.

Got it? Good. Now stay with me.

A ferocious battle erupts. Five Demonic Servants (two Lesser Demons and three Greater Demons) join the fray. There is *no* increased or additional I.S.P. because the *Threat Level* is already maxed out. Available I.S.P. always reflects the maximum Threat Level, it doesn't matter that more supernatural foes appear. Likewise, if a Dark God joined the fight, there would be no additional I.S.P. because a Dark God and Demon Lord are in the same category and the Threat Level is already maxed out.

The same would hold true if the Threat Level were lower, say x4 for Predators and Lesser Demons, and first we have the Hell Hound, followed by a pair of Grave Ghouls and then a Tectonic Entity. ALL represent the same level of power and threat, so there is no additional boost after the initial x4. **Note:** This means that the psychic characters must use whatever I.S.P., wisdom, cunning, skills, and weapons at hand to deal with the problem. That might include running for one's life, hiding, bluffing, cutting a deal, etc.

The aftermath of a conflict. Fred performs heroically and uses up most of his boosted I.S.P. before the Demon Lord and his Demonic Servants are defeated or flee (teleport away). He's down from 110 I.S.P. to 38 points. Everything calms down and the maximum threat seems to be gone. Within a few minutes the adrenaline surge dies down and the boosted I.S.P. fades with it. If all supernatural beings are gone, that could mean dropping all the way down to the Base I.S.P. If the psychic continues an investigation, the I.S.P. drops to that level. In Fred's case, that means dropping from 38 I.S.P. to 11 or 22 (the latter only if the investigation continues). Suddenly, a Greater Demon reappears! However, because one hour has not passed since the previous maximum Threat Level, Fred's Inner Strength Point total shoots back up to where it left off from that previous x10 encounter, to 38 I.S.P. That's all the I.S.P. he has available, and to defeat the demon or save lives, he may have to use some or all of his *Base I.S.P.*

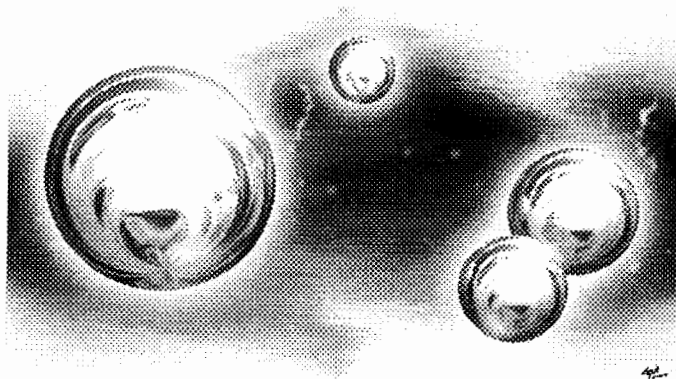
Let's say that Fred has to use all 38 I.S.P. to survive the demonic encounter. With no I.S.P. Fred is without psychic ability. He cannot use any ability that requires even ONE I.S.P. A Grave Ghoul appears (normally a x4 Base I.S.P. boost), but with NO I.S.P. remaining, Fred gets no boost and cannot use any psychic abilities. He is drained of psionic energy.

(Note: Although psychic characters may come to rely on their psionic powers (perhaps too reliant), these gifts represent only a part of the overall character. Fred (and any character) still has his eight attributes, skills, cunning (time to role-play), and weapons. It's time for the player to be smart, cunning and role-play his character out of trouble. *Fred is far from helpless.* He knows from his skill, Lore: Demons and Monsters, that Grave Ghouls are a cowardly lot and hate to fight unless they outnumber their opponent and believe they can win. Fred bluffs the Ghoul so convincingly that it tells him everything it knows about the cult of humans who have summoned the Dark God and his demonic servants, before running for its life when Fred tells it to go. In the end, the powers, guns and gizmos are the frosting on the cake – the dressing that is extra-special – for the players, it's all about *role-playing*.)

To recover I.S.P. Fred and the other characters need to get to someplace safe, rest, patch themselves up, and meditate. A character may also meditate while one or more of his teammates are taking action, or while waiting, or riding in a car, etc., provided he has at least 30-60 minutes to do so. Sleep will restore Base I.S.P. too. **Note:** Meditation does nothing to restore I.S.P. boosted via close proximity to the supernatural, only *Base I.S.P.* can be recovered.

Ley lines add a new wrinkle. Ley lines provide the psychic with *additional I.S.P.* from ambient energy radiating from the line. Psychics can draw on this energy even when all of their own I.S.P. Base is gone, or instead of using their Base I.S.P. However, the available I.S.P. is seldom more than five or six points unless at a nexus or on a ley line during a surge period. Ley lines are discussed at length elsewhere in this book.

Magic is something entirely different, but equally effective. It will be addressed in the **Arcanum** sourcebook.



Psychic Character Classes (P.C.C.s)

"Why do you do it?" he asked the psychic.

"What other choice is there?" was the simple reply.

"You could . . . I don't know, walk away. Ignore it."

"If you saw a house on fire, could you turn your back and walk away without doing anything? Just ignore it?"

"No, but . . . that's different."

"No, it's not. Once you walk down the path, and your eyes are opened, there's no turning back. You know things . . . see things . . . feel things that others don't. You feel it right down to your bones. And because you know these things, you also know you can make a difference, help people. You can't ignore that. Well, at any rate, I couldn't. I felt it was my responsibility to help the people stumbling in the dark to escape getting burned. Burned by things they deny even exist. You see, there are no firemen coming to help these people. There's only me, and people like me, so the choice was simple. What else could I do?"

Autistic Psychic Savant P.C.C.

The psychic stared out the window for a minute, turned, and without looking directly at the reporter said, "I nuh . . . know people think I'm a retard, Muh, Mister Sheridan. Buh but, um, that's where they're wrong. Yep, wrong. I'm not stu . . . stupid. Buh but I'm different. I'm different. I know . . . different. It's okay. I am what I am . . . um . . . like Popeye." he added with a childish giggle.

"And what are you, Simon?" asked the reporter.

"Um, a hero – like Popeye. I help people."

"Help people how?"

Simon squirmed in his seat, and looked side to side. "You know, Mister. You know. Yep. Yu know."

"Yeah, I know, but can you tell me?"

"Protect them."

"From what?"

"Evil."

"What kind of evil?"

"The buh . . . bad kind. The kind people duh, don't, um believe in. I know where the evil, um, hides. And I duh . . . don't let it hurt people."

"How, Simon? How do you stop the evil?"

"I don't like bad things. Nuh . . . no. Don't like it. Um, did I show you muh . . . my butterfly collection? It's pretty."

In some ways, the Autistic Psychic Savant has it a little easier than other psychics. When it comes to accepting the impossible and the supernatural, the Savant doesn't have preconceived notions or years of schooling or scientific dogma to unlearn and overcome. Instead, the Autistic Psychic Savant simply *accepts* what he experiences. He feels and knows that the supernatural and paranormal are real. End of story. He doesn't question it, he

doesn't hesitate, and he intuitively knows how to best use his special gifts. In short, the Autistic Psychic is at home in the supernatural world, more so than in the world of humans where he is a social outcast and feels isolated, confused and different.

The Psychic Autistic Savant taps into recesses of the mind that most psychics don't even know exist. Many Autistic individuals see, sense and do things that may seem impossible and superhuman. On the other hand, the Autistic Savant's Third Eye is opened so wide (and unblinking) that the character almost exists outside our reality and is severely mentally handicapped.

The Autistic Psychic Savant has many more challenges and obstacles than an ordinary person. Although the player characters are *not* severely handicapped by autism, they do have learning, communication and social disabilities, making the Autistic Psychic Savant something of a contrary figure, both the most powerful and most helpless character in **Beyond the Supernatural™ 2**.

Think "Rain Man" with psychic powers.

Like the Rain Man character in the movie, the Autistic Psychic Savant is part child, part misfit and part super-brain.

Role-playing this character is very demanding and it may be best suited as a Non-Player Character (NPC). The challenge as a player character is that the Savant is *severely flawed* in three or more areas and the player needs to remain "in character" to play him properly. That means playing a character with a low I.Q. but with flashes of true genius and psychic insight. A character who may recognize the smallest clue or a hint of supernatural evil, but who doesn't remember the car they just arrived in (and can't find it on his own), or the name of the neighbor who spoke to him just a few minutes ago (or what the person looked like other than, "Pretty Lady. Yellow hair. Good. Pure aura. She . . . she wants to help."). The Autistic Psychic Savant *knows* things via E.S.P. and has keen Perception, but has great difficulty clearly expressing that knowledge. Rather than being able to say something like,

"My dear colleagues, I have deduced that we are dealing with a Mindolar who has been manipulating the people of this town via mind control. I have been able to track the creature and sense that its lair is directly below us, probably in a concealed sub-basement or an ancient labyrinth of some sort. I believe I have located a secret door behind the bookshelf that should take us directly to the creature, but we all need to be very careful. This is a cunning and dangerous beast."

Although the Autistic Psychic Savant *knows* all of the above, the good-hearted character struggles to say, "Nuh, nuh, no go that way. Bad. Evil buh, below. Nuh, evil, bad evil. Hate. Using puh, puh, people to do buh, bad . . . things. Muh, Mind Slug . . . down buhlow. We go down. Use buh, buh, books. Bookshelves to go down. Here . . . this way we go (as he struggles to find the latch that will open the secret door, probably making a mess and a fair amount of noise)."

Playing the character like a day dreaming, five year old child who forgets to button his coat and wanders off to play with the kitty and who *seems* oblivious to adult conversation is a good



approach to portraying this character. The Autistic Savant probably can't read (at least not past a First Grade level), and often can't perform the simplest of tasks, like using money, buying things in a store, or dressing himself properly. The Psychic Savant may lack the sense (or awareness) to get out of the rain or a hail of bullets or a racing car, but will sense supernatural evil from a mile away. In addition, the character will also have to trust his comrades and pray their characters "take good care" of him. Since most Autistic Savants can't tie their shoes or open a can of dog food, the impaired character *must* rely on the kindness of others and often needs to be led by his hand, directed and asked to do or respond to the most obvious things.

This is a lot more difficult to play than you might believe. In play tests, there were many times when the player, who clearly understood what was transpiring around him, wanted to do and say things the Autistic Psychic Savant character just couldn't or wouldn't do, and had to stop himself or be reminded by the Game Master that, "Um, your character has no idea what the group is talking about, but he sees the Poltergeist and is fascinated, watching it like a child or a cat might watch a firefly as it flutters about." Or, "Hey, Steve, *you* have it all figured out to a T, but your Autistic Savant character has no idea how to articulate his thoughts to express them to the group, at least not in a way the group can clearly understand. All he can do is rock back and forth in his seat on the couch repeating the same two words. Maybe one of the other characters will recognize the clue, and maybe not."

Surprisingly, most people have no trouble playing the physical role of the Autistic Savant character. They manage to have the brain-scrambled character walk into danger, get lost, create confusion and wander around mumbling with relative ease. The tough part is the mental part of the game. Biting your tongue when you, the player, have figured out a clue or recognize a danger, but the addled character is oblivious to it or can't express himself even when he does recognize it. I think gamers, especially seasoned ones, forget how cerebral role-playing really is and get frustrated when they play an impaired character like this. They forget how difficult it is to hold back and "play in character" when the solution or salvation is on the tip of their own tongue.

Ninety-nine percent of role-playing is using your head, using your brain to figure out clues, to imagine the scene and situation, to formulate solutions, and to use the most appropriate skills or powers in the best course of action. The interactions between the players and the Game Master all require brain-power. That's the beauty and elegance of role-playing games, it all takes place in your mind as the story grows, twists and turns thanks to the interaction between you, the other players and the Game Master. So it can be super-difficult to pretend you don't see the danger, or value in a magic item, relic, piece of jewelry, etc., and even harder to pick it up and drop it down the sewer drain or hand it over to the human bad guy because that is what your Savant would do under the circumstances. I've seen a few players squirm, whimper and groan as if in agony as their fellow players engage in some misguided action or fall for a villain's con game because his character is helpless to prevent what's unfolding in front of his own eyes. Helpless, because while the player has a vital realization, the Savant is oblivious or incapable of doing or saying anything about it. Really, playing this character is much harder than one might imagine and G.M.s

should allow a player to opt out and roll up a new character if he or she gets too frustrated with it. Of course, I have also seen players handle this character beautifully and have fun with it. Just remember, while the Autistic Savant may act distracted, child-like and mentally handicapped at times, he is NOT stupid or an idiot. In fact, the Savant is probably more aware and alert to *supernatural* evil and dangers than anyone in the group! And as always, the idea is to have fun.

Special P.C.C. Abilities

The Autistic Psychic Savant gets all of the following special abilities. There is no I.S.P. cost unless indicated otherwise.

1. **Autistic Defensive Trance.** An Autistic Psychic Savant can appear to “check out” of reality by entering into what appears to be a catatonic state. The Savant usually stops and sits down or curls up into a tight ball (fetal position) and zones out. Hands will be folded or balled together as if in prayer or wringing of the hands. The character rocks back and forward or side to side while humming, moaning, counting numbers, performing simple mathematics (“one plus one is two,” perhaps repeating the same one over and over again), or muttering or repeating the same phrase over and over again (“Don’t be afraid. Don’t be afraid.” or “It’s okay, it’s okay.” or “Stop it. Stop it. Stop it.” and so on.). Threats, physically shaking the character, picking him up and moving him, none of it will break the character out of his trance.

In reality, the entranced psychic is vaguely aware of what’s going on around him, but he has closed himself off from the world as a temporary defense maneuver. While in the Autistic Defensive Trance the character is *impervious* to Telepathy, Empathy, Empathic Transmission, Bio-Manipulation, See Aura, Detect Psionics, Hypnotic Suggestion, illusions and all types of psychic probes, mind reading, and mental attacks, including Horror Factor and Possession. To other psychics and supernatural beings, the Savant reads as a blank and is perceived as helpless and harmless, however, the Savant can sense when they are no longer watching him and no longer consider him an threat. That’s when he comes out of the trance and takes action (makes good an escape, gets help, rescues a friend, even attacks a monster). For a five full minutes after coming out of the trance the Savant remains impervious to Horror Factor, Possession, Mind Control and all the things noted above.

2. **Autistic Psychic Messaging:** The character has trouble expressing himself or hardly talks at all, at least not very coherently. However, his mind reaches out to write words, phrases and one or two sentences out of common materials. This may appear as if written in the dust with a finger, or scratched in the dirt with a stick or formed out of pebbles, sticks, toothpicks, rice, grain, salt, pepper, sugar, peas, noodles, ketchup, string, even hair shed by a house pet! The message is always spelled correctly, grammar is perfect, and the message very clear. **Note:** Nobody ever sees the words form, they are just suddenly there. The Savant knows when Psychic Messaging appears, and will point to it, take people to it, or draw attention to the message in some way or another to get his message, idea or statement across. Never more than thirteen words and usually 2-8.

3. **Autistic Reading:** Normally the character cannot read a word, but when in an agitated psychic state (investigation or crisis situation), he can not only read signs, newspaper headlines and book titles, but also magic symbols, wards, runes, and archaic languages such as ancient Greek, Egyptian hieroglyphs, Sanscrit and similar. The Savant also instantly understands the meaning of a child’s drawing, optical illusions, puzzles (can find the key missing piece or two after looking at the puzzle and pieces for one melee round), and even “see” the key word(s) or phrase in an encrypted code. The word(s) just pop into the Savant’s head and he speaks it aloud, sometimes repeating it over and over again (especially if important) until someone else gets the meaning or the significance.

In all cases, the Autistic Savant only reads a few key words, a name, title or phrase, but like the key piece of a puzzle, it should be enough to enlighten the rest of the team.

This power only engages in a x2 or greater Threat Level or when someone can get the character to look at and focus on a word, puzzle or image that has a secret, paranormal or mystical meaning.

4. **Intuitive Skills and Clarity.** During periods when the character is involved with investigating onsite locations involving the paranormal, and when dealing directly with the supernatural, magical or paranormal, the character’s autism is still present, but much less severe. He becomes more like an eight year old child in his communication skills and can perform basic functions: get dressed by himself, open doors, use a telephone, turn a switch on and off, use and untie rope, use tape, use simple tools, and knows the purpose of common, everyday items such as a vehicle, computer, alarm, phone book, gun, etc., even though he cannot actually use any of them, and so on. He is still odd, awkward, stilted, and distracted, but different, more “there” than usual.

Stranger still, the Autistic Psychic Savant can, as needed in a crisis situation, perform select skills he has never learned at 82% proficiency! They include *Escape Artist*, *Hide* (equal to Prowl as long as he stays in one place and doesn’t move), *Land Navigation*, *Pick Locks*, *Rope Works* and *Swim*.

5. **Psychic Bloodhound.** The Autistic character may need help to dress properly, need to be led around by the hand (“stand here,” “sit there,” “wait here until I come back to get you”), speak in single words (“yes,” “no,” “okay”) and short phrases (“change the channel,” “I’m looking for something,” “very bad thing did this.” “We need to stop it.” “No more suffering.” etc.), and seems oblivious to ordinary things and events happening around him most of the time. May sit or stand in one place for hours at a time, and what he’s looking at or thinking about is anyone’s guess, because he can’t say (“Just waiting, thank you.” “Pretty sky.” “Thinking about mystery.” etc.).

However, when the supernatural, psychic or magical is within one mile of the Autistic Psychic, he becomes – by comparison – amazingly cognizant and aware. The character is motivated, driven even, to locate, interact with, and respond to the supernatural, magical and psychic. He seeks to protect people from supernatural evil and destroy the monsters who prey upon and torment humans. The character is always motivated to investigate psychic and supernatural

phenomena (drawn to it like a moth to flame) and to confront/fight supernatural and magical evil and any other-worldly thing that threatens human life.

6. See Multiple Levels of Realities. Most of the time the Autistic Savant seems out of it, in a daze and sleepwalking through life. However, in places of mystic power and/or in the presence of the supernatural, magic, or psychic phenomena, he can automatically see the invisible (including ghosts, Elementals and Astral Beings), sense dimensional anomalies and find dimensional portals. The Savant can also see Scurriers and Stealers (they act as if the Savant isn't even there and do things right in front of him; half the time the Savant could care less and ignores them). In addition, the character can tell the difference between what's real and what's an illusion (when in normal life he can't tell the difference between a knife and a fork), and recognizes items that are imbued with dark magic or possessed by evil spirits (amulets, charms, talismans, statues, weapons, scrolls, etc.). Likewise, the character can easily find his way out of a maze, fog, etc., and stay on the correct or safe path the entire time, unless he strays from it to help somebody.

7. Speak in Tongues. All Autistic Savants have trouble communicating, and some scarcely talk at all. However, there are moments that come and go when the character can suddenly understand and fluently speak a language unknown to him at 89% skill proficiency. This includes alien languages, demonic tongues, and ancient lost languages (i.e., Egyptian and even Lemurian and Atlantean). In addition, the character can instantly figure out spoken word puzzles, tongue twisters and riddles. **Note:** This ability applies exclusively to the spoken word; the character cannot read.

8. God's Wrath. This startling power occurs only when facing Possessing Entities or any force that can possess a mortal being (person or animal), Demonic Servants (Greater Demons), Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences or their avatars, as well as any supernatural being directly attacking the Savant. The character must expend 6 I.S.P. and desire to attack or destroy the monster for the power to engage. When he does, the character's hands glow and smolder as if they were hot coals.

Range: Touch, punch or light beam.

Duration: One melee round.

Damage: A touch of both hands to a mortal possessed by an evil entity does one point of damage to the victim and 4D6 damage to the possessing force. To inflict damage again, the Savant must remove his hands and then touch the victim again. After two touches (and damage) there is a 01-50% chance the possessing spirit will vacate its mortal host. After the possessing force loses more than two thirds of its Hit Points, it is almost certain (01-89% likelihood) to vacate the body, unless it can make good an escape inside the host body. **Note:** This weird exorcism does *not* work on Witches and others who join and merge with supernatural evil of their own choice.

A punch attack against Demonic Servants and greater supernatural beings also inflicts 4D6 damage to the creatures, but the Autistic Savant can also fire *bolts of light* that inflict 1D6 damage per level of experience (a fifth level Savant does 5D6 damage, and so on) to supernatural beings, and has a range of 15 feet (4.6 m) per level of experience. I.S.P.: 6

9. Standard Meditation is an automatic, intuitive ability.

Game Master Note: The player of this character may ask the G.M. if any of the above abilities have kicked in and should remind the G.M. about them in situations where they are likely to come into play. The reminder is wise because they are, after all, out of the normal scope of most characters.

In many cases, however, it is the *Game Master* who should tell the player when a special snippet of insight pops into the character's mind and what it is, like the name of a demon, person, place, or title of a book, and so on. This is especially true of *Autistic Reading*, *Speaking in Tongues*, *Intuitive Skills*, and *Seeing the Invisible*. In some ways, the G.M. may look at the Autistic Savant as a walking clue machine who senses and knows things out of midair. It's then the player's problem to decide how to relate that info to others or how best to respond. G.M.s, don't go overboard and spoon feed the Savant and his or her teammates everything, they should work for their accomplishments. And don't lead the Autistic Savant around like a puppet or a child, the character should be played by the gamer and can think and feel and react on his own, he just cannot communicate and relate to the real world the same as the rest of the player characters.

Autistic Psychic Savant P.C.C.

Attributes: Real I.Q. 2D4+10, but communicates with others as if I.Q. were 1D4+2; M.A. 2D6+3, M.E. 1D8+3, P.S. 1D8+5, P.P. 1D8+2, P.E. 2D6+6, P.B. 2D6+3, Spd. 3D6. See Character Creation in the rules section for more details about attributes and designing a character.

Alignment: Any, but most Autistic Psychic Savants are brave and heroic by nature and regard supernatural evil as their natural enemy; 25% Principled, 30% Scrupulous, 25% Unprincipled, 10% Anarchist and 10% other.

Attribute Bonuses: None.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses from the initial creation): Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +1 to roll with impact, +1 on Perception Roll at levels 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13. +7 to save vs possession, +6 to save vs illusions, +5 to save vs Horror Factor and curses, +3 to save vs magic, and is impervious to Hypnotic Suggestion, mind controlling drugs and most forms of mind control (including magic).

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Mild to Moderate Autism is a curse in and of itself. The shortcomings have already been discussed in detail: Trouble relating to the natural world, behaves like a 4-6 year old child, and has trouble communicating with others.

Has only two melee actions or attacks per round at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6 and 12.

Shoots guns with a penalty of -3 to strike even on an aimed shot.

Each psychic attack or use of a psionic ability counts as one of the character's melee attacks or actions.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 2D4+6. Most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his psychic abilities and natural awareness to the supernatural. However, the Autistic Psychic retains more P.P.E. than most non-magical characters.

Base I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points): 1D6+5 to start, +1D4 per level of experience starting at level two. (x3, x5, x8, x12) Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. Major psi-abilities can be quite costly in I.S.P., while others require only two or three I.S.P. points. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., relaxation, sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process for all psychics, but the Autistic Psychic Savant is *special*. Total relaxation or sleep will restore *two I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. Meditation is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *five I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation for the Autistic Savant. The recovery of I.S.P. through relaxation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus.

The Autistic Psychic Savant is one of those rare P.C.C.s who automatically gets the *Meditation* ability. *Advanced Meditation*, however, is a practiced ability that must be *selected* as a psychic ability for the character to possess it.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: Psi-powers for this character include the Special P.C.C. abilities listed above, plus the following: Three Psychic Sensitive abilities, two Physical, and two Healing or two Pyrokinetic abilities. The character gets one additional Sensitive ability at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15, and one Physical Psychic ability at levels 4, 7, 10 and 13.

Occupation: Typically none. Most Autistic Psychic Savants live at home, with family or in a care facility. However, about 20% actually have gainful employment as a Professional Psychic, and another 15% hold a low wage job (at least part time), such as a greeter in a store, cleaning or as a cleaner's/janitor's assistant and similar "assistant" jobs that don't involve much communication or a great deal of interaction with the public.

Common Skills: None.

Other Skills: None, but see *Intuitive Skills*, described previously.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear includes a medium-sized duffle bag or backpack or briefcase, flashlight, pocket mirror, six to 10 inch (5-10 cm) cross, 2-4 inch cross or other holy symbol made of silver, magnifying glass, notebook, two pens or markers or mechanical pencil, a piece of white chalk, 1D6+2 individual packets of salt, 1D6+2 individual packets of sugar (no sugar substitutes), 1D4 cloves of garlic, 1D4+1 candy bars (or other favorite snack food), 2D6 sanitary wipes, 1D4 pairs of plastic gloves, 1D20 zip-lock sandwich bags, 1D20 rubber bands, a hair brush or comb, wallet, a pair of sunglasses, cap or hat, jacket, very basic wardrobe, one suit, and some personal items.

No weapons, but may use something on site if handy and the character can figure out how to use it.

Housing: Pick one: 1) Flophouse, free cot, breakfast and dinner whenever he shows up for them, or may live on the street or in an abandoned building. No cost.

2) A bedroom or basement apartment at the home of the parents, a sibling, other relative or legal guardian. No cost.

3) Bedroom and study, in an apartment or flat shared with a friend, family member, teammate or member of a community outreach service for the handicapped. Safe and clean, but nothing special for a cost of \$300 a month, utilities included.

4) A two bedroom apartment as part of a community program for the disabled or mentally handicapped for a cost of \$900 a month. Utilities are extra and the quality of the facility and neighborhood varies from facility to facility.

5) Institutionalized. Lives at a facility for assisted living, or a nursing home, or similar medical institution, but is allowed to leave with friends, family, healthcare professionals, and/or on a work program. One room with a bed, an easy chair, dresser, TV and desk for a cost of \$6500 a month (high cost due to the medical care, treatment and assistance provided).

Pay: Varies with occupation. See description of occupations in the rules and background section. The Autistic Psychic Savant is likely to make most money as a Professional Psychics, but is likely to need an "assistant" (friend, family member, fellow psychic or adventuring partner) to be the front man/business partner, interpreter of what the Savant says or means, and handle cash transactions.

Money in Savings: Professional Psychic Occupation: 3D4x \$1,000, all others 4D6x\$100.

The Diviner P.C.C.

"I guess you could say my 'gift' is finding things and recognizing the not-so-obvious. It may not be a flashy ability, but I like it. You see, I can feel energy, read invisible signs and follow psychic trails left by the supernatural that few others can see."

"That's why I have to investigate the paranormal and hunt the supernatural. I can feel their presence and follow their trails. Not just a hunch, mind you, I see signs as big as a billboard and I'm pulled down paths that are more like highways to me. Everywhere I turn there's a sign that tells me something or a trail that leads to the unknown or the monstrous or someone in need. It's hard to ignore things that stand out like a neon sign, especially when you realize you're the only one who can see the signs or follow the trails."

The Diviner is a psychic who is sensitive to mystic, psychic and supernatural energy. This character can see and/or feel and follow the flow of psychic and magical energy, including ley lines and the use of magic (a succession of spells or magic ritual, the opening of a dimensional portal, etc.), as well as the release of energy (energy bolts, lightning, fire breath, etc.) produced by supernatural beings (and creatures of magic), magic rituals (especially as they build to a crescendo), and blood sacrifice (the moment of death and the release of doubled

P.P.E.). The Diviner can also read signs and see omens in what seems to be the ordinary.

These characters tend to be determined, self-reliant and familiar with travel and the outdoors. They aren't naturalists, per se, but feel comfortable with nature, surrounded by the natural flow of the world. It is this harmony with the natural world that enables the Diviner to sense the *unnatural* – and recognize the presence of the supernatural and the mystical.

The Power of the Diviner

Psychic Dowsing

The average person has heard the term “dowsing” but typically thinks of it as a way to “divine” or *locate* water by using a “Y” shaped branch or rod. Most people don't realize that the art of Dowsing goes back centuries, perhaps thousands and thousands of years, and has been practiced in one form or another in England, Europe and China since before written history. While *dowsing* can be used to locate water, divining has always included the ability to sense, locate and follow streams of “earth energy.” The Chinese call these streams of energy *Dragon Tracks*, Westerners call them “ley lines” and Victor Lazlo gave the magical earth energy, or ley line energy, the more scientific name of *Potential Psychic Energy* or *P.P.E.* **Note:** Ley lines are natural phenomena that run through and across the earth as *rivers* of invisible energy – magical energy that the scientific community fails to recognize or acknowledge as real. Some-

times the mystic energy *pools* and other times the energy is drawn or redirected by a Diviner, mage or supernatural force. Ley Lines and places (pools) of magic are discussed in detail in the **Arcanum** sourcebook.

In plain and simple terms, Diviners can use their Dowsing abilities to sense magic energy (P.P.E.). This ability is so finely tuned they can locate and follow invisible lines of energy radiating from the earth (ley lines), locate depositories of P.P.E. (places of magic), and track the supernatural by following the energy signatures the more powerful creatures leave behind like a vapor trail.

In most cases, the psychic needs a tool called a *Divining Rod*. The traditional rod is “Y” shaped, with the Diviner holding the top of the Y with both hands and letting the bottom (in this case, the point) lead him to sources of P.P.E. (or other natural resources). The Divining Rod serves as the psychic's *focus* of his own, natural psychic abilities to draw upon the ambient mystic energy in the area. This creates vibrations in the Divining Rod that grow with intensity from barely noticeable at first to obvious trembling movement as the character gets closer and closer to the object of his psychic search. The Diviner is so attuned to his tool and the subtleties of the vibrations that he can feel the rod pulling him in directions – right, left, forward, and so on. When the object of the search or the location/source of the energy has been found, the Divining Rod may point downward or bob up and down.

While cartoons typically depict the Divining Rod as being an ordinary branch, the professional Diviner usually makes a rod of



his own design. True Divining Rods may be made entirely of wood (with birch, oak and willow being the most common materials), wood and metal, or entirely of metal. It may come in pieces bolted together or formed from a single piece of wood or metal. These handmade rods are always constructed by the psychic, personally, are acutely attuned to him/her and are most accurate in locating water and ley line energy.

What most lay people don't know is a Divining Rod can be used to locate almost anything: earth energy/ley lines, water, gold and other precious metals, fossil fuel, and strong sources of P.P.E., including, places of magic, powerful supernatural beings, creatures of magic, beings (mortal and supernatural) involved in the expenditure of magic (i.e., casting spells), rituals that draw out or syphon P.P.E. and so forth, even lost keys.

Base Rate of Success in Divining by Subject: M.E. attribute number +5% per level of experience (the bonus starting with level one), plus the following *bonuses* or *penalties* applicable as follows.

+5% if the Diviner has an object/possession or sample (including soil or fabric) from the place, person or creature he is trying to locate.

+20% to find and trace the path of a ley line.

+40% to follow a ley line to a *nexus point*, the intersection where two or more lines of Potential Psychic Energy cross each other (if any).

+10% to follow supernatural evil to its lair if the trail is "hot," less than 12 hours old.

+20% to feel the approach of Demonic Servants within 200 feet (61 m).

+30% to feel the approach of great supernatural evil (Ancient Evil, Dark God, Avatar, Alien Intelligence or several Demonic Servants) or powerful magic within 400 feet (122 m). Cannot pinpoint a specific individual (if the being is in human guise), but can narrow the location to 20 feet (6.1 m) or when it is nearly on top of him.

+10% to follow the trail of a Greater Demon, Ancient Evil, or Alien Intelligence, provided the trail is no more than 32 hours old, otherwise -10% to follow a trail that is older than that, and impossible to follow if any older than 72 hours. Can also sense, through Divination, if such a being has been present at a specific location within the last 48 hours.

+5% to follow the ambient energy trail of a Supernatural Predator or Trickster to its lair, and if there are several supernatural beings (three or more) living in the same lair/location (other than minor Entities, they don't count) add another +5% for each supernatural being inhabiting the lair. Can also sense, through Divination, if such a being has been present at a specific location within the last 24 hours.

+2% to follow the trail of a Haunting Entity, Syphon Entity or Tectonic Entity, Ghoul or Banshee, or to sense if one has been present at a specific location within the last 24 hours.

+5% to find the location of magical activity (spell casting going on at that very moment, magic ritual in progress, the opening of a dimensional portal and similar); +10% if it is a Greater Demon performing the magic, +30% if it's an Ancient Evil or Intelligence.

+5% to locate the place where someone has died or was killed in the last 24 hours; must have an idea where to begin looking.

+15% to find surface water such as a stream, river, lake, pond, etc.

+10% to find and follow an underground stream of water.

-10% to follow the trail of a creature that can fly.

-15% to follow the trail of an energy being or the splintered life essence of an Ancient Evil. Cannot feel or follow Astral Beings.

-10% to locate a lost personal object owned by the Diviner.

-20% to locate a lost object/item that belongs to someone other than the Diviner.

-30% to locate a lost or kidnaped individual (mortal); must have an idea where to begin looking.

-35% to find the grave of a murder victim; must have an idea where to begin looking.

-10% to find the grave/resting place of the Undead/Vampires.

-45% to find the ruins of an ancient grave/burial place or temple; must have an idea where to begin looking.

-25% to find gold, silver, and other precious metals or valuable resources (i.e., oil, natural gas, etc.).

-35% to find less valuable underground minerals and resources, such as nickel, zinc, lead, salt, coal and oddly enough, precious stones.

All other searches via Divining are done without penalty or bonus.

Note: In addition to the above, the Diviner will sense if the underground resource or place of power is located on an ancient burial ground or a place with a history of tragedy and death or supernatural activity. In the case of all searches, the Diviner must have a starting point and the target of his search must be within a half mile (0.8 km) of his sensing ability; increase by a half mile (0.8 km) per level of experience starting at level two. Will lose a trail if the target teleports, walks through a dimensional portal or is mixed and confused with several (three or more) other similar signatures (but could follow each). Most psychic and magic trails fade away after 24 hours, only the most potent from the most powerful monsters and magic linger for 48 hours or longer.

I.S.P. cost to perform a Psychic Dowsing: Two points per 10 minutes of dowsing.

Reading Signs

Omens & Portents of Things to Come

The Diviner can also read signs. Unlike charlatans and superstitious individuals who read meaning into dreams, coincidence or superstitions (i.e., a black cat is bad luck) and think they see the future or some sign of things to come, the Diviner really does see omens that speak to the future. Unlike the Psychic Sensitive who receives all sorts of psychic sensations and visions, the Diviner needs physical props and tools to use the ability to read signs. Ironically, these *signs* don't usually come in the form of cards or bones or tea leaves, though they can, but rather in ordinary things the psychic happens to notice. For the Diviner, psychic insight is triggered by random patterns that could come from anything and occur almost anywhere. A wave of insight might come from a pattern in a spider's web or weave of vines, a flower blossom or a random pattern of cracks in the founda-



tion of the floor, dribbles of blood or wine or spilt paint or the ring left by a coffee cup or glass of water, to a particular cloud formation, a pattern of light or reflection, the ripple of waves, a pile of twigs or leaves, scratches in the floor or table, or marks in the dust, or the presence of a bird, insect, cat, dog or other animal, and just about anything else.

It is important to understand that a Diviner can't make a sign appear when he wants one, he only sees and interprets what is *actually there*, if anything at all. Though a Diviner can try and look for a sign, he cannot force one to appear or find one because he wants it. A sign is either there or not, and they usually show up out of the blue when he's not even looking for one.

The meaning of the sign is instantly known to the Diviner, but it is often broad or vague. For example, a Diviner entering a house or building might see a sign that warns him of the presence of evil, magic, the supernatural, witchcraft, danger or death inside, but it does NOT tell him who, where, or what. That's where Dowsing may come in, because if a sign indicates a magic or supernatural presence, the Diviner may be able to follow a psychic energy trail to the source using the power to Divine via Dowsing.

The ability to read signs is also valuable in that it can provide additional insight and information. For example, the group may know that magic or supernatural forces are involved but they don't know who or what they are up against, or how serious the situation may be. Upon approaching a house, a raven, standing on the doorstep cries, out, looks at the door, cries out again and flies away. Not just flies away, but practically dive bombs the Diviner on its way out. The character (as told by the G.M.) knows this means danger and death waits inside and that if he were wise, he'd flee with the raven. The situation is now known to be *deadly serious*. Information he should share with his teammates, provided they are friends and the character is a team player. Similarly, there may be a sign that indicates the villain here is definitely a demon and while all clues point to the upstairs, a sign tells the Diviner the source of the problem resides in the basement (or confirms that it is upstairs).

Game Master Note: The appearance of signs and what they should mean to the Diviner, is ultimately *your* responsibility. You need to tell what the sign is and what the Diviner gets from it. As noted, use these omens, visions and flashes of insight to provide a *bit* of information, confirmation of already gathered info, or to point the character in the right direction, or to prepare him and the player group for danger or trouble, as well as to identify the enemy: demon, sorcerer, ghosts/spirits, monster, cult, an ordinary person, etc. (For example, while others are jumping to the conclusion that some Non-Player Character is the bad guy responsible for "X," the Diviner knows from the NPC's

"energy" or an "omen" that he is not the guilty party, and may even be a good guy who can help them.)

The Diviner may also add to the atmosphere of the game when his signs are used to create and build suspense, tension and nail biting action. One could drop in signs to confirm the group's worst fear or that the situation is worse than their worst fears, but it should be done in such a manner that the knowledge comes piecemeal in little dribs and drabs, as the adventure progresses, building tension and suspense along the way. And so on.

Note: Though the character does not read cards, bones, tea leaves, etc., they do create patterns that *could* result in random, psychic omens. When this happens the character will know the difference between a parlor game or theatrical trick and a *genuine sign*.

I.S.P.: None, but must notice the sign, and may not if otherwise distracted (make a Perception Roll).

Base Rate of Success: Automatically knows the meaning of any true omen or sign.

Reading Clues and the Obvious (at least where magic, monsters and the supernatural are concerned): There are signs and indications – clues and trails, if you will – that the Diviner should instantly recognize. For example, the stacking of chairs and other traits of a Poltergeist are instantly recognized as such. Likewise, the Diviner can instantly tell if a magic circle is authentic or fake and whether its purpose is for good or evil, but not exactly what it does or how to use it.

A Diviner will also notice and understand physical signs that indicate the presence of evil Witches, Demons, Entities, possession and the supernatural, or the lack thereof, meaning he can tell if a scene is designed to fool people into believing magic or monsters were involved when they were not. **Rate of Success Reading Clues:** 40% +5% per level of experience; +10% when the signs point to fakery, forgery and no involvement of the paranormal (i.e., no psychic, magical, or supernatural forces are at work here). No I.S.P. cost.

Palm Reading

The Diviner derives knowledge from physical signs and patterns, which means he can read a person's palms to get fundamental information about that individual similar to the psychic ability, *See Aura*. The Diviner does not actually see the aura, but he gets the same information: An impression of alignment (good, selfish or evil), age (within 1D4 years), general level of experience (low, medium or high), health (well, ill, suffering from an injury), key personality traits (shy, confident, quiet or outspoken, indecisive, bold, etc.) and whether the individual has low self-esteem or healthy self-esteem and if fortune or misfortune may be in his future. **I.S.P.:** 3. **Note:** Requires physical contact, sufficient light and close examination of the palm for at least one minute. That means the psychic will need the individual's cooperation or an unconscious subject. A casual glance or handshake provides nothing. Most people are fascinated with the *idea* of palm reading and getting their future told, especially in a casual meeting or party atmosphere, and will allow a quick reading they believe is a fun parlor game.

Touch Conveyance

Touch Conveyance has nothing to do with patterns, and everything to do with the flow of energy in and around the character being touched. This power enables the Diviner to tell if the character has low (under 10 points), medium (11-25 points) or high (30+ points) levels of P.P.E. or I.S.P., if he or she is psychic or wields magic (or has the potential for one or the other), if the character is human or *something else* (but not exactly what), and if the character is possessed or something is not right (the latter usually indicating a magical charm, trance or enchantment in place rather than outright possession, or a symbiotic link with something inhuman, or the presence of a terminal disease). In addition, the touch (shaking hands is typical) will indicate if the individual is friendly and open, closed and secretive, or glad to see the individual, indifferent (which may simply mean he doesn't know the person and is simply being polite) or annoyed, bothered or angry/resentful toward the psychic. Powerful evil or intense good can also be sensed by touch. **I.S.P.: 5. Duration:** One melee round (15 seconds). **Note:** Requires *physical contact* with the skin of the subject for at least five seconds to get any sense of the person (counts as two melee actions); will not work through gloves or clothes. **Player Note:** This is *not* an automatic ability, and the player must spend the appropriate I.S.P. and announce to the G.M. his character's intention to do a Touch Conveyance. In addition to the handshake, one may be able to hold/touch a hand under the pretense of admiring the person's jewelry, skin or other cosmetic qualities. Women are most susceptible to compliments about their skin, fingernails and hands. A man is likely to think another man is strange for talking about his lovely skin, though a female holding his hands and commenting on how strong, artistic or gentle his hands are should work more often than not. Putting one's hand on the shoulder or arm of a stranger is likely to get the psychic slapped or punched, and the arm pulled away from his touch (five seconds is longer than you imagine). Palm reading could work, though a character or shape changer with something to hide is not likely to comply.

See the Aura of the Supernatural

The Diviner can see the aura of supernatural beings and recognize what they are (what kind of demon or monster) from the aura alone, provided he has seen it before. This is true even if the creature is disguised via magic metamorphosis, shape changing ability, or if actively possessing a mortal host (cannot see aura if the possessing force is not in control of the body at the time). To see a supernatural aura the Diviner must be looking and spend the necessary I.S.P. **Duration:** One melee round. **Range:** Line of sight up to a maximum of 300 feet (91.5 m) away. **I.S.P.:** 2.

See the Aura of Magic

A Diviner can tell if an object is charged with or contains magic energy (P.P.E.) and therefore, whether it is a magic item or a cursed object; can see if the energy emanations are good/beneficial or evil/destructive. Can also tell if an object is possessed. **Range:** Must be within 10 feet (3 m) and the Diviner needs a clear line of sight to the object; best if within a foot or two (0.3 to 0.6 m). **Duration:** One melee round. **I.S.P.:** 4.

Diviner P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attribute Bonuses: +2 to P.E. or P.B. (pick one).

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +10% to Land Navigation skill even if a Secondary Skill, +1 to dodge, +1 to save vs possession and disease (including magic disease), +1 to save vs magic and curses, and is +4 to Perception Rolls when looking for "signs," but +2 on all other Perception Rolls. +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. *Impervious to Negative Energy:* The Diviner is *impervious* to most forms of negative energy, including Negative Chi, Dim Mak/death touch, petrification magic and curses, and magical insanity. Likewise, magic and psychic charms are only half as effective (half the penalties, half the duration, etc.).

Neither completely Opened or Closed to the Supernatural.

Open enough to recognize signs and warnings, and able to sense psychic emanations but only when divining or reading signs/palms, etc.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy Points): Roll 1D4+1; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his psychic abilities and skills.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 2D6 +2 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics, but not all. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus.

Selecting Physical Psychic Abilities: Psi-powers for this character include the *Special Diviner Abilities* listed previously, plus select two Sensitive abilities at level one and one additional Sensitive ability at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15.

Occupation: Any, but lean toward scholarly occupations and those that involve investigation, travel, tracking and/or the outdoors.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. New car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with

monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, compass, wristwatch, digital camera, tape recorder and 1D6+6 tapes, pocket notebook and 1D4 pens or markers, a mechanical pencil and 24 replacement leads, small hand pick (1D6 damage as a weapon), small shovel (1D4 damage as a weapon), a pair of binoculars, sunglasses, some kind of hat or cap, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, hiking boots, some personal items, a cross or other holy symbol as a necklace and as a pocket-size item (six inches/15 cm), and, of course, three different varieties of Dowsing Rods (different materials and/or slightly different sizes and shapes).

One simple melee weapon like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

Two modern weapons: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or one or two revolvers or pistols (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

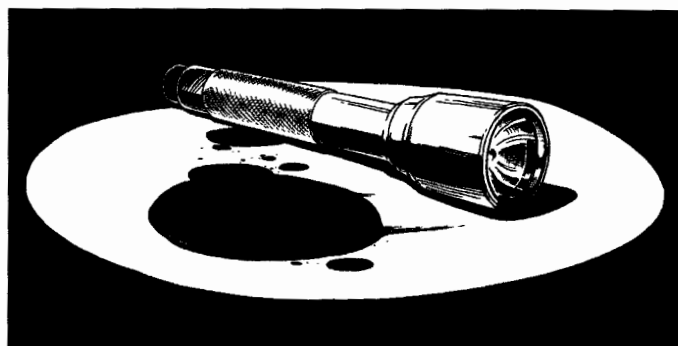
2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation: See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.



Fire Walker P.C.C.

A type of Physical Psychic

"Sure there's some smoke and mirrors when you're dealing with the paranormal," said Lisa Maxwell with a cocky grin.

"Just remember, baby, where there's smoke, there's fire."

The Fire Walker is a Physical Psychic whose focus and powers involve heat and fire. The technical term is *Pyrokinesis*, the ability to influence and create fire with the mind through sheer force of will and mental concentration. It is uncommon compared to Psychic Sensitive and Physical Psionic powers, and quite unique. Although other psychics may wield the power of Pyrokinesis, it is a comparatively crude and limited ability over fire, while the Fire Walker commands many fire related abilities and wields precise control.

As the name suggests, a Fire Walker can walk on burning coals and handle fire without physical injury, but the character's relationship with fire goes much deeper. In a way, it is his spirit guide – an inner force that provides the Fire Walker with insight and visions as well as inspiration and raw power. Against supernatural forces, especially those vulnerable to flame, a master of Pyrokinesis is a power to be reckoned with, but like other Physical Psychics, his sensitivity to spirits and other subtle energies is minimal.

It is interesting to note that the *personality* of the Fire Walker is often combustible. Many are openly flamboyant, hot-tempered and emotionally volatile. Even the outwardly quiet and introverted ones may be volcanoes boiling with emotion beneath their calm exterior. Most Fire Walkers have strong opinions, at least about certain subjects, and have one or more "hot buttons" that get the emotions fired up. Hot button subjects may include politics, the government, conspiracies and cover-ups, the media, religion, prejudice, human rights, injustice, poverty, and brutality. More personal hot button subjects may include a favorite sports team, author or TV show, parent(s), siblings, appearance, weight issues, cowardice, bravery, and even psychic abilities and how one should best use them. Of course, there may also be issues and subjects about the supernatural, magic, and the paranormal that make the character emotional (insecurities, fears, villains, likes, dislikes, and so on). Although the "hot" reaction usually manifests itself as smart remarks, anger, rage and violence, it may also manifest as tears and sorrow, or quietness and isolation (holding one's anger inside and avoiding conflict or even people; the lone wolf). It can also appear as sarcasm, a cutting wit, or outrageous behavior. Temper tantrums are a rarity, but saying and doing flamboyant things are not. Fire Walkers who feel insecure (despite how they may claim or pretend to feel) may also take foolish risks to prove themselves and act fearless even when they are terrified or confused. Openly flamboyant Fire Walkers like to be the center of attention, and may dress or act provocatively (which may or may not mean sexy) and many are irreverent toward social dogma. Most are also champions of the underdog and serious about *battling* the supernatural.

Many Fire Walkers see themselves as self-styled warriors of the psychic community. Their aggressive and fiery temperaments and ability to control fire make them well suited for the



warrior role. However, they must exercise extreme caution, because fire can be destructive and hurtful to innocent people, and if the Fire Walker loses control, it can consume him and all around him. As a result, most Fire Walkers are very serious about fire and use it with much forethought and consideration.

Special P.C.C. Pyrokinetic Abilities:

- 1. Burning Touch.** The psychic's touch burns supernatural beings and creatures of magic. Requires physical contact via touch with one's hand(s) and adds to punch damage. Against humans (and other mortals, including mages), the character's touch may seem warm, as if he has a fever, but it does *no* damage whatsoever. It will, however, burn Witches and others who have willingly joined or merged with supernatural evil, unless they have some sort of supernatural or magical defense (i.e., impervious to fire/heat). Duration: One melee round (15 seconds). Range: Touch/punch. Damage: 2D6. I.S.P.: 4
- 2. Commune with Fire.** After 30 seconds of focus and concentration, the psychic can sense the size and speed of the fire's growth and rate of expansion, the path it will travel, where it has already traveled (meaning he can tell where it started), and how long before it consumes the entire area/structure. The psychic can also tell if the fire is out of control, the level of danger it represents to those working with or around the fire or trapped inside a burning structure, the safest and fastest way out or around the fire, and whether the fire was caused by accident, nature, or deliberately set. Furthermore, the character can tell if a supernatural being(s) is inside the fire or within 50 feet (15.2 m) of it, and if the creature or a fellow Pyrokinetic psychic started it. This same information can be acquired from the ash and remains of a cold fire, too. Duration: One minute per level of experience. I.S.P.: 4
- 3. Fire Awareness or Sense Fire.** The psychic can sense fire within a 100 foot (30.5 m) diameter in all directions of him. For example, he knows there are six lit candles on the mantle before he ever sees them, he knows leaves and branches are being burned in a fire pit behind the house, and he feels it when someone out front lights her cigarette. He can also sense that all the fires are controlled and nonthreatening. If an enemy or an arsonist starts a fire in the basement, the Fire Walker will know it the instant the fire is lit, know that it was deliberately set and that it is a threat to the structure and those inside, provided the fire is started within his sphere of fire awareness. The Fire Awareness is being able to tell how much time has passed by seeing how much of a candle has melted, and the psychic is especially aware of and alert to all things involving fire, including the smell of smoke, burning materials, etc. **Note:** +3 to Perception Rolls involving fire, accelerants, combustibles, potential fire hazards and the aftermath of fire (i.e., *clues* and *physical evidence* to what caused it, where it started, was arson involved, etc.). No I.S.P. cost.
- 4. Fire Knowledge.** The psychic has always found fire fascinating, though not to the point of obsession or pyromania. As a result, the Fire Walker knows all about chemical combinations that burn and extinguish fire, how to make Molotov cocktails, how to turn a can of hair spray into a mini-flame thrower (six foot/1.8 m range, 2D6 damage per blast), how to

handle fire and flammable chemicals, basic arson techniques and methods, and similar things about fire and firefighting. Base Skill: 80% +1% per level of experience.

5. **Resistant to Fire.** A natural P.C.C. ability, the psychic is not adversely affected by hot air temperatures; up to 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.7 Celsius) feels comfortable. However, he dislikes the cold. Feels chilled and must dress in a sweater and/or coat in temperatures below 58 degrees (14.4 C). The character can also physically pick up and handle hot (not burning hot) objects such as a hot potato right out of the oven or a hot cup of coffee, a warm coal, and takes half damage from steam and fire. No I.S.P. cost.
6. **Sense Temperature.** The psychic can estimate the heat/temperature of the air, fire, hot items, etc., within 1D6 degrees Fahrenheit (0.5 to 3.3 C). To tell the temperature of a flame, hot physical item or liquid, the character must put his hands within six inches (15 cm) of it. To tell air temperature he need only pause and concentrate with his palms open. Both count as two attacks/melee actions. Duration: Instant. I.S.P.: One point.

Physical Pyrokinetic Psychic or "Fire Walker" P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section for details, bonuses and other elements.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to P.S. and P.B.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +1 to roll with impact, +4 to save vs possession, +3 to save vs fever (including fever inducing curses and magic spells), +2 to save vs magic and +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12. Remember, Fire Awareness gives the psychic a +3 Perception Roll bonus when it involves fire; see #3, above.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural.

Although the Fire Walker possesses psi-powers, he is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal. He is simply not "tuned in" to the ethereal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation, though his enemies may be able to sense him.

Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It means the physical focus and a closed psyche shields the character from supernatural forces, providing a natural defense to possession, Horror Factor and magic (see P.C.C. Bonuses, previously). This natural resistance coupled with the character's own psi-abilities can make him a dangerous opponent to supernatural creatures. Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he lacks the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

Each psychic attack or use of a psionic ability counts as one of the character's melee attacks or actions.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D6; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his physical and mind over matter abilities.

Base I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points): 2D4 +2 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. Major psi-abilities can be quite costly in I.S.P., while others require only two or three I.S.P.

When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended Base I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics. Total relaxation or sleep restores *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus. **Note:** The Fire Walker does not automatically get the Meditation ability and must select it as a skill or psychic ability.

Selecting Physical Psychic Abilities: Psi-powers for this character include the Special P.C.C. Abilities listed previously, plus a selection of Pyrokinetic Psychic abilities. Select 1D4+5 Pyrokinetic abilities at level one. The character gets one additional fire power per level of advancement, starting at second level.

Occupation: Any, but tends to be attracted to occupations that have some excitement, challenge, physical activity and flash or fire to them. Firefighters and arson investigators for the Police, Fire Department, and insurance companies are appealing for obvious reasons, so does detective, security, investigative and police work.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D6 year old car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, 1D4 books or boxes of matches, one disposable butane cigarette lighter, one refillable butane lighter, small acetylene torch, a dozen candles, a small portable oil lamp, a gallon bottle of oil, two gallons of gasoline, two foot length of plastic tubing or hose (for syphoning gasoline), a bag of old newspapers, a blanket, a roll of duct tape, pocket knife (1D4 damage as a weapon), a pair of sunglasses, jacket, heavy coat, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one expensive suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace or pocket-size item (six inches), optional.

Two simple melee weapons like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length

of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow its citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one:

1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation.

Money in Savings: Highly Skilled Occupation: 2D6x\$1000.
Modest Skills: 1D4x\$1,000, and unskilled: 5D6x\$100.

Genius or Natural P.C.C.

"Anyone who has studied the subject for more than 10 minutes can see there is a mountain of anecdotal evidence to support a long list of human extrasensory abilities. Another 20 minutes of research will unearth a surprising amount of clinical evidence as well. Open your narrow mind and you'll find plenty of evidence to support that we are not alone, and I don't mean aliens from another planet . . . though I haven't given that subject any consideration, so I wouldn't exclude alien . . . Um, anyway, I have found compelling testimony and some substantive scientific investigations that support the existence of supernatural beings and, dare I open myself to ridicule, demons and magic. And then there are the mountains of historical documentation from every country on the globe . . . You know what Mr. Sheridan? I can see you're a bright man and a professional journalist. That means: a) You already know all this, and b) you know I'm a brilliant man who wouldn't waste his time chasing a fantasy. Take my word for it. E.S.P., demons, ghosts, the Boogeyman, all of it. Real. So carry a silver cross, lock your doors at night, say your prayers and don't let the bed bugs bite. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm in the middle of a project."

A Genius is an individual who has turned his Potential Psychic Energy toward a particular area of skill expertise or physical perfection that has grown into brilliance. The character is



also known as “a Natural” – meaning he seems to have been born gifted in one or more particular areas that put him head and shoulders above the norm. For this individual, certain skills (usually key to the character’s chosen occupation) seem to be second nature and effortless. In the alternative, the character may easily achieve a level of physical performance that supercedes the conventional accepted boundaries. Whichever the case, the Genius or Natural has almost superhuman ability in a few select areas. Uncanny ability that far outstrips the character’s age, experience and formal education or training.

According to Victor Lazlo, this is an example of super-focused P.P.E. As the theory goes, the character was able to tap into his Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) at a very young age and focus it into areas of interest/study or physical awareness. So intense, deliberate, and all consuming was this interest that it, in effect, was turned into the character’s special power. Rather than develop psychic or magical abilities, this person developed a genius intellect or superior physical ability.

The Genius or Natural is actually a study of contrast and imbalance – phenomenally brilliant in one area, average or even inept in another. It’s just that he shines so brightly in certain things that it tends to overshadow the character’s failings. This raw talent often instills the bona fide Genius or superior physical specimen with supreme confidence and exuberance that prompts him to continually challenge himself and those around him. Unfortunately, it may also give the Natural an overblown sense of himself, leading him to mistakenly believe he (or she) is better than anyone else. On the other hand, many Geniuses are oversensitive about their abilities and fearful that it will make others see them as superior and treat them differently, like misfits. Truly confident and emotionally balanced Geniuses and Naturals believe everyone has value and accept people for who and what they are. They treat all people with respect, consideration and compassion. Those who suffer from insecurity or a superiority complex overcompensate by either trying too hard to fit in and be just “one of the guys,” or becoming callous and treating those they see as beneath them (which is 98%) with contempt or snide indifference. (“I don’t need you. You’re nothing. Less than nothing.”) Narcissism (“I’m smarter, better looking, and more important than you.”) is a common failing among Geniuses and Naturals, and because such individuals are among the most memorable (a narcissist makes it a point he is not overlooked or forgotten), public perception is that all Geniuses are that way, but only about 20% behave in such a deplorable fashion.

Finding the paranormal. Geniuses and Naturals who become involved in the paranormal usually come to it in one of two ways. Either the supernatural found them (someone the character cares about has a terrifying encounter with the unknown and inhuman), or the character is drawn to it because of the many unanswered questions and intriguing possibilities. In the case of a close encounter of the third kind, the Genius is smacked in the face with something that shouldn’t even exist, and in this driven character’s way, he responds with everything he’s got to offer. This means trying to figure out exactly what’s going on and how to remedy the situation, which may include hunting down a supernatural menace and destroying it. As for the intellectual, it’s a case of curiosity killed the cat, or in this case, captures his attention and imagination. Any number of in-

cidents or coincidences could draw the attention of the Genius, and once on the problem that analytical mind keeps asking questions and seeking answers. In this case, it probably starts with one simple question: “How can that be?” How can a so-called psychic move an object with his mind, or get a premonition of the future? And so on. Once the questions start there is no end to them, and the puzzle is too fascinating to push aside. The Genius is compelled to solve it. The fact that many of these phenomena seem to defy the laws of science only makes it that much more fascinating and challenging.

Special Genius/Natural P.C.C. Abilities

Not all **Beyond the Supernatural™** characters possess unusual powers, but all do have some special distinction which sets them apart from the rest of humanity. The Genius or Natural exhibits an astonishing aptitude or “natural” ability in a particular area or several. Exactly what those areas are, we leave to the players.

First roll for P.P.E.: 2D6+18 points. This is the character’s initial Potential Psychic Energy available as a child. You, dear player, are about to determine how that P.P.E. was spent to create your Genius or Natural character. Spend *ALL* P.P.E., there is no reason to keep any in reserve.

Second, mental or physical perfection. Select whether the character is a *Genius* or *Natural Athlete*. Genius indicates mental aptitudes that apply to skills and education, be it a genius at art, mechanical engineering, electronics, medicine, science or whatever. Natural Athlete indicates physical perfection. Both are designed to allow players to create a huge range of interesting and different characters.

Third, an occupation. Many of the bonuses apply to the character’s skills, which means if you haven’t taken a look at character creation you should do so before you continue, and select an occupation and skills. Then come back here to decide where you want to spend your character’s P.P.E.

Fourth, bonuses. You are about to determine what areas the character excels at on a genius level. Unless noted otherwise, all bonuses are accumulative. Spend your P.P.E. Wisely.

Genius

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute P.C.C. Bonuses: +1D4 to I.Q., M.E. and P.B.

P.P.E. Bonuses: Okay, this is what makes your character a Genius. Each possible bonus costs a certain amount of P.P.E. You can only spend the P.P.E. available.

Skill Bonuses for the Genius:

10 P.P.E. for a +30% bonus on any *three Occupational Skills*. Should probably be the three that are most important or key to that occupation. This is in addition to the occupational skill bonus and any I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased one time.

5 P.P.E. for a +10% bonus on any *two Elective Skills*. Should probably be the two that are particularly interesting to the character (psychic investigation?). This is in addition to any other

applicable bonuses for Elective Skills, including any I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can be purchased as many as two times for a total of four Elective Skills bonuses.

2 P.P.E. for a +5% bonus on any *four Secondary Skills*. Should probably be the skills that are most significant to the character's hobbies (psychic investigation?). This is in addition to any other applicable bonuses for Secondary Skills, including I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased one time.

4 P.P.E. Select two additional Elective Skills (+10%). **Note:** Can only be purchased one time.

2 P.P.E. Select two extra Secondary Skills (+5%). **Note:** Can only be purchased one time.

Attribute Bonuses for the Genius: Any of these categories may be purchased as often as desired.

- 1 P.P.E. to increase the I.Q. attribute by one point.
- 2 P.P.E. to increase the M.E. attribute by one point.
- 1 P.P.E. to increase the M.A. attribute by one point.

- 3 P.P.E. to increase the P.S. attribute by one point.
- 4 P.P.E. to increase the P.P. attribute by one point.
- 4 P.P.E. to increase the P.E. attribute by one point.
- 2 P.P.E. to increase the P.B. attribute by one point.
- 2 P.P.E. to increase the Spd attribute by one point.

Hit Point & S.D.C. Bonuses for the Genius: Each may be purchased once.

- 4 P.P.E. to acquire 1D4+1 additional Hit Points!
- 3 P.P.E. to acquire 1D6+2 additional S.D.C.

Other Applicable Bonuses for the Genius: Any of these categories may be purchased as often as desired.

- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs Horror Factor.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs illusion.
- 1 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs insanity.
- 5 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on initiative.
- 3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on Perception Rolls.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs possession.

Natural Athlete

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute P.C.C. Bonuses: +1D6 to P.S., P.B. and Spd.

P.P.E. Bonuses: Okay, this is what makes your character a superior physical specimen. Each possible bonus costs a certain amount of P.P.E.

Skill Bonuses:

10 P.P.E. for a +20% bonus on any *three Occupational Skills*. Should probably be three that involve physical activity or use of the hands (Mechanics skills, Demolitions, Palming, Climb, Swim, etc.) as well as having importance to that occupation. This is in addition to the occupational skill bonus and any I.Q. attribute bonuses. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased one time.

5 P.P.E. for a +5% bonus on *all Physical Skills* (i.e., all skills that are found under the category of Physical Skills). This is in addition to any other applicable bonuses, including any I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased once.

5 P.P.E. for a +5% bonus on any *two Elective Skills*. Should probably be the two that are interesting to the character. (And psychic investigation?) This is in addition to any other applicable bonuses for Elective Skills, including any I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased as many as two times, for a total of four Elective Skill bonuses.

3 P.P.E. for a +5% bonus on any *four Secondary Skills*. Should probably be the skills that are most significant to the character's hobbies (psychic investigation?). This is in addition to any other applicable bonuses for Secondary Skills, including I.Q. attribute bonus. **Note:** This bonus can only be purchased one time.

4 P.P.E. Select two additional Physical or Wilderness Skills (+10%). **Note:** Available for purchase only one time.

2 P.P.E. Select two extra W.P. (Ancient or Modern) skills. **Note:** Available for purchase only one time.

Attribute Bonuses: Any of these categories may be purchased as often as desired.

- 5 P.P.E. to increase the I.Q. attribute by one point.
- 3 P.P.E. to increase the M.E. attribute by one point.
- 2 P.P.E. to increase the M.A. attribute by one point.
- 13 P.P.E. to make P.S. Supernatural.
- 1 P.P.E. to increase the P.S. attribute by one point.
- 3 P.P.E. to increase the P.P. attribute by one point.
- 2 P.P.E. to increase the P.E. attribute by one point.
- 1 P.P.E. to increase the P.B. attribute by one point.
- 1 P.P.E. to increase the Spd attribute by *two* points.

Hit Point & S.D.C. Bonuses: Each can be purchased twice, unless stated otherwise.

- 3 P.P.E. to acquire 1D6+3 additional Hit Points!
- 2 P.P.E. to acquire 1D6+10 additional S.D.C.
- 6 P.P.E. to heal twice as quickly as normal. One time purchase.
- 5 P.P.E. for a bonus of +10% to save vs coma/death.
- 5 P.P.E. to be resistant to cold (does half damage; half the symptoms).

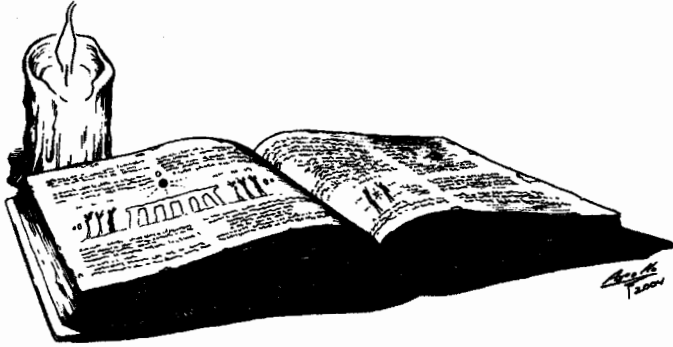
Other Applicable Bonuses: Any of these categories may be purchased as often as desired, unless stated otherwise.

- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs disease.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs Horror Factor.
- 3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs illusion.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs insanity.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs possession.
- 3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on initiative.
- 4 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on Perception Rolls.
- 1 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to pull punch.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to roll with impact.
- 2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to *disarm* in hand to hand combat. Can only be purchased four times.

2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to *strike* in hand to hand combat and with melee weapons. Can only be purchased twice.

3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to strike using *modern weapons/guns* (includes the bow and arrow) on an aimed or Called Shot. Can only be purchased twice.

4 P.P.E. to get an *automatic dodge* (the act of dodging does not use up a melee attack/action). Can only be purchased once.



Genius or Natural P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be heroic characters of a good or Unprincipled alignment.

Attributes: As noted under the Genius and Natural Athlete previously described.

Attribute Bonuses: As noted under the Genius and Natural Athlete previously described.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): As purchased with P.P.E. Low base P.P.E. means that the character is less likely to be sought as a P.P.E. power source, sacrifice or target for possession.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties:

- Needs to roll a 15 or higher to save vs psychic attacks at all times.
- Has no psychic powers or senses.
- Has no other special bonus.
- Closed to the Supernatural means the character is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him.

Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It shields the character from supernatural forces, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks. Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he may lack the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Base: 1D4; all the rest was spent on areas of speciality and genius.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: None.

Recovering I.S.P.: Note applicable.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: None.

Occupation: Absolutely any.

Common Skills: All +6%.

Other Skills: As per occupation and bonuses above.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. New car of any kind, sports car, sedan, SUV, pickup truck, and similar, cell phone, laptop computer, electronic notebook, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (at home and the office), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (back home and at the office), digital camera, pocket notepad, 1D4 pens or markers, mechanical pencil and 24 replacement leads, brief case, backpack or duffel bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, a pair of expensive sunglasses, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, three expensive suits, some personal items, a gold or silver cross or other holy symbol worn as a necklace, and a pocket-sized item (six inches/15 cm), optional.

Simple melee weapon: One if a Genius, something like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage), small knife (1D4 damage), or typical knife (1D6 damage). One for each W.P. if a Natural Athlete, plus one extra item from above just in case.

Modern weapon: One if a Genius, two for each W.P. if a Natural Athlete. Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of the car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A three bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1,500 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A roomy, three or four bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2,500-\$3,000 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation. See descriptions of occupations in the rules section near Skill Descriptions.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 3D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D10x\$1000. Unskilled: 1D6x\$1000. **Note:** The Genius or Natural will always get paid the maximum salary plus bonuses unless he fails to perform up to expectations.



Ghost Hunter

Also known as a “Night Hunter” and “Psi-Mechanic Hunter”

“Do you believe in destiny? I do. And it’s my destiny to fight the supernatural. Why else would I have these abilities and the knowledge to build weapons that work against the invisible invaders? But more than that, I can feel it. My blood boils with the hunger of a warrior . . . a hunter who hunts the ones everyone else fears. In a different time, I would have been a respected demon slayer. In today’s world I have to hide what I was born to do, but it doesn’t slow me down, brother. Doesn’t slow me down one bit.”

Unlike the true Psi-Mechanic who can build and repair almost any kind of machine, the Psi-Mechanic Hunter – better known as the Night Hunter or *Ghost Hunter* – is focused on hunting and slaying demons, devils and supernatural monsters. In ancient times it is likely that this psychic functioned as *Demon* and *Dragon Slayers* and *Demon Quellers*. While he possesses a certain mechanical aptitude and can make a small number weapons and devices, his life’s purpose is to hunt down and destroy supernatural evil. The character is actually driven to hunt and slay the supernatural, consequently, whether male or female (roughly a 50/50 split), the Ghost Hunter is always athletic and strong.

Most are rather serious and stern when it comes to dealing with the supernatural and are always for destroying said evil rather than studying or chasing it away. All believe in a higher power (i.e., a supreme being) and many ascribe to one particular faith. In fact, a good 15% are the equivalent of a fire and brimstone preacher. On the other hand, at least one third are quietly devoted to their faith, or don’t follow any one religion, though they ardently believe in a supreme being, destiny and the eternal battle between good and evil. The nondenominational Night Hunters tend to be humble, soft spoken, deeply law abiding, kind, gentle and compassionate. Quite the contrast to the more common aggressive, hard-talking, brawler type of Ghost Hunter or the outspoken, hell blazing preacher type.

Unlike the Psychic Sensitive, the Ghost Hunter cannot sense or sniff out the supernatural, but he is always ready to battle it. Consequently, even the most aggressive and hard-nosed Ghost Hunter has learned he must work and cooperate with others to be effective in his war on supernatural evil. Also surprising is that even the gruffest, toughest and most extreme Night Hunters are usually willing to sacrifice their own life to save a fellow human being, even those of questionable moral fiber. That is how strongly they regard human life. The only exceptions are those who betray humanity by allying themselves with the forces of darkness, i.e., witches, demon worshipers, cultists, and others who serve supernatural evil for their own selfish advancement and gain, or for the pure sake of evil itself.

Ghost Hunter P.C.C. Special Abilities:

1. Mechanical Aptitude. Can use any device made by another Night Hunter or Psi-Mechanic and can assist Psi-Mechanics, but lack their full range of abilities. +10% to all Mechanical Skills and +5% to any Electrical skills, including Secondary

Skills. This is a one time bonus to skills applied when the character is first created.

2. Intuitive Weapon Knowledge. Somehow, all Ghost Hunters know how to make Ghost Vision Goggles, Ghost Guns, the Ecto-Slayer Shotgun, Devil Sword and Ghost Armor. It just comes to them at the onset of their ghost-busting career. No I.S.P. Cost. See Special Weapons. **Note:** Can only build one of each at level one. Can add an extra one of these items as a spare at levels 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, and 14. They can also make a replacement if an original is lost or destroyed, however if a lost original is recovered, it will no longer work. Remember, only the Night Hunter can use the weapon or item.

3. Fire an Empty Gun (The Hunter’s Telekinetic Bullets). The weapon fires a TK bolt/bullet and inflicts 4D6 damage without the sound of gunfire (a soft, poof-poof sound is made) or leaving the telltale residue of sulfur and gunpowder left by conventional rounds.

Range: Must touch the weapon to be loaded. Duration: Five minutes per level of experience or until fired, whichever comes first. Damage: as per gun. I.S.P.: 7.

The Ghost Hunter can mentally create *two* bullets per level of experience out of sheer mental force of will. This Telekinetic or TK bullet will inflict the same damage (at the same range) as the normal round for that weapon, because the physical gun is the psychic’s frame of reference and the bullet must fit within that weapon’s capabilities. Fires from any ordinary gun; bullets appear right in the chamber or magazine. (Special bullets like dumdums and Teflon coated shells can *NOT* be created.) TK bullets will work on mortals, magical and supernatural creatures, including Entities, spirits, Astral Beings, and the Undead.

4. Spirit Fist: Punches that do damage to supernatural beings that are otherwise impervious to ordinary weapons and punches, including Vampires, Astral Beings, Entities, ghosts and spirits. I.S.P. Cost: 6. Duration: All physical attacks using the hands, feet, head, and body (no weapons) for one full melee round. Damage: 2D6 +P.S. damage bonus, if any, double damage on a Natural Twenty.

5. Intuitive Combat: A psychic ability the Ghost Hunter may summon at will the same as any psionic power. Range: Self. Duration: Two melee rounds per level of experience. I.S.P.: 10. Description: This is a form of telepathy geared to give the psychic an advantage in melee combat. To put this ability in place, the psychic must concentrate for one melee round (15 seconds), putting himself in a Zen-like state of awareness. For the next two melee rounds (per level of experience), the Intuitive Combat sense makes the character one with his body and weapon, reacting quickly and efficiently with amazing reflex action, balance and grace. **Note:** The psychic is unable to use any other psionic power, including Mind Block, while this power is in use. He can cancel it with a thought. Bonuses: +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry, +4 dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, and +2 to disarm. Cannot be caught by surprise, even by attacks from behind or from long-range, which means he can *try* to parry or dodge all attacks leveled at him. +10% to abilities (balance, etc.) provided by the Acrobatics and/or Gymnastic skills, as well as +10% to Climb and Swim skills.

Ghost Hunter P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), or Unprincipled, while the most wild and extreme may be Anarchist or even Aberrant evil. Though all Ghost Hunters are natural born adversaries of supernatural evil, some become so driven, ruthless and vicious that they cross the line and become a sort of honorable evil (Aberrant). Both Anarchist and Aberrant evil Night Hunters have no qualms about threatening and torturing supernatural beings or their human flunkies (witches, cultists, etc.). However, all retain their regard for human life, and most have a soft spot for children and clergy.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section for details, bonuses and other elements.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D6 to P.S. and Spd, as well as +2 to P.E.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +4 to save vs possession, +1 to save vs magic, +10% to save vs coma/death, and +2 to Perception Rolls that involve hunting/seeking supernatural prey. +2 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 2, 4, 8 and 12.

+3 to Hit Points per level of experience (starting at level one).

+5% to Track (any), Tailing and Prowl skills even if they are Secondary Skills.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural. The character is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him. Being closed to the supernatural does shield the character from supernatural forces, however, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks (see bonuses). Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he may lack the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D4+4; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on developing his body and his psychic abilities.

Base I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points): 1D6+4, as well as +1 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) Every time a psychic ability is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. Major psi-abilities can be quite costly in I.S.P., while others require only two or three I.S.P.

When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended Base I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics, but not all. *Total relax-*

ation or sleep will usually restores *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest, however the Ghost Hunter recovers *two I.S.P.* per hour of rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: *Open Lock, Telemechanics, Stop Bleeding (Self)* and 1D4+1 Physical abilities of choice at level one. The character gets one additional Physical or Machine Psionic at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

Occupation: Any, but tends to be attracted to occupations involving athletics, police or detective work, security, mechanics, repairs, and physical labor. Many are Professional Psychic Investigators.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. Two year old SUV, van or pickup truck with an alarm and kill switch defense system, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, magnifying glass, a pair of quality binoculars, passive nightvision goggles, basic portable tool kit (set of screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, hammer, scissors, ice pick/hole punch, battery operated drill, duct tape, a small selection of nails and screws, etc.) in a hard plastic case or metal toolbox, a pair of goggles, refillable cigarette lighter, sunglasses, pull-over knit cap of some kind, trench coat or similar long jacket (to conceal weapons and body armor), basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, and some personal items.

Weapons: 1D4+1 flares, 1D4 smoke grenades, 1D4 phosphorus grenades (burns, starts fires), one or two small silver daggers (1D4 damage; one usually hidden in a boot or ankle strap, the other in his belt in the small of his back or under the arm), .22 caliber automatic pistol with silver coated rounds (cheap, easy to conceal anywhere on the body and especially effective against supernatural beings vulnerable to silver; 2D6 damage to mortals, 4D6 to beings hurt by silver), silver cross worn on a chain under his clothing and armor, one or two 6 inch (15 cm) wood or silver crosses stowed on his ammo belt or tucked in a pocket, 1D4+3 wooden stakes (typically held in the loops of a utility belt), small ball-peen hammer, Holy Book (Bible, Koran, or whatever book the character's religion holds as the testament of his faith).

Two melee weapons like a knife (1D6 damage), sword (1D8 to 2D6 damage), mace or crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) and similar (crossbow, spear, etc.).

Two modern weapons: One hunting rifle with infrared, telescopic scope (typical damage: 7D6 or 7D6+8 damage) and a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6 – 5D6 or 6D6 for the heaviest caliber/Magnum handguns). G.M.s, note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the car, at least when participating in an active investigation, but the character will have backup weapons and ammo hidden at home and perhaps other locations (handgun and silver bullets in a safe deposit box, etc.).

Special Weapons and Equipment: While conventional weapons can be used as is appropriate, the Ghost Hunter *builds* his own unique weapons and gear that are powered by P.P.E. or I.S.P. Nobody else, not even other psychics or Psi-Mechanics, can fire the Night Hunter's weapons, or use his goggles or equipment. They are all calibrated to his specific harmonic frequency and aura. Furthermore, to anyone familiar with guns, the character's weapons don't appear to be real, but the creations or props for a movie, nut-job or confidence artist. Close examination only confirms they don't hold conventional ammunition and don't actually work (at least not like real guns).

Devil Sword: This weapon can be any type of short or large sword. Three crystals are built into the handle, holy symbols are carved into the blade, and one point of P.P.E. (or two I.S.P.) powers the weapon for one hour. When coursing with psychic energy the sword inflicts 3D6 damage +2 points per level of experience (starting at level one) to supernatural beings, double damage to Ancient Evil and triple to Alien Intelligences, but only 1D6 (short/small sword) or 1D10 damage (broad, bastard and large swords) to humans/mortals; no experience bonuses apply against mortal opponents. No effect on Astral Beings, Ghosts or Entities in the physical world.

Ecto-Slayer Shotgun: A sawed-off shotgun with extra tubing and wire. When activated with one point of P.P.E. (or two I.S.P.) each blast fires a bolt of flaming energy that never does more than 1D6 points of damage to humans/mortals, but does 1D6+1 damage per level of the psychic to supernatural beings with a physical body and double damage to Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences, and also double damage to creatures vulnerable to fire. Half damage to energy beings and Entities. No effect on Astral Beings in the physical world.

Ghost Armor: Lightweight chest plate molded from plastic or fiberglass. It is reminiscent of the armored chest plates worn by the ancient Greeks and Romans. The color is always white, grey or silver, and the edges of the armor trimmed in actual silver. Electrical wires and sensor contact pads like those used in an EKG machine create a strange sort of circuit board on the inside of the armor. Three contacts are located above the heart, one near the right shoulder and one on the stomach. Similar plates may be strapped to the thigh and forearm; groin piece is optional. A solar powered battery with a power crystal in a pack is worn on the back or hip. **Duration:** Activated for one hour per two P.P.E. points or four I.S.P. spent. **A.R.:** 13 when not activated, *A.R.* 17 when the armor is activated. **S.D.C.:** 24 when not activated, 48 +10 S.D.C. per level of experience (starting at level two) when the armor is activated. Functions more as a strange type of force field than conventional armor.

Ghost Gun: This is an oversized handgun of unusual design and configuration, making it look more like a toy than a 21st Century gun. Two modes of attack. **1)** Fires energy bolts that can strike and hurt energy beings, Entities, and Astral

Travelers. **Damage:** 2D6 damage (double damage in the Astral Plane). **Range:** 120 feet (36.6 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of the Ghost Hunter's experience (starting at level two).

2) Telekinetic Bolts that hit with the power of a heavy bullet. **Damage:** 5D6, but half damage (2D6+3) to humans/mortals, energy beings, ghosts, Entities and Astral Traveler. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience.

Payload: 24 energy/TK bolts, only any energy or Telekinetic bullets that are created inside this weapon remain loaded indefinitely, until fired or the weapon is dismantled. The psychic ammo vanishes when the weapon is taken apart/examined.

Bonuses: +1 to strike on an aimed or Called Shot (no kick), and minimal noise, has a muffled or distant gunshot sound with each shot.

Accessories: Laser targeting and/or infrared or passive starlight scope is usually built into the gun.

Powered by two D-size batteries and a power crystal. It's creating the ammunition that costs I.S.P. (See #3 under P.C.C. Special Abilities; energy bullets cost the same as TK Bolts).

Ghost Vision Goggles: Can see the invisible, including ghosts, Entities, Astral Beings and those magically invisible, as well as providing the equivalent of conventional passive nightvision goggles. Also enables the Ghost Hunter to recognize Ectoplasmic Disguises. He can see the ectoplasm and knows it's a disguise, but the weird substance still obscures the person's true features. **I.S.P.:** One point to activate for 30 minutes at a time.

Housing: Pick one (needs at least one extra bedroom as a workshop):

1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month, 750 for a three bedroom. Utilities are extra.

2) A three bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$950 a month. Utilities are extra.

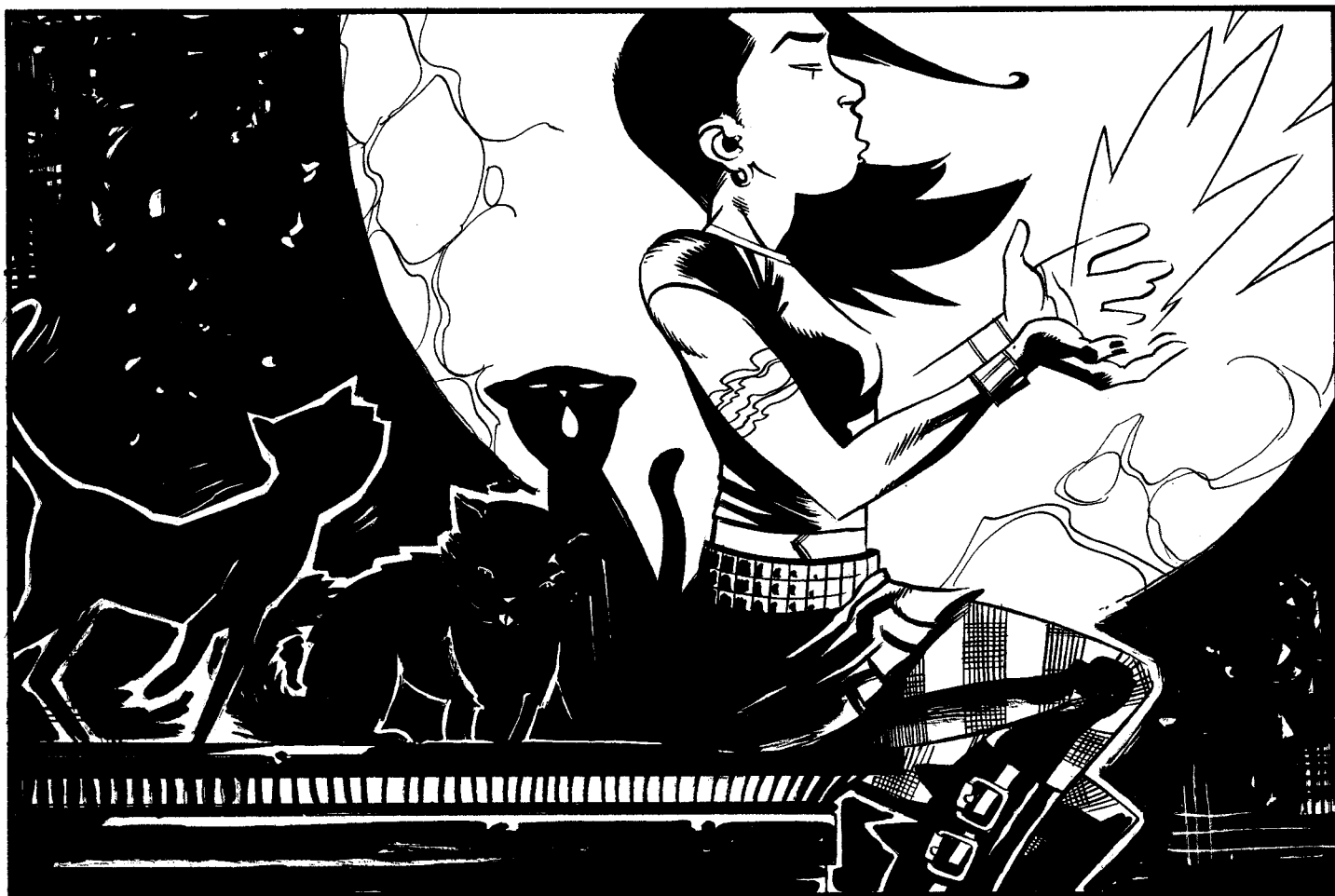
3) A three bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1,500 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2,800 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation.

Money in Savings: Highly Skilled Occupation: 2D8x\$1000. Modest Skills: 1D6x\$1,000, and Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.





Latent Psychic P.C.C.

"I don't care where psychic abilities come from or how they work. It's weird stuff, you know. I mean Sci-Fi Channel weird stuff. But it is what it is, I guess."

"I just wish I knew, why me? I mean, was I bitten by a radioactive spider? Am I the love child of a demon or chosen by God? I don't think so, you know. So why me? And this crap doesn't come with an instruction manual, you know. I mean, how am I supposed to know what to do with these . . . these, um, powers? They must be meant for something, but I'm just winging it, hoping I'm doing alright with them."

"Okay, I have to admit, some of it is pretty fun – in a weird, sorta creepy way, you know?"

The Latent Psychic may be thought of as something of an undisciplined psychic rogue. An individual who possesses some psionic abilities but neither fully accepts nor understands them. Unusual abilities just appear from time to time and the Latent accepts it the best he can.

Even with formal instruction and genuine enthusiasm, Latent Psychics can never fully control their abilities. Contributing to the problem is that the character is resistant to the concept of psychic phenomena and doesn't like the idea of demons and monsters existing in the real world. Nor do they accept that there are selfish, evil and hateful people who are willing to call upon demonic forces and dark magic for their own benefit, re-

venge or pleasure. All these things are frightening, repugnant and so unacceptable on some level that it blocks the character's full psychic development. It also captures and freezes a larger than usual measure of Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.), which means the Latent Psychic may have enough P.P.E. to activate and use certain magic items, charms and talismans. It also makes them desirable targets for villains who engage in human sacrifice. **Note:** At the moment of death, a person's P.P.E. is doubled, and practitioners of magic and demonic beings knowledgeable in such matters can capture and use that increased P.P.E. for dark magic.

Victor Lazlo speculated that the Latent Psychic is further proof that psychic individuals are Nature's antibodies created through evolution to protect humankind from supernatural forces. That even though most Latent Psychics hate the idea of a supernatural world, and don't feel comfortable with their powers, the overwhelming majority feel it is their responsibility to use their powers for good and are inexorably drawn to fellow psychics, the paranormal and supernatural forces. And that most Latent Psychics seem compelled to use their insight and powers to help, warn and protect their fellow man, and to thwart and destroy supernatural evil.

Most Latent Psychics are inquisitive, full of life, and exhibit high ideals and an exuberance tempered by innocence. In many respects, the character intuitively knows the psychic world better than most. The lack of a definitive focus enables the character to straddle across several different Psychic Character Classes. He can reach out with invisible psychic antennae to feel

and sense the unseen forces around him like the Psychic Sensitive, but may also be able to operate machines with his mind like a Psi-Mechanic, or create fire like the Fire Walker, or move objects with his mind like the Physical Psychic. However, the expanded range of psychic ability is limited by the Latent's lack of mastery over any one area of psychic focus. The character is all over the map with his powers. Furthermore, the character's expanded world view can seem too big and overwhelming, dwarfing him and his insignificant abilities. Consequently, these psychics tend to be full of life and wonder, but often a little insecure.

Outlook & Orientation

Psychic Abilities, I.S.P., P.P.E. & Bonuses Based on the Character's Outlook

Roll percentile dice (or pick one) for a random determination of the Latent Psychic's orientation.

The Latent Psychic's ability to use his psionic abilities is almost always *limited*. The number of powers is small compared to other P.C.C.s and the character can't control them all. This means while the Latent Psychic has several psionic abilities, the player must select a small number which the Latent can use at will. That is to say, a fixed set of abilities that he is able to spend I.S.P. on to manifest whenever he wants them to, provided the character has sufficient I.S.P. Once these specific or *favorite powers* are selected they are the only ones the Latent Psychic can use with any regularity or control. All others appear at moments of stress, danger or intense emotion.

During the game, it is wise for the *player* to remind the G.M. which randomly appearing powers the character has, and which specific ability the psychic might be *wishing* would happen when it is most needed. However, it is the G.M. who will determine what psionic ability (if any) manifests in a crisis or agitated state (angry, sad, worried, frustrated), and this may include a power that the character can normally call up as desired. Whatever the ability, it should be something that fits the situation and is helpful to the character. This means a G.M. can give the character a "psychic flash" of insight, premonition or warning that pops into the character's head, out of the blue, provided the Latent has the appropriate ability. For example, the character may suddenly know something evil is nearby or feel the presence of the supernatural. If a Physical Psychic of some kind, a Physical power known to the character might manifest as a defense mechanism or fire off when he is upset, angry or fighting evil. **Note:** In all cases, the randomly appearing psionic ability uses up the character's I.S.P., so the G.M. should use randomly appearing psychic abilities when they count most.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

01-10% Fears Psionic Abilities. Doesn't want them and has no desire to learn more about psychic phenomena. Tries not to use his powers and ignores the supernatural, but they keep manifesting themselves and the Latent can't keep denying seeing glimpses of the future, ghosts and strange things in the shadows. Powers often engage without warning, can't stop them. The

more this character is around others psychics, arcanists and the paranormal, the more frequently the powers manifest.

Base I.S.P.: 1D6+2 to start +1 I.S.P. per level of experience. (x2, x3, x4, x6) The character's fear prevents serious growth of psychic abilities and keeps him weak even when faced with supernatural horrors. Can draw ambient I.S.P. from ley lines with ease, which only makes his powers manifest by themselves at these locations and frightens him even more.

Available Psychic Categories: Doesn't want any, but select two from Physical, two from Sensitive and one from Machine Psionics at level one. Then select *one* new ability at levels 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, and 15 from any of those three categories.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Fearful Latent is only able to summon two specific powers at will at level one, but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 3, 6, and 12. However, these and other selected abilities may appear unwanted and without warning, usually when angry, frustrated, under stress, worried, scared or threatened.

Bonuses: The character's fear helps to block him from the supernatural, giving the fearful psychic the equivalent of *Mind Block Auto-Defense* at no I.S.P. cost whenever the Latent is terrified as well as when he knows (or fears with some level of certainty) that something inhuman or evil is trying to read his mind, possess him, or attack him with psionics or magic. +6 to save vs possession, +3 to save vs mind control and illusions, and +2 to save vs magic.

Penalty: -2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Remaining P.P.E.: 2D6+4

11-20% The Devil's Curse. The character is rather religious and his puritanical upbringing has led the Latent to believe he is somehow cursed or touched by evil. One or more family members and/or a fire and brimstone preacher may have reinforced this paranoid belief by talking about how the abilities are unnatural, a curse, and could only have come from the devil or other dark forces. The young psychic was then told to pray and do penance, perhaps even fasting to the point of starvation or whip himself to be "purged of the evil within" and make the powers go away. When that didn't work, the Latent was likely forced to leave that church (and/or home or community) because he is "a child of the devil" or "touched by evil."

As a result, the Cursed Latent Psychic wonders if the preacher and/or family members might be correct, and worries that he's destined to become a pawn or soldier for evil demonic forces. "I may be able to control myself now," he tells himself, "but sooner or later, my evil nature will surface, I'll lose control and become a monster." Consequently, the psychic tries not to use his powers except when they are most needed, and worries when he finds himself enjoying having such gifts even when they are used to help others or to triumph over evil. (He's been told that to enjoy such unnatural and Hell-spawned powers is the first step to succumbing to demonic temptation.) Such a tortured individual will, inevitably, pray and work hard at being a good, God-fearing person, and tries to remain humble, compassionate and kind to others. The motivation for the Cursed Latent going out and fighting supernatural evil may be to prove he is not evil and, perhaps, to see if there's a way he can give up these abilities and become normal again. The character is likely to seek out and associate with other good people who battle the

supernatural. Note that with age, good counsel and greater understanding of the paranormal, this character is likely to learn to accept his abilities as a gift, not a curse, but the doubt and fear will always linger deep inside of him.

Base I.S.P.: 1D6+2 to start, and +2 per level of experience, starting with level two. (x2, x4, x6, x10)

Available Psychic Categories: Select one ability from each of the categories of Fire Walker, Healing, Physical, and Sensitive at level one. And then pick one additional from *any* of those categories at levels 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Cursed Latent is only able to use his four favorite powers at will at level one, but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 2, 4, 8, and 12. However, these and other selected abilities may appear without warning, usually when angry, frustrated, worried, scared or threatened.

Bonuses: The character's conviction not to be the pawn or spawn of supernatural evil makes him +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs demonic curses, +2 to save vs possession, and +1 to save vs magic.

Blessing or a Curse: The character's goodness combined with his secret desire to understand his powers and to use them to help others makes him *Open to the Supernatural* the same as a *Psychic Sensitive P.C.C.*

Alignment Note: This character will always start out Principled, Scrupulous or Unprincipled, but *may* turn Anarchist or evil as time goes on, depending on how events and friends help shape his life.

Remaining P.P.E.: 1D10+3

21-35% God's Gift. Conditional Acceptance. This character tends to be religious or spiritual and sees his abilities as a gift from a higher power. He also regards it as a great responsibility (and possibly a burden) and chooses to use his psionic powers to the best of his ability because they must have been given to him for a purpose. Since they come from God, that purpose must be to help and defend others, and destroy evil. To deny that responsibility would be wrong, a sin, and an affront in the eyes of God. This individual has a very philosophical, positive and helpful outlook on his abilities, but does little to formally develop them or understand the supernatural world. Whatever abilities and insight materializes are "God's will" and he simply accepts them.

Base I.S.P.: 1D4+3, +2 per level of experience, starting with level two. (x2, x4, x6, x10) The character prays for spiritual guidance and has learned he can draw ambient I.S.P. from Ley Lines whenever he tries, but doesn't understand how he can do such a thing.

Available Psychic Categories: Healing and Sensitive; select two from one and three from the other, +1 additional power from either one of those categories at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Gifted Latent is only able to summon his four favorite powers at will at level one (and two of those will be powers that help or protect others), but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 3, 6, 9, and 12. However, these and other selected abilities may appear without warning, usually when angry, worried, scared, under attack or when an innocent person is threatened.

Bonuses: +3 to save vs possession, +4 to save vs a Vampire's mind control powers and bite, +1 to save vs Mind Control, and +2 to save vs magic and Horror Factor.

Remaining P.P.E.: 2D6+3

36-50% Casual Attitude Toward Psionics. This character likes the idea of having psychic abilities. They make him feel special and important, but at the same time this Latent Psychic has no real interest in learning about the paranormal or supernatural, nor any meditation exercises. He or she simply goes with the flow and looks at whatever happens as "fate" or the "natural" progression of his/her abilities. Still, the character is inexorably drawn to other psychics and the supernatural.

Base I.S.P.: 1D6+1 to start, +1 per level of experience, starting with level two. (x2, x3, x5, x8) The character's "acceptance," but lack of deliberate development and research into the paranormal limits the person's growth and raw power. Realizes ambient I.S.P. can be drawn from a Ley Line when he chooses to do so, but doesn't understand how he does it.

Available Psychic Categories: Machine Psionics, and Sensitive or Physical; select two from one and three from the other, +1 additional ability from either one of those categories at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Casual Latent is only able to summon his four favorite powers at will, but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 4, 8, and 12. However, these and other selected abilities may appear without warning, usually when angry, worried, under stress, scared or threatened.

Bonuses: +2 to save vs possession, +1 to save vs magic and +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

Remaining P.P.E.: 1D8+4

51-65% Thrilled with Having Psionics. Filled with the wonder of it all and the infinite possibilities, this psychic embraces being special. Only he can be a little too excited, unrealistic and immature. The character does not try to master any of the abilities, but rather revels in them. He sees himself as some sort of comic book *super-hero* with incredible (albeit, uncontrolled) powers. Somehow he expects the powers will "settle in" or "mature" on their own over time, so he doesn't make any effort to learn to control or use them better. Nor does this Latent Psychic make any effort to understand the very serious and deadly world of the supernatural and the monstrous beings who will see him as a threat or a pawn. This makes the character reckless, uncontrolled, vulnerable to manipulation, and, sometimes (perhaps often), a danger to himself and others. He constantly overestimates his own abilities, underestimates the abilities of his opponents, and the dangers of the supernatural world. This natural, "I am what I am," approach stunts the character's true psychic potential and makes him unreliable and a danger to himself and others.

Base I.S.P.: 1D6+4 to start, +1 I.S.P. per level of experience, starting at level two. (x2, x4, x6 and x10) Can also intuitively draw ambient I.S.P. from ley lines and places of power once per melee round when he chooses to do so.

Available Psychic Categories: Physical, Fire Walker, Sensitive, and Healing power categories are available, but Physical

and Fire Walker are the most appealing. Select four Physical, two Fire Walker and one from Sensitive or Healing. Select one additional psychic ability from any of those categories at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 11 and 15.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Thrilled Latent is only able to use his three favorite powers at will, but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 3, 5, 7, 9 and 13. However, these and other selected abilities may appear without warning, usually when the psychic feels angry, frustrated, scared or threatened.

Bonuses: +4 to save vs possession, +2 to save vs magic curses, +1 to save vs magic, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor (because he sees himself as a super-hero).

Remaining P.P.E.: 1D8+2

66-83% Academic – Embraces Psychic Abilities. Loves being psychic and accepts the supernatural, but finds the latter unnerving and hard to believe. Reads everything he can find on the subject of psychic abilities, ghosts, myths, legends and the supernatural as well as finds and follows, or develops his own, regimen for developing and controlling psychic abilities. Has a good amount of “book” knowledge on the subject of the supernatural, which is mostly historical myths, legends, and superstitions, as well as scientific speculation on the paranormal and the writings of crackpot theorists. Consequently, he lacks a solid, scientific background and has an unclear and uncertain view of magic and the supernatural, both of which he has a hard time believing are real, even though he accepts that they are. His understanding and control of psionics, however, is good to very good.

Base I.S.P.: 1D6+2 I.S.P. to start, +1 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) Can also draw ambient I.S.P. from a Ley Line or place of power every melee round as he chooses.

Available Psychic Categories: Select a total of six abilities from one or any combination of the following three categories: Healing, Physical or Sensitive. At levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14 the Academic Latent Psychic can select *one* new psionic power from one of those categories.

Ability to Use Psionics: Very controlled and can use *any* ability he possesses at will the same as any P.C.C., but sometimes one of his abilities manifests all on its own, prompted by powerful feelings of anger, fear, anxiety or uncertainty.

Bonuses: +3 to save vs possession, +5% skill bonus on all Lore skills, and +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

Penalties: -1 to save vs magic, -2 to save vs illusions.

Remaining P.P.E.: 1D6+4

84-00% Paranormal Enthusiast – Embraces Psychic Abilities. Embraces being psychic and is fascinated by the supernatural and the unknown. Takes a very methodical, investigative approach like a scientist or reporter. Studies the phenomena, keeps a diary, takes notes and photographs, tries to make personal observations and analysis, and compares them to what few books and studies there are on the subject. Is realistic about the dangers of the supernatural and tries to be prepared and careful, but he is drawn to the unknown like a moth to a flame and can't resist pursuing and investigating the supernatural.

Base I.S.P.: 1D4+3, +2 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10)

Available Psychic Categories: Select 1D4+4 abilities at level one from *one* of the following psychic categories: Healing, Physical or Sensitive, and one additional ability from that *same* category at levels 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13 and 15.

Ability to Use Psionics: Of all his abilities, the Enthusiast Latent can only use his four favorite powers at will, but can add one more power to those he can control at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12. However, these and other selected abilities may appear without warning, usually when angry, worried or scared.

Bonuses: +3 to save vs possession, +2 to save vs mind control and illusions, +1 to save vs magic curses, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor (knows what to expect and has braced himself for the worst).

Remaining P.P.E.: 1D6+1

Special P.C.C. Abilities and Bonuses

1. Mind Storm: A flood of psychic information that the Latent Psychic cannot stop, limit or control – it just keeps coming until the character collapses or it just stops on its own. This is a sort of uncontrolled “opening of oneself” to the supernatural.

A Mind Storm *sometimes* occurs (G.M.'s discretion) when the character is extremely worried about an upcoming event or confrontation with the supernatural, and/or tries Precognition.

A Mind Storm automatically occurs whenever an *Ancient Evil (Demon Lord, Dark God)*, *Alien Intelligence* or one of their *avatars* is nearby (within 3000 feet/910 m), and whenever such a being reaches out to the psychic or the psychic tries to reach out to it (sense it, communicate with it, etc.). It will also occur whenever *any* supernatural being tries to take control of the Latent Psychic's mind, only in this case the seizure lasts one melee round and *if* the psychic *saves* against mind control, he will know what just tried to control him, its general intentions for him, and its general location (upstairs, in the basement, next-door, outside, etc.).

A Mind Storm only lasts for 1D4 melee rounds though it will seem like several minutes to the beleaguered psychic, and he will need another 1D4 minutes to completely recover his senses (-2 on Perception Rolls and combat bonuses until then). While lost in a Mind Storm, the Latent Psychic is completely helpless, trembling and shaking as if he is having a seizure of some kind. No I.S.P. cost.

2. Precognitive Dream. Typically a dream that is a warning about the future or a coming danger, enemy or monster, the meaning of a clue is revealed, or a clue is provided by the dream that has to do with events unfolding within the next 7-14 days. Typically occurs when the character is focused on trying to figure out a clue or puzzle, worried about a specific person, object, problem, or event, and when he, himself, or the player group is being targeted by a supernatural force. No I.S.P. cost. Ultimately the G.M. should decide when such dreams occur.

3. P.P.E. Base. The comparatively high P.P.E. of the Latent Psychic means the character may be able to use a magic item, magic weapon, activate a magic circle or symbol or use a Psi-Mechanic's creation; nothing else (can't cast spells, etc.). Unlike I.S.P., the P.P.E. Base of psychics does NOT increase when in the presence of the supernatural.

Latent Psychic P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be heroic characters of a good or Unprincipled alignment.

Attribute Bonuses: May spend two P.P.E. to increase any one mental or physical attribute by 1D4 points or to purchase an extra 1D4 Hit Points. This bonus is applied only once when the character is initially created.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, otherwise bonuses are as noted under the character's *Outlook*.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural unless noted otherwise under the character's *Outlook*. He is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him.

Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It shields the character from supernatural forces, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks (see bonuses). Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he may lack the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: As noted under *Outlook*.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: As noted under *Outlook*. Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: As per *Outlook & Orientation*.

Occupation: Any, though Latent Psychics lean toward computer, communication and investigation related occupations.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D6 year old car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, a pair of sunglasses, baseball cap, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace or pocket-sized item (six inches/15 cm), optional.

One simple melee weapon like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage), small knife (1D4 damage), or typical knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. **Note:** Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation. See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 1D10x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 5D6x\$100.

Nega-Psychic P.C.C.

"Look, I'll be the first to admit that science doesn't know everything. We still have a lot to learn about our planet and ourselves, but I'm sorry, I don't believe people return from the dead as vampires or ghosts, or that so-called 'psychics' can move objects with their minds or commune with the dead.

"I think a lot of those people mean well, but they are unprofessional, unscientific and . . . well, to be frank, I've seen my share of misguided souls, quacks and crazy people. What I haven't seen are any ghosts, demons or UFO love-children, and I've been investigating the unexplained for nine years.

"I try to keep an open mind, but my investigations have yet to turn up proof of monsters or things that go bump in the night. Unfortunately for the New Age community and would-be psychics, I haven't seen anything that can't be explained rationally. That's just the reality of the matter."

The Nega-Psychic is an odd case. On one hand, the character is a skeptic, absolutely convinced that psychic powers, the paranormal, magic and supernatural do *not* exist.

This belief is unshakeable and no amount of evidence, speculation, or even firsthand, personal experience with the supernatural will persuade this character to change his conviction. It's all hogwash and nonsense, illusion and trickery! The only thing that would change a Nega-Psychic's mind is confirmation by the scientific community as a whole, and even then, the character is likely to side with holdouts and extremists who question or condemn the consensus.

On the other hand, the Nega-Psychic is fascinated by claims about the supernatural and paranormal, and seems driven by an

insatiable curiosity to investigate and “debunk” them. This conspires to make the Nega-Psychic the ultimate *skeptic* who tenaciously clings to the line of thought that everything must have a plausible, logical, scientific explanation. He will insist on assigning some sort of label, explanation and logic to paranormal events regardless of how contrived and flimsy they may be – and he genuinely believes them. (“There’s no other rational explanation.”)

According to the Nega-Psychic, unknown energy, lines of power, psychic abilities, ghosts, possession and monsters are not possible, logical or scientific. Thus, this is the guy who may have spent the last two hours battling supernatural horrors, witnessed magic and psi-powers firsthand, but when it’s all over, defiantly states: “Some further investigation may be justified, but there was nothing supernatural about tonight’s events.” And this is likely to be followed by a litany of explanations that might include everything from hoax or conspiracy to how someone did all this to cover up his “real motives” (crime, murder, revenge, terrorism, a desire to be famous or important via hoax, etc.). Other “rational explanations” may include a prank gone wrong, mass hallucination, mass hysteria, mental illness, drug involvement, secret military exercises, superstition inspired delusions, misinterpretation of the true facts, sunspot activity, weather balloon, and swamp gas.

Skeptics like the Nega-Psychic also like to forget about things they can’t explain, and willfully ignore “claims” by “so-called psychics” and eyewitnesses. One of the skeptic’s weapons is to discredit eyewitnesses with observations and assumptions like it was too dark or confusing for them to have seen what they claim to have seen, or that they remember events inaccurately. Skeptics are also quick to point out when “drugs and alcohol were involved,” even if only one beer was con-

sumed and everyone else was stone cold sober. An overactive imagination and tricks on the mind are also favorite explanations. “Obviously in the panic, Mr. Smith thought he saw – such and such – but what he really saw was . . .”

The scary thing about all this is that the Nega-Psychic (and most skeptics) deliver their *version* of events with such conviction and sincerity that they are often believed over equally passionate eyewitnesses. When dealing with paranormal events and supernatural encounters of the third kind, the eyewitness accounts are less palatable and hard to believe, mainly because the authorities, media and most people at home don’t want to believe it. Consequently, people accept the “logical explanation” with the pseudo-scientific jargon most Nega-Psychics like to bandy about, even if it contradicts the evidence or eyewitness accounts.

The only compromise a Nega-Psychic may be willing to accept is that something was “unexplained” and “may warrant further investigation to uncover the truth.” But it sure wasn’t magic, spooks or the supernatural. Then he might add, “Science will figure it out. They always do.” No matter what happens, the Nega-Psychic (“nega” meaning negative) will propose his own observations and conclusions based on “common sense and science.”

There is a humorous irony that the Nega-Psychic can never appreciate. He is, himself, a *psychic* and uses his psychic energies daily. “Preposterous!” would be the outcry from a Nega-Psychic, and the person who just made that statement or suggestion will earn from him the label “crackpot” or “charlatan.” If pressed, the Nega-Psychic will laugh and rebuke the individual, “Don’t try to drag me into that poppycock, sir. I am a man of science and state I have never experienced a psychic event in my entire life.”



And, yet, it is true, the character is an unusual type of psychic.

The Nega-Psychic is a person whose denial is so entrenched and skepticism so resolute, that his Potential Psychic Energy turns into a sort of *negative psychic energy*. An energy that shields the character from the psychic world so he really does *not* see the invisible, ghosts or illusions. The Nega-Psychic NEVER gets precognitive hunches. NEVER gets clairvoyant images or flashes of insight. He NEVER sees a ghost, is incapable of receiving telepathic or empathic communications, is incredibly difficult to possess, and disrupts other psychics and sorcerers around him with negative psychic energy. Ironically, because he cannot be affected by psychic forces, it reinforces his conviction that they do not exist. From an outsider's point of view, Clairvoyance and Precognition really do seem like nothing but "coincidence." In fact, most Nega-Psychics never, personally, experience any psychic phenomena and dare not believe their own eyes, because the eyes, and even the human mind, can always be fooled.

Yet Nega-Psychics seems to be drawn to the supernatural and psychic phenomena despite their steadfast rejection of its existence. Likewise, they are surprisingly tolerant of "deluded individuals" who believe they have psychic powers or are plagued by unnatural forces. Nega-Psychics often associate and even work with psychics or paranormal investigators, especially if there is a scientific basis to the team's operations. And here's another irony, the character's resistance to psychic influences, Horror Factor and magic can make a Nega-Psychic a valuable member of any group going up against the supernatural. On the other hand, the character is often blind, deaf and dumb to the paranormal. Not only can't the character see or sense the supernatural, he doesn't believe what he sees. Such is the paradox of the Nega-Psychic.

Special P.C.C. Anti-Psychic Abilities:

None of these Anti-Psychic Abilities require the expenditure of I.S.P. Also see Limitations and Penalties for aspects of disbelief that work both for and against the Nega-Psychic and help to make him what he is.

- 1. Mind Block Auto-Defense.** See the complete description in the Psionic's Section under Psychic Sensitive powers, but the long and the short of it is, the psychic is automatically *blocked* from all forms of psychic communication, probes and scans, such as Empathy, Telepathy, Thought Reading, Hypnotic Suggestion, Empathic Transmission, etc., only in this case, the character doesn't even know he's using it and subconsciously refuses to let the block down. Duration: 20 minutes per activation. Range: Self. I.S.P.: None.
- 2. Psychic and Paranormal Disruptor.** The irony is that the Nega-Psychic possesses real psychic potential, but so vehemently denies that potential that it manifests itself as a protective, anti-psychic shield or force. This shield, powered by the character's own psychic energy, not only protects the Nega-Psychic, but reaches out to prevent or disrupt magical, paranormal and supernatural influences all around him.

The disruptive energy cancels or dissipates magic (P.P.E.) and psionic (I.S.P.) energy, and makes spell casting and the use of psionics much more difficult around him. The range of this disruptive energy radiating from the Nega-Psychic is

three feet (0.9 m) per level of experience. Any psychic, mage or supernatural being caught within the Nega-Psychic's range has to spend 50% more I.S.P. or P.P.E. than usual. So if a psi-power normally costs 5 I.S.P., it costs 7 when within the influence of a Nega-Psychic (round fractions down).

In addition, psychic abilities that have a "skill percentage" for success are diminished by the skeptic's negative vibes. For each one P.P.E. point possessed by the Nega-Psychic, the other psychic suffers a -4% success penalty. So if the Nega-Psychic has 8 P.P.E., the Psychic Medium is -32% to succeed in communing with the dead! Worst of all for those around the Nega-Psychic, his Negative P.P.E. is not temporarily burned up, but a constant source of interference.

Furthermore, a psychic, spell caster and even supernatural beings will find their confidence wanes and *skill performance* suffers a -10% penalty when the Nega-Psychic verbally questions their preternatural abilities, skills, knowledge and/or integrity, or condemns their viewpoints, offers scientific explanations, and/or suggests they are fake. ("Do you know what you're doing?" "That's crazy . . . or at least silly." "I don't think you really care to uncover the truth. I think this is all a game to you. A way to get publicity, eh?" Or, "You do know none of this is real, right? It's probably all a hoax. No? Okay, show me." or "Prove me wrong." And so on). The negativity gets on the nerves of *gifted people* and *true believers*, and increases the level of anxiety and stress. This, in turn, disrupts a character's focus, concentration and/or confidence. **Note:** A Psychic Sensitive or anyone seeing the Nega-Psychic's aura will know he is a *negative force* and know that he should be kept at a distance in order to use their powers without trouble. However, the Nega-Psychic doesn't buy into this malarkey about "negative energy" or "bad vibes," and may sneak up on the characters to get a better look at what they are doing, will not charitably cooperate by staying back or out of the action, and chalks up their talk of "negative energy" as an excuse why their powers won't work in front of him or see the things they "claim" to see, or to superstition ("typical of these people") or that the self-proclaimed psychic is indeed a fraud and afraid he'll catch him doing one of his "tricks" or "con games."

Magic Disruption is even worse. When the Nega-Psychic is part of a magic (or psychic) group ritual, the range of his energy field doubles and he radiates negative energy with his ardent (and sometimes angry) disbelief. Confident that such rituals are a hoax, madness or just won't work ("I'm not worried, magic's not real"), each one of the Nega-Psychic's P.P.E. points negates – dispels, eradicates, burns up – four (positive) P.P.E. points of magic power, requiring the mage/cultist to spend *four times* as much P.P.E. to cast a spell or complete the ritual! Expending less than that amount means the ritual doesn't work (no results). Most ordinary humans won't understand why a ritual failed, because they cannot sense the Nega-Psychic's negative vibes, but most supernatural beings and Psychic Sensitive can and will leave these people out of their ceremonies.

Trying to cast magic on or at a Nega-Psychic costs double the P.P.E. and has half the usual effect (half the damage, half the penalties, half the duration, etc.), this includes the effects of magical curses, magic disease and the Evil Eye.

Note: The Nega-Psychic cannot turn off his negative energy, it is always on. Double the negative P.P.E. when facing *Demonic Servants*, and quadruple the number, and double the range of the disruptive force, when dealing with *Ancient Evil* (Demon Lords and Dark Gods) or an *Alien Intelligence*.



3. The Skeptic's Viewpoint. As a skeptic, the Nega-Psychic is well versed in myth, legend and a certain amount of science and book knowledge. He uses this background and information to fabricate plausible explanations for psychic and supernatural phenomena. Here are some examples.

The Bermuda Triangle and similar places reputed to be linked to other dimensions and unstable dimensional (or magical) forces are infamous for freak storms and the unexplained disappearance of aircraft, large ships, boats and people for centuries. Skeptics claim there is no mystery or supernatural forces at work and that people are reading more into these disappearances than they really deserve. Skeptics insist all of these locations are known for sudden, treacherous storms and seas and that any disappearances are born from nature, not the supernatural.

In fact, one group has gone so far as to suggest that giant gas bubbles of methane escaping from the Earth's crust from the ocean may be responsible for many of the "disappearances." They theorize that giant bubbles and clouds of methane can result in freak tidal waves and parting of the seas that can swallow ships in a matter of seconds. Similarly, an invisible cloud of methane rising into the air is capable of knocking out aircraft instruments and stalling engines, causing the aircraft to plummet into the sea before the pilot and crew know what's hit them. These researchers have replicated such conditions in the lab with scale models and consider the mystery of the Bermuda Triangle *solved*. Case closed. Anything else is coincidence and the imaginations of people working overtime.

Astral Travel – Trick of the mind causing vivid hallucinations resulting from neurological or psychological trauma. This trauma is what creates the illusion of an out of body experience. Autoscopy, a condition that causes one to hallucinate and see a transparent image of himself is another explanation. All other claims are delusions, madness or lies.

Bending Spoons/Metal – Nothing more than a carnival trick.

Big Foot & Other Monsters – Hoaxes (i.e., a man in costume, puppet, faked photograph, etc.), or misidentification of a bear or other large animal, or even a hunter in a fur coat. Tracks/footprints claimed as evidence are again, either a hoax or ordinary animal tracks, perhaps several animals, that have via the elements, tricksters or coincidence been warped to "appear" to look like giant footprints when it is nothing of the sort.

Clairvoyance – Coincidence, lies and chicanery often employing *psychic rhetoric*, gobbledygook and wording to make a psychic pretender (charlatan/con artist) sound as if he knows more than, or is more accurate than, he really is. Also see *Visions*.

Crop Circles – Hoax, plain and simple. The frauds have even admitted to the deeds.

Demons – Creatures of myth and superstition empowered by the human imagination and fear.

Discorporation – Myth, lies or illusions.

Dowsing – If it's real at all, it is probably some sort of response to magnetic fields in the earth's crust. Another explanation is Dowsers subconsciously process nature's clues to make a good guess about where one might find water or minerals. The rest is chicanery, lies and fiction.

ESP – Myth and confidence games that claim to exhibit mental powers or Extrasensory Perception. Most ESP phenomena have been proven to be trickery, stage magic, chicanery or inconclusive (but unlikely).

EVP (Electronic Voice Phenomena) – Since the advent of the radio, people have claimed to capture and hear the voices of the dead. This is usually done by turning to a radio frequency between stations, or turning on a tape recorder and capturing any tangible sounds during a seance. The result is usually words and voices mediums claim to be from the dead. However, the skeptic insists this is nothing more than random noise and radio chatter randomly picked up and captured on tape, not the voices of the dead. They also point to pareidolia, the mind's tendency to see and hear what is not actually present. **A note about the human mind and perception:** Nega-Psychics and skeptics like to throw around a number of terms and conditions with officious scientific sounding names to explain what they cannot believe. *Pareidolia* is a mental process in which the human brain tries to find recognizable patterns and meaning in everything we hear, see and experience. That's why we see images in the clouds and from ink blots. It is the subconscious mind searching for answers and images we recognize and understand. Skeptics often cite a pareidolia response to explain someone having seen a ghost or alien, hearing a voice and words or sounds where there were no spoken words, and other eyewitness accounts of strange phenomena. Pareidolia is a huge piece of ammunition in the skeptic's arsenal and handily used to explain reports and incidents that seem to defy reason, logic and science. Another pair of official sounding words that provide the skeptic with easy explanations are *hypnagogia* and *hypnopompia*, the altered state of consciousness before one falls asleep or is just starting to wake up, and during which hallucinations and misremembrance may occur. Another is *confabulation*, a process by which people unconsciously confuse fact with fantasy, espe-

cially common among children and victims of emotional trauma. ("Don't you see, you thought you saw X, but it really must have been Y. Anything else would be impossible.") In short: The mind will play tricks on you, so you can't always believe what you (think you) saw, heard or experienced.

Kirlian Photography – A suspect and inconclusive photographic process that photographs invisible light patterns around living creatures. Claims that Kirlian photography captures a person's spiritual aura seem unlikely.

Ley Lines – Ancient trade routes without any supernatural significance. Naturally stone temples, burial mounds and other edifices were built along these well traveled paths. The rest is coincidence given significance by dreamers where no real facts exist.

Levitation – Pure hokum; stage magic trickery, illusions or mass hypnosis.

Lights in the Sky – Ball lightning, misidentified airplane lights or clouds, a mirage, rare but natural weather phenomena, reflected lights, hysteria, weather balloons, and secret government aircraft or experiments. If they wanted us to know what they were doing, the government would tell us, until then, case closed.

Hell Hounds – See Strange Creatures.

Monsters – See Strange Creatures.

P.P.E. – There is no such thing as P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy), earth energy or magic.

Possession – Paranoid schizophrenia, psychotic delusions, drug or alcohol induced dementia, personality disorders, and other maladies of the mind and trauma to the brain. These mental illnesses may also explain unexplained ghost sightings, auditory ghost communication, hearing voices and seeing visions.

Psychics, Spiritualists, Mediums – Misguided individuals who have taken up "New Age" or "occult" beliefs and chosen to embrace them in place of science. A system of faith-like or childlike beliefs in the spirit, intuition and invisible forces rather than science, hard facts and logic. Others are charlatans, quacks, and confidence artists preying on the desperate, grief-stricken or self-deluded.

Psychic Abilities – Most are carnival tricks, stage magic and physical illusions, the rest are cases of the mind playing tricks on a person, lies, hoaxes and mental illness.

Precognition – Coincidence, lies, dreams, and hallucinations brought on by physical conditions (brain trauma, oxygen deprivation, etc.), alcohol, drugs or a troubled mind.

Raining Frogs, Fish or Debris – Possibly the result of the animal or eggs ready to hatch being sucked into the air by a waterspout, tornado, or other atmospheric anomaly, and later deposited elsewhere, hundreds or even thousands of miles away. This same explanation, in one form or another, has been used to explain all sorts of small animals falling from the sky, including snakes, rodents, fish, mussels, squid, toads, frogs, worms, insects, and even juvenile alligators, though frogs and fish are by far the most common. Rocks and ice raining from the sky are explained as debris dropped by an aircraft, space junk, meteor shower or a twister that has lost energy and its cargo of debris let loose to fall to the ground. Changes in migration patterns, dry weather conditions and

other natural causes can explain so-called "plagues" of frogs, toads, snakes, etc., as well.

Strange Creatures – A simple case of mistaken identity; really a misidentified ordinary animal (large cat, dog, wolf or coyote possibly with mange or another disease or malady that has altered its appearance) or an exotic animal (leopard, black panther, African Lion, bear, etc.) released or escaped into the wild or an urban environment and mistaken for something monstrous. Other claims of monsters are publicity stunts, the product of hoaxes or delusions.

Telekinesis – Stage magic, trickery, illusion, mirage or mass hypnosis. If it is real at all, it probably has to do with people who are sensitive to electricity and/or electromagnetic energy and can influence and move objects or energy in ways science has yet to fully understand. A rare, natural phenomenon, not a power of the mind.

Third Eye/Psychic Awareness – Myth, imagination and rubbish.

Vampires – Pure myth, superstition and the occasional deluded madmen or cult given to drinking human blood. Nothing real. *Sleep paralysis*, also known as *Night Terror*, may have contributed to the belief in vampires and other night stalking monsters. Night Terror usually occurs when a person is half awake and is struck by a debilitating feeling of terror that something is about to get him or hurt him. The terror seems so real the victim is frozen and helpless, sometimes for minutes. Sleep Paralysis may be accompanied by hallucinations. Almost always associated with sleep and nighttime.

Visions and Seeing the Future – Dreams, delusions, mirages, and coincidence given credence "after the fact." The rest are hearsay, rumor, lies and quackery.

Weeping Stones or Statues – A capillary action caused by the collection of moisture in porous materials foolishly misinterpreted as real tears or blood miraculously coming from stone or the eyes of a statue. Others are hoaxes or have a rational explanation.

Werewolves & Wolf Men – Lies, hoaxes, or a real wolf, coyote or dog mistaken for something more than natural. Clinical lycanthropy is a mental condition in which the subject "believes" he is or becomes a wolf or werewolf at night and may act like one, complete with howling, biting and aggressive behavior. Hypertrichosis – a rare genetic condition in which hair covers the entire body, including the face, cheeks, nose, forehead, etc., may have also contributed to myths about werewolves.

Nega-Psychic P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D6 to any *one* Mental or Physical Attribute.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), or reluctant heroes (Unprincipled or Anarchist).

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Needs to roll a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, but automatically saves against See Aura, Telepathy, Empathy, Empathic Transmission, Object Read, and all forms of Psychic Healing.

+1 bonus to save vs all types of psychic attacks, +2 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs curses, and is impervious to possession and illusions. +1 to save vs Horror Factor at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13 and 15.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Blind to the Supernatural.

The Nega-Psychic's refusal to believe in any of it – the paranormal, magic and the supernatural – means he saves against *all* of it, and is *resistant* to psychic powers both helpful and detrimental. Furthermore, the character can never understand or imagine the supernatural world, the paranormal or magic.

The palpable negative energy emanating from the Nega-Psychic chases away most Prankster supernatural beings, so the character will NEVER be bothered by, or see, a Stealer, Scurrier, Poltergeist, Haunting Entity, or any Entity for that matter, because they are repelled by the negative vibes. Likewise, intelligent supernatural beings, including some Predators, sense this character is not a threat to them because he doesn't believe in them and they know that he doesn't want to find them. Consequently, if they just stay out of his way and wait, the Nega-Psychic will *rationalize* why they "do not" exist and weave a convenient cover story for their activities.

The Nega-Psychic can NOT see the invisible.

The Nega-Psychic is impervious to mental and magical illusions, chalking up other people's strange behavior and reports of seeing things *he knows* for a fact were *not* there or never happened (because *he* didn't see them) to hysteria, psychotic episodes, drugs, drink, delusion, trickery and lies. In the Nega-Psychic's eyes, such claims from otherwise respected individuals and investigators damage the credibility of *all* their claims, reports and theories.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D6+6 to start, and +2 per level of experience starting with level two. Double the negative P.P.E. when facing Demonic Servants, quadruple the number and double the range of the disruptive force when dealing with Ancient Evil (Demon Lords and Dark Gods) or an Alien Intelligence.

Most of the character's P.P.E. has already been spent on his anti-supernatural denial and subsequent defenses, with other P.P.E. having gone toward the enhancement of one attribute and his strange attraction to (and research in) the paranormal. However, most of the character's efforts are to disprove, debunk and discredit supernatural and paranormal phenomena, so he has become a source of disruptive or negative energy that counteracts psionics, magic and the supernatural.

Base I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points): Not applicable.

Recovering P.P.E.: The Nega-Psychic never loses his P.P.E., it defies normal convention and supplies the character with unique defenses rooted in denial. If the Nega-Psychic should ever come to accept the supernatural, reduce his P.P.E. Base and bonuses by half, and delete all special P.C.C. Abilities of Disruption.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: None; not applicable.

Occupation: Any. Most Nega-Psychics tend toward scholastic occupations (writer, teacher, researcher, computer systems, etc.), medicine, electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, or science. However, the character is best suited as an in-

vestigator, report or Professional Debunker. If a part-time debunker, he may have a "real job" to make good money and does "debunking" part-time as a hobby.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D4 year old sedan or practical car, SUV, mini-van or van, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at his home or office), laptop computer with wireless internet capabilities, high quality (10 megapixel) digital camera, cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), briefcase (soft leather or hard case), duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, high quality binoculars, tape measure, pocket calculator, notebook and pen or marker, one thick marker, mechanical pencil and two dozen extra leads, a pair of sunglasses, a dozen plastic surgical gloves, hat, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, 1D4 suits, and some personal items.

One simple melee weapon like a cane/walking stick (1D6 damage), baseball bat (1D8 damage, usually in the car), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation. See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly Skilled Occupation: 2D8x\$1000; moderately skilled: 1D6x\$1,000; and unskilled 6D6x\$100. The Nega-Psychic tends to be practical and means he is usually a good saver, and a bit of a miser.





Ordinary People P.C.C.

"I won't pretend to have some kind of psychic insight into the unknown, I don't. I can't even imagine what it must be like to have E.S.P. or see ghosts. But I can tell you this: E.S.P. and the supernatural are real. Okay, I know what you're thinking. I never believed in it either. I used to think it was all lies and garbage – until I lived it."

"How is that?" asked the reporter.

"A few years ago, my little girl vanished from the school playground. The official police report will tell you an indigent man took her and that a team of private investigators found her unharmed. The perpetrator remains unknown. He's presumably left town. Sweet and simple, complete with a happy ending wrapped in a bow. Only that's not how it went down. This, um, demonic predator – this Boogeyman – snatched her from the playground. The police didn't have a clue. Not a clue. My little Tina would be dead if it wasn't for the psychics who just showed up on my doorstep."

"And now you're one of them? One of the good Samaritans who appears on people's doorsteps?" asked reporter, Thomas Sheridan.

"Absolutely."

"Why?"

"Because there are other people like I was, helpless with nowhere to turn when their lives have been touched by the super-

natural. My story does have a happy ending, but only because someone who cared reached out to help me. I guess I'm just returning the favor."

"But you said it yourself," noted Sheridan. "You're just an ordinary guy. You don't have psychic abilities or training in this type of thing."

"Look," replied the handsome computer science teacher at McKenzie High, "nobody has training in this kind of thing. Not really. It's all fly by the seat of your pants, on the job training. But I can't just sit back and do nothing. My eyes have been opened. I know what's out there. I know other people are in danger. Right now, somewhere, somebody is being terrorized or victimized by some damned thing most people think only exists in the imagination of Stephen King. If I can help that person through counseling and advice, I'm there."

"Dude, you do more than hold group therapy sessions. You're out on the streets hunting," said the reporter in a serious tone.

The teacher grit his teeth nervously. "That can't appear in any article Mr. Sheridan, the school . . . they'd never understand."

"It won't, I'm just asking for my own information."

"Okay. Yeah, me and some others – others who can sense and track down supernatural evil – yeah, we're out there. I have other obligations to my family, the kids at school, but when I can, I'm out there . . . hunting."

"And killing?"

"If you can call it that. They disappear, you know. Like they never were."

"So it's a vendetta for you?"

"Vendetta? No. A mission, maybe. You don't get it, Mr. Sheridan. There is no one else. You can't go to the cops or the government for help. What other recourse is there?"

"Aren't you afraid?"

"Of course."

"Dude, you have a wife and child, why put your neck on the line like this?" asked Sheridan.

"So when my daughter asks me if I can keep her safe from the monsters, I can say 'yes' and mean it."

People who have endured a frightening brush with the supernatural react in many different ways. Some try to forget it, pushing it from their memory as if it never happened. Others hang cockamammy explanations on it and convince themselves it's true. Most choose to live in denial or in quiet terror. The most tragic snap, and spend the rest of their lives in a padded room sucking down thorazine.

Some, however, choose to do something about it. They don't want to forget, they want to stop the madness and help others in need. They accept that the supernatural is real. That demonic monsters stalk our streets and that madmen summon demons to draw on their power and/or command them to do evil. They know there are ghostly beings and entities, and impish fiends that invade our homes just to mess with people.

Without any government agency to turn to, these people are forced to take matters into their own hands. They understand that society is not willing to accept what they have personally learned the hard way. It's not their goal to convince people monsters are real, their goal is to find and help others in need. Victims of the supernatural, you see, need no convincing that demonic horrors or dark magic are real, and seldom turn away a helping hand even when it comes from an unexpected source like *Joe Nobody*.

That's right, half to three quarters of the people who are actively involved in the investigating of the paranormal and supernatural don't possess psychic abilities, magic powers or a Harvard education, they are ordinary people. Individuals who come from every walk of life, but who share two things in common: 1) They or a loved one have suffered at the hands of supernatural evil, and 2) they want to do something to stop the secret terror.

Inevitably, any excursion into the realm of the paranormal leads to meeting people with special "gifts." Consequently, ordinary people committed to dealing with matters of the unknown eventually meet psychics and Arcanists/mages with insight into the world of the supernatural and special "gifts" to help even the odds. Such like-minded allies are always a plus when going up against the supernatural, but most of these people would press forward without such aid; that's how committed they are to making a difference.

These Ordinary People are only *ordinary* in the sense that they neither possess psionics nor wield magic. In truth, however, they are *extraordinary*, because they have the courage to look into the face of the gorgon and dare to say, enough. They are willing to tread the path of the unknown and to do battle

with creatures of diabolic origins and terrible natures. And though revenge sometimes plays a role, most do so out of compassion for others. This makes them the invisible front-line troops and unsung heroes in a shadow war taking place on every street in every city, in every corner of the world.

Ordinary People are included as a P.C.C. (Psychic Character Class) because they have been touched by the supernatural in such a way, that it has drawn them into the paranormal world, where they have become a force for good.

Three quarters of the *Lazlo Society* is composed of Ordinary People. People who, for one reason or another, have developed an interest in the paranormal. Most of those active in the Lazlo Society stay in the background with their eyes and ears open for hints of the unknown and bizarre. They are *regular folks* who hold down mundane jobs, live ordinary lives, have families and go to church on Sunday, but who also know that evil – supernatural evil – is among them. They are Joe and Jane Average, no longer willing to be silent victims of forces they do not understand. Thus, they buy the literature on the paranormal and go to the *Lazlo Society website* (www.lazlosociety.org) and tell their stories, listen to others, exchange their views and ideas, ask questions, seek advice and offer up their own theories on the subject. Many actively skim newspapers, magazines, the Internet and watch the televised news with an eye and ear cocked for things that may have more to do with the supernatural world than our own, and report it. Report it to the Lazlo Society and share whatever insight or inside information they may have with *Lazlo Agency* investigators and other concerned individuals.

Many proactive Ordinary People find their way to the *Lazlo Agency*, the inner circle of the Lazlo Society. It is Lazlo Agents who operate as amateur or Professional Psychic Investigators. People who, either as individuals or members of a team, go out into the streets to dig up more information, examine crime scenes, talk to eyewitnesses, find and follow leads, assist fellow Lazlo Agency investigators and, most importantly, help the innocent victims being terrorized by the supernatural (as perhaps they had once been). Some have even turned a basement or spare room into a database or field headquarters or even a safe house for those who need it. Other members of the Lazlo Agency and Lazlo Society enthusiasts regularly volunteer to serve as host, taxi driver and native guide to psychics, out of town investigators and fellow operatives from Lazlo.

However, many Ordinary People at war with the supernatural have no affiliation with the Lazlo Agency or any other group, other than the one they happened to put together or fall into. Most "investigative groups" are a mixed bag of regular folks and psychics out working the streets to help others. Most were or have become close friends. Some focus on investigation and counseling of victims, others are hunters looking to exterminate supernatural vermin, others are pseudo-scientific organizations, or a combination of the three. Many are right there in the thick of things even when combat or trouble breaks out.

Whether members of the Lazlo Agency or free agents, their ages range from 16 to 92, and their occupations from stay at home mom or retiree to factory worker, professional psychic, cop or college professor, and everything in between. **Note:** There is more on the *Lazlo Society and Agency* later in this book.

Reason for Involvement with the Paranormal

The ways these Ordinary People may have gotten drawn into the world of the supernatural and reason they stay involved are many and varied, but the following eight themes cover the great majority. Roll percentile dice for a random determination (or pick one).

01-50% Personal Experience and Altruistic Motives. The character has survived a terrifying brush with the supernatural. The individual, personally, knows the pain and terror that comes from the experience, and reaches out to free others living that same hell. Like members of a support group (on many levels the *Lazlo Society* provides a cathartic bond and sense of shared experience), they reach out to others and let them know they are not alone. Through talk and exchanges of personal experiences the character tries to help others accept the reality of the situation and show them how to survive it.

51-57% Curiosity. Interest in the paranormal or magic has drawn the character into the shadowy world of the unexplained and despite some frights, he or she desires to learn more. Fascinated by the subject, no amount of horror can dissuade the individual from seeking greater knowledge and experience. As a matter of course, the person is drawn into the classic struggle between good and evil, and forced to take a stand.

58-64% Pure Happenstance. Saw, heard or experienced something that gave the individual an epiphany. Now that the character's eyes are opened, he can't ignore the needs of others or deny the existence of demonic forces at work. This individual is in for the long haul, no matter the consequences.

65-71% Good Samaritan. Tried to help someone troubled by supernatural forces, one thing led to another, and now, the character is in it deep. Like the rest, this individual can't pretend that supernatural forces are not at work in the world, and has dedicated himself to foiling the schemes of monsters, destroying evil and liberating the tormented.

72-78% Revenge or Justice. A friend, family member, or loved one has been threatened, hurt or killed by supernatural forces or the occult, and the player character is looking, a) for answers, b) for revenge on whomever or whatever was responsible, and c) to make sure no other innocent person suffers like this ever again. For most characters driven by a sense of retribution or call for justice, even after their personal campaign for revenge has been satisfied, they continue their battle against the forces of darkness. These are the lucky ones, the ones who find some personal *closure*, because many people go on such a quest, but less than half meet with success. The rest remain haunted by the memory of the villain or creature that got away, and though the individual may help innumerable people along the way, the target of their vengeance eludes them.

79-85% Sense of Duty. The individual happened to stumble onto events or monsters that have forced the character to accept the reality of the paranormal, supernatural and magic. This revelation has changed the character's life and he or she now strives to learn and understand more about the subject. The character also works to help and protect victims violated by the supernatural and its human pawns and minions. Taking a stand and battling evil just seemed like the right thing to do.

86-92% Religious Conviction. The character has great faith in God, goodness and humanity. Having learned that demons and supernatural evil walk the Earth, there is no other recourse

but to battle the darkness and help those in need, all in the name of God.

93-00% Attuned to the Supernatural. Less than a Latent Psychic, this individual, nonetheless, has the same power of *Opened to the Supernatural* as the *Psychic Sensitive P.C.C.* This means he or she has felt the presence of ghosts and supernatural beings since childhood. On a very real, gut level, the character knows the supernatural is real, and though it may scare the day-lights out of him, the person feels compelled to learn more and to combat the inhuman, evil forces loose in the world. **Note:** This character will have his home invaded by 1D6 Scurriers and 1D4 Stealers, he can see Poltergeists and Haunting Entities, *feel* the presence of supernatural evil the same as the Psychic Sensitive, and has a bonus 1D4 P.P.E.

Designer Note on Playing Ordinary People: There is just something about the *everyman* that appeals to people. During the early stages of **BTS-2** conceptual discussions and play tests, where I was focusing on characters with *special powers*, I was surprised by the number of play testers and staff members who were quick to ask if "ordinary people" would still be available as player characters, and then went on to give an impassioned pitch on why such characters *should be* a part of the game. It surprised me.

I suspect there are a couple reasons for this. One, **BTS-2**, more than most games on the market, reflects our own real world and we (being ordinary people ourselves) relate to characters who, in effect, could be one of *us*. Two, I think it's human nature to root for the underdog and want to see the *Average Joe* win or be a hero.

All I *do know* for certain is that many gamers want Ordinary People as player characters in this game, so here they are. That's also why I have made a point of creating so many occupation templates in the Occupation section. Yes, I know 42 occupations don't even begin to cover every conceivable type of work, they aren't meant to, but they cover a wide spectrum that work in the context of this game, and should give Game Masters a clear idea of how to whip up new ones on their own. Empowered psychic or Ordinary Joe, unleash your imaginations and enjoy. — Kevin Siembieda

Ordinary Person P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be heroic characters of a good or Unprincipled alignment.

Attribute Bonuses: See P.P.E. Bonus Options.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Needs a 15 or higher to save vs psychic attacks. +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 to save vs Horror Factor and +1 to save vs magic, all due to the character's resolve to battle the supernatural and help others. Also select two additional Elective Skills (+10%) and two extra Secondary Skills.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: **Closed to the Supernatural** means the character is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him.

Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It shields the character from supernatural forces, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks. Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he may lack the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

P.P.E. Note about Children (Ages 2-12): P.P.E.: 4D6+12. The amount of P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) changes as the person grows and matures, both physically and emotionally. A child has the greatest P.P.E. because he or she is a walking energy reserve of unbridled potential. A child has an intensely curious mind, wide open to ideas that jaded adults would reject without a moment's thought; like a ghost or monster living in the attic. Since a child has not yet focused his potential in any area, his psi-energy is at full capacity. Sadly, the glow of P.P.E. from a child or teen can become the target of supernatural beings or iniquitous mages who would feed on or tap into the child's potential to supplement its/his own power. The huge amount of P.P.E. possessed by a child means the kid may unwittingly draw upon it with the following results (similar to a Latent Psychic):

Clairvoyant Flash/Insight (01-30%): Usually a dream or feeling when worried.

Sense Good & Evil (01-40%): Gets a good or bad feeling about somebody or someplace.

Sixth Sense (01-60%): A sudden awareness of danger that manifests as a gut fear or feeling. ("No Mommy, don't go in there. Let's go home, now!")

See the Invisible (01-50%): Can see Haunting Entities/Ghosts and other, normally invisible beings about half of the time. Always if the child establishes a friendship with the thing.

Bonuses for Children: +2 to save vs possession and +1 to save vs magic.

Note: None of the psychic abilities above can be controlled or intentionally directed (most kids won't even realize anything is unusual), they just happen from time to time. The *percentile number* indicates the likelihood of a manifestation under stressful conditions or when threatened by supernatural evil. A child may be an NPC of the Game Master or an *optional* player character, but only if the G.M. allows it.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Base Points for Player Characters: Teen 13-19 years old: 1D8+5 P.P.E.; Young Adult 20-28 years old 1D6+3; Adult 29 and older: 1D4. This is the amount the character has as his permanent base. Reduce a Teen's or Young Adult's by half upon reaching the age of 29. **Note**: A person's potential psychic energy dissipates with age as the view of the world becomes narrower and specific interests occupy one's attention and focus. A teenager is still growing, developing, thus, his/her P.P.E. is a little higher than a physically mature adult. An adult, in this case, anyone older than 20 years of age, is fully developed physically and has expended P.P.E. on areas of study, interest and work.

P.P.E. Bonus Options: Roll 1D6+3 to determine "bonus P.P.E." This number indicates some of the Potential Psychic Energy that, during the character's youth, got channeled into particular areas of interest, ability and expertise. YOU, the player,

can now select what those special areas are by spending the bonus P.P.E. Note that a category may be purchased more than once. Must be done when the character is first created.

2 P.P.E. to increase any one mental attribute (I.Q., M.A., M.E.) by one point.

2 P.P.E. to increase the P.P. or P.E. attribute by one point.

2 P.P.E. to increase the P.S. or P.B. attribute by 1D4 points.

1 P.P.E. to increase the Spd attribute by 1D4+1 points.

4 P.P.E. to acquire 1D6+2 additional Hit Points!

1 P.P.E. to acquire 1D6+1 additional S.D.C.

1 P.P.E. for a +3% bonus on any one skill.

3 P.P.E. for a +10% bonus on any one skill.

5 P.P.E. for a +15% bonus on any one skill.

1 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs Horror Factor.

2 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs Possession or Mind Control.

3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 to save vs Magic.

3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +2 to save vs Insanity.

3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on initiative.

3 P.P.E. for a bonus of +1 on Perception Rolls.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: None.

Recovering I.S.P.: Note applicable.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: None.

Occupation: Any, though a fair number actually become part-time or full-time Psychic Investigators or a detective, reporter, or researcher of some kind or another.

Common Skills: All.

Other Skills: As per occupation.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D6 year old car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home or the office), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, a pair of sunglasses, baseball cap, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace or pocket-sized item (six inches/15 cm), optional.

One simple melee weapon like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage), small knife (1D4 damage), or typical knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. **Note**: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of the car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$570 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.



3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation. See descriptions of occupations in the rules section near Skills Descriptions.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D8x\$1000. Unskilled: 1D4x\$1000.

Parapsychologist P.C.C.

"Forget everything you've ever heard about the supernatural or think you know about the paranormal, and ask yourself this one question: If any of this is real, any of it, what is science missing? What parts of our theories of relativity and physics have we gotten wrong, or work in ways we don't yet understand? The paranormal isn't voodoo, ghosts and fortune telling. I want to remove those stigmas. It's about understanding the power of the human mind and, I suspect, aspects of time, space and dimensions. I want to peel away the shrouds of mystery and hocus-pocus that surround the paranormal, and put the various phenomena under the scrutinizing light of science so we may understand the reality of how and why it works."

The Parapsychologist has many names, among them, Doctor, scientist, psychologist, psychic investigator and ghost hunter. As a rule, the Parapsychologist is not a psychic but a scholarly expert on the paranormal. A Doctor of Psychiatry, the Parapsychologist is fascinated by the wonders, mysteries and possibilities of the human mind. As a psychologist, the character has studied, if not witnessed first hand, accepted feats of mind over matter – the powerful results of placebo, applications of hypnosis and biofeedback in medicine, and numerous mental conditions that can divide a personality, create obsession, cause dementia and literally hundreds of conditions – that can affect the physical body, health or one's perception of reality. To the inquisitive mind of the Parapsychologist, the question of whether E.S.P. (Extrasensory Perception) is real, and if real, can it be taught and controlled, or whether E.S.P. might be the symptoms or aspects of mental illness, are alluring ones. That makes psychic phenomena fascinating, and figuring it out the Holy Grail for those who choose to walk down that path of research.

Many powers of ESP seem to open doors and channels to what is known as the *supernatural*, and that draws the Parapsychologist into an entirely different realm of research and exploration. Can psychics see and talk to the dead? Do they really sense the presence of supernatural monsters and evil spirits, or is this some sort of dementia or hallucination that comes with E.S.P.? And if the ability is real and these supernatural beings are real, what does that say about our understanding of nature? How dangerous are these creatures? What threats do they represent and how can they be dealt with? As a man of medicine as well as science, the Parapsychologist is dedicated to *helping* people. For many, that includes helping people possessed and assailed by supernatural beings that deserve the title *demon* or *monster*. The trick is helping without destroying one's career.

As a result, the Parapsychologist is an investigator of the paranormal, dedicated to unraveling the secrets of the human mind, human psychic potential and exploring the supernatural world; which is why he's included in this section with the Psychic Character Classes.

Psychic abilities, also known as the paranormal, supernormal and Extrasensory Perception (E.S.P.), are exceptional powers generally thought to be *mental phenomena* science considers to be *outside* the range of the normal five physical senses. Scientists have recorded some incidents of psychic energy at work, but research is minimal, analysis is inconclusive and skepticism runs high.

Although paranormal abilities *are* a reality in the world of **Beyond the Supernatural™**, they are not commonplace nor commonly accepted as real. Most rational people and students of science argue, in fact, that the paranormal is *not* real, and reject any "soft" evidence that supports claims to the contrary, i.e., anecdotal evidence and that which cannot be replicated in a lab. Science has closed its mind to such fanciful nonsense as E.S.P. and mind over matter, which makes investigating claims of magic, ghosts and supernatural creatures seem more like chasing rainbows and a colossal waste of time than "real science." Then again, once upon a time, science chased rainbows and today knows exactly how they work.

The pioneers of paranormal research are often regarded as being on the fringe of science. There is little money or prestige working in the area of paranormal research, but plenty of heartache and isolation. Most are treated as social outcasts in the scientific community and looked upon as oddballs, misguided dreamers, and even quacks and charlatans. With this shameful bias prevalent in the revered halls of science, it is no wonder that truly gifted psychics prefer to remain anonymous, and why ambitious scientists intrigued by the paranormal steer clear of it for fear of ruining their careers. Despite the inherent problems, some men and women have the courage to seek truth regardless of the stigma, and the Parapsychologist P.C.C. is such a character class.

Armed only with an open mind, his instincts, gear and an education in psychology, the Parapsychologist challenges conventional science and dares to think outside the box. The character asks the hard questions and treads where few others are willing to go. In the world of **Beyond the Supernatural™**, that can be an eye-opening experience. Many Parapsychologists quickly find themselves charter members of an underground community committed to exploring and battling the supernatural in a secret war their colleagues would never believe. These Parapsychologists soon recognize a higher calling than trying to prove new theories to the scientific community. Instead they use their station and academic credentials to gain access to people, private libraries, collections of ancient artifacts, and places that hold precious knowledge not readily available to those outside academia. Information that, like puzzle pieces scattered around the world, creates a fuller, clearer picture about the supernatural. They may also find themselves in a position to help genuine psychics and trusted civilian psychic investigators by hiring them under the guise of assistants, researchers and advisors, or help get them grants to conduct their own "research."

Some Parapsychologists involved in the battle with dark forces keep copious notes and diaries. A few plan to write one

or more books one day, while others keep everything in their heads for fear of being condemned, ridiculed and driven out of the scientific community if their unconventional activities and beliefs were ever uncovered. Still others find teaching or continuing official research (at least part-time) helps to keep them grounded and sane. A handful dare to publish papers on their findings, but are always careful not say too much, lest they find their funding cut off and tenure ended for being too controversial or over the edge.

Radical, rogue, respected scholar, or visionary, many Parapsychologists lose themselves in the shadowy underworld of the supernatural where they use their vast range of knowledge to thwart supernatural forces and defend ordinary people from the unknown.

Special P.C.C. Abilities of the Parapsychologist

1. Specialized Knowledge of the Paranormal and Magic.

Though the Parapsychologist has no special psychic abilities or magical powers himself, the individual is armed with an open, inquisitive mind and a deep knowledge of the paranormal and supernatural. Expert knowledge that provides insight into the paranormal and enables the character to discern truth from coincidence, mental illness, an overactive imagination or deliberate trickery, fraud, and chicanery. His knowledge of the arcane and paranormal also enables the Parapsychologist to recognize and use magic, identify the presence of the supernatural and how best to defend against and battle supernatural threats. In many cases, it will be the experienced Parapsychologist who serves as the (often unofficial) group leader, deftly identifying a supernatural menace and mobilizing those around him to counter it as effectively as possible.

The Parapsychologist's understanding of the paranormal and psychic phenomena usually exceeds those who actually possess psionic powers. To a psychic, his abilities are as natural as breathing, thus many psychics tend to rely on their heightened senses and unique abilities without actually studying or understanding psychic phenomena, the history of the paranormal or even mythology or superstition. Most don't even have a clue how their abilities work, only that they do.

The Parapsychologist, by contrast, has spent years studying and observing the paranormal, has traced reports and events throughout history, formulated theories on how and why psychic abilities work, what they can do, how they correspond to the supernatural, and how they can be used to detect and defend against supernatural beings. As a result, he has a much broader world view and sense of history (and the magnitude of the supernatural world) than most psychics or paranormal investigators.

Common Skills: All +6%.

Occupational Skills: Anthropology (+15%), Biology (+15%), Crime Scene Investigation (+15%) or Medical Doctor (+10%), Computer Operation (+15%), Creative Writing or Technical Writing (+12%), Lore: Cults & Secret Societies (+15%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%), Lore: Entities & Ghosts (+20%), Lore: Magic or Magic Arcane (+15%), Lore: Mythology (+20%), Lore: Paranormal & Psionics (+25%), Lore: one of choice (+15%), Parapsychology (+30%), Psychology (+25%), Research (+15%), and Sensory Equipment (+20%).

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories plus any Medical and Science skills (all +10%), and the character also gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 4, 7, 10, and 15.

Special Skill Bonus: +6% additional skill bonus on any one skill of choice, the character's area of expertise or special interest.

2. Keen Perception: +1 on Perception Rolls at levels 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, and 12. The Parapsychologist's scholastic background and scientific methodology also helps him to gather clues, evidence and information and collate and evaluate it in the most effective manner. Furthermore, the character's extensive background and studies (at least 6-8 years) into the related realms of the supernatural and the occult gives the character strong knowledge of and/or access to rare books and databases about history, myth, legend, demons, monsters, magic, reputed magical artifacts, ley lines, places of power, and related material and how they may all tie together. This wide range of knowledge, and trained observational skills gives the Parapsychologist keen *Perception*, practiced objectivity and a deeper understanding of all things supernatural, paranormal and magical.

3. Understanding the Principles of Psionics. The Parapsychologist has an excellent knowledge of the paranormal and an understanding of the theories behind it all. Thus he understands the differences between the various P.C.C.s and the strengths and weaknesses of their abilities and orientation.

- *Recognize real psychic abilities vs stage magic and trickery.* The Parapsychologist's expertise in psychic phenomena enables him to see through fakery, fabrication, simulations, quackery, and shams. Base Skill: 60% +3% per level of experience starting with second level.

- *Recognize mind control and possession.* Includes hypnotic suggestion, mind controlling and altering drugs, psychic possession/mind control, demonic possession, and magically induced manipulation. Base Skill: 50% +3% per level of experience.

4. Understanding the Principles of Magic. Magic is studied because its practitioners often claim abilities that mimic psychic phenomena as well as alleged mental and physical links to supernatural beings who can give them psychic, superhuman or magical powers. A parapsychologist examines all paranormal occurrences and is frequently called upon to investigate "alleged" psychic mediums, witchcraft, sorcery and cultist activity involved in magic or the paranormal. The ancient psychics, shamen, holy men, sages and prophets were customarily believed to be magicians or linked to spirits and supernatural forces. The connection between magic, psychic phenomena, and the supernatural has existed throughout history, consequently, the principles of magic and the psychological ramifications are a part of the Parapsychologist's studies.

The Parapsychologist's understanding of magic is by no means as in depth or complete as true practitioners of magic, but it is reasonably extensive. The character studies the history of magic, the various types of mystic philosophies, theo-

ries, known rituals, social structure and interactions of cults, and supposed powers linked to the supernatural as well as the psychology and purpose behind fundamental rituals and occult practices. The knowledge is complete enough for the Parapsychologist to recognize specific types of magic such as Voodoo or Necromancy, and even identify specific types of circles, symbols, and paraphernalia (ceremonial tools, herbs, components) commonly used in magic. With this knowledge, the character can deduce the probable intent of the magic and which supernatural forces might be involved. All of this helps the expert psychic investigator to prepare himself mentally and emotionally to combat magical threats and unnatural manifestations.

The Parapsychologist's knowledge of magic is helpful in his investigations of the paranormal and consulting with other organizations, but it is not enough to enable the character to actually perform magic or cast spells. Generally, his knowledge is limited to the concepts, ideals and motives behind magic, not the true essence of magic or specific spell incantations or rituals. Furthermore, the Parapsychologist lacks the mental discipline and training to perform most types of magic. Still, it is knowledge that comes in very handy from time to time. (**Note:** The intricacies of magic will be explored in the **BTS-2 Arcanum** sourcebook.)

Base Skill: 50% +4% per level of experience. A failed roll means the character is not familiar with the magic or does not recognize its significance or which supernatural elements might be involved. A failed roll might also indicate the scholar misinterprets the meaning of the mystic symbols, signs or ritual.

- **Read Magic.** Although the Parapsychologist cannot actively practice magic, he is skilled enough to recognize magic symbols, read runes, and cast low level spells by reading invocations written on scrolls and from books for 50% more than the usual P.P.E. amount. Likewise, he can assist in or perform magic rituals provided that he has elaborate instructions to follow.

Base Skill: 32% +4% per level of experience. If the character is being forced to do the magic and does not want to succeed there is no possibility of success. If a spell or ritual is read, but the Parapsychologist has insufficient P.P.E. or fails the Read Magic skill roll, the spell fails.

- 5. Knowledge of and access to scientific equipment.** This is knowledge and experience using sensory, film and scientific equipment used for paranormal research and includes special optic and sensor systems, surveillance equipment, cameras and other items useful in paranormal studies and testing. Available equipment may be limited by the organization or institution that employs the Parapsychologist.
- 6. Leads a Paranormal Research Team (optional):** More likely than not, the Parapsychologist is funded by one of the following groups. The G.M. should pick one or roll percentile dice for random determination (or allow the player of the Parapsychologist to roll). If this is the case, the Parapsychologist is likely to be the head of (or a key member within) the team.

The other members of the research team can be reputed psychics, Psychic Investigators, Skeptics/Debunkers, scientists, detectives, aides, assistants, advisors, even hired security

or drivers. This is convenient because all or most of the player characters can be hired as "official members" of the team, and get paid by the sponsoring organization for psychic investigation. It keeps the group together without causing suspicion and gives them all mobility. It also gives them limited access to scientific equipment (not weapons) and transportation. If this is going to be the player's approach to employment it will be useful to select skills that will help them in their profession.

01-05% Self-employed. The character has started his own little group of investigators and makes money charging for various services, working as an advisor, and probably 1-3 days of private practice as a psychologist. Reduce the typical pay by 10%.

06-10% Self-employed, but established consulting or private investigation company dealing with the paranormal and the unknown.

11-30% University. A fair amount of personal freedom and direction, but the school expects quarterly reports, updates on breakthroughs and a complete accounting of expenses, salaries, and equipment. At least two, scholarly, published papers are expected annually.

31-45% Scientific Research Organization. Expects the team to operate within strict scientific guidelines, and may have specific protocols and parameters within which it expects the Parapsychologist and his team to work. Failure to do so will result in dismissal, unless results are spectacular. Monthly, if not weekly, reports are part of the job. Privately funded and may be an arm of a secret society, cult or the government. Increase pay by 20%.

46-60% Private Industry. Fundamentally the same as Scientific Research Organization, only private industry is looking for ways to exploit and profit from the paranormal in some way. Increase pay by 30%.

61-80% Philanthropic Organization/Society. The money comes from a group of concerned citizens (even the characters themselves), or a coalition of business people, universities, scholars or scientists interested in the study of the paranormal and willing to sponsor an outside group (i.e., the player characters). The Lazlo Agency is an example of this concept, though it is much, much larger, older and established than most. Basically the same as the University, above, only all findings are confidential and private. Privately funded and there may be a chance that it is an arm of a secret society, cult or the government using the character(s) as a pawn.

81-90% Wealthy Individual. For whatever reason (probably for any one of the reasons ordinary people become involved in paranormal investigation; see the *Ordinary People P.C.C.* description), a rich individual, family or trust fund provides the funding for paranormal research and investigation, and possibly even outright extermination of supernatural menaces. Privately funded and there may be a chance that it is an arm of a secret society, cult or the government using the character(s) as a pawn. Increase pay by 20%.

91-00% The Military or Government. A civilian organization or team hired by and working for a branch of the government (or a foreign government). Specifications of the job probably include verification of specific psychic abilities,

how they work, how they can be replicated or nurtured in others, recommendations for possible military applications (including national security and espionage), possible spy work from test subjects in the field, and similar. The second arm of this research is investigating the supernatural threat, the verification that demonic beings exist, their classification and cataloging, threat assessment, recommended counter-measures, defenses and extermination methods, feasible military applications involving the creatures, and similar (possibly even the capture of said creatures for further study). May be a top secret operation or a quiet public investigation into psychic phenomena. (No government is ever likely to admit the investigation of supernatural beings, magic or cults, though the investigation of practitioners of magic and cults could fall under the umbrella of Homeland or National Security, and in the United States, even counter-terrorist activities under the auspices of the FBI, ATF, NSA and almost any of the alphabet agencies.) Increase pay by 10%.

Status with the Sponsoring Organization:

01-25% Excellent! Considered to be an exceptional talent. Increase salary by 10%; likely to get special equipment and travel allocations.

26-50% Well Liked. Considered to be one of the best in the field, competent, knowledgeable, resourceful. Increase salary by 10%; likely to get special equipment and travel allocations.

51-75% Liked by his team, but unpopular with the bosses. Considered to be a prima donna or a maverick who plays by his own rules. Good, competent Parapsychologist who is well respected, but has stepped on too many toes within the hierarchy of management. Gets basic gear and expenses, seldom gets special equipment or accommodations.

76-90% Disliked. Competent, but does not fit into the organization. Rarely gets special equipment or accommodations and consistently gets the worst assignments.

91-00% Can do no wrong. This character knows who to shmooze and how to play the system. His employers adore him, he is the first to get new or special equipment, always gets top-rate travel and accommodations, and little indiscretions are overlooked without incident. It would take a great deal (public scandal, betrayal, etc.) to put this individual out of favor.

Parapsychologist P.C.C.

Common Personality Traits: Highly educated with a doctorate in psychology, yet imaginative, open to new ideas, observant, inquisitive, and analytical. Most are also fairly realistic and accept that they are something of outcasts within the scientific community and are seen to operate on the fringes of science.

Attribute Requirement: I.Q. 10 or higher. A high M.E. and P.E. are also recommended but are not required.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4+1 to any one mental attribute (I.Q., M.A., or M.E.) and +1 to P.E.

Alignment: Any, but tend to be of good or Anarchist alignments.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 15 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +3 to save vs Horror Factor and hypnosis, +2 to save vs magic and curses, +2 to save vs possession, and +1 to save vs mind altering drugs. Also see Perception bonuses under Special P.C.C. Abilities, previously.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural.

Although an expert in the paranormal, the Parapsychologist has no natural psychic or magic abilities, cannot sense the supernatural, and is vulnerable to psionic and magic attacks. Unlike practitioners of magic, the Parapsychologist doesn't know how to draw on his own P.P.E. base (which is higher than most human adults) or other available sources, nor does he know how to focus the P.P.E. into an actual spell invocation, though he can participate in magic rituals and read and activate magic scrolls.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy Points): Roll 2D6; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his education (hence the mental attribute bonus, above).

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: Not applicable.

Recovering I.S.P.: Not applicable.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: Not applicable.

Occupation: In this case, the P.C.C. is also the occupation:

Parapsychology and Psychology. The character may be part-time or full-time, on staff, an independent contractor/advisor, or a private practice (psychology or psychiatry, or psychic investigator).

Skills: See #1 above.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Field Equipment: basic gear to start: 1D4 year old sedan (4 door), mini-van, van, or SUV; personal cell phone with built-in digital camera, conventional 35 millimeter camera, pocket tape recorder, two radios, a high quality digital camera, laptop computer, note pad and two pens or markers, small pocket knife (1D4 damage), briefcase (soft leather or hard case), backpack or duffel bag, binoculars, magnifying glass, large flashlight, pen flashlight (kept in pocket), pocket mirror, basic portable tool kit (set of screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, hammer, scissors, ice pick/hole punch, duct tape, a small selection of nails and screws, etc. in a hard plastic case), a pair of sunglasses, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, three suits, and some personal items.

At the Office: Personal computer with monitor, printer, and document scanner, high-speed internet connection (but it is at the office), cable or satellite TV, VCR or DVD player, TiVO, microscope, and special gear.

Weapons: Baseball bat (1D8 damage) or crowbar (2D6 damage) in the trunk of his car, plus a six inch (15 cm) silver plated crucifix and a larger 8-12 inch (20-30 cm) cross made of wood or stone.

Modern Weapons: None.

A Note About Equipment: Almost any kind of scientific and industrial equipment can be purchased by this character or the institution he may work for, it just may take a while to track it down. Some institutes may even get their hands on military and experimental equipment, but such gear is usually a *loan* and hard to come by.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for \$800 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for \$1,200 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A nice two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) "on campus" with campus security, for \$1,800 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$3,500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Money in Savings: 4D6x\$1,000.

Pay Varies with Employer: Typically, 1D4x\$1,000+\$50,000, possibly more depending on the sponsoring organization.

The Psychic Parapsychologist Option

In this case, the Parapsychologist is a minor psychic with only a handful of abilities, but it was this personal experience that inspired him to explore the paranormal and to take up the profession. May be considered an even less developed *Latent Psychic*. Probably keeps his abilities a secret from his employer and most people he associates with; the player group is an exception.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +3 to save vs Horror Factor and hypnosis, +2 to save vs magic and curses, +3 to save vs possession, and +2 to save vs mind altering drugs.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 1D6 +1 per level of experience. (x2, x3, x4, x6) The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: Standard: *Total relaxation or sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: *Sixth Sense* (2; engages in moments of crisis and need, but is regarded as hunches and educated guesswork); *Medical Hypnosis* (2-4) but considers it a "skill" not a power (still costs I.S.P.), and an additional three skills selected from the *Physical* or *Sensitive* categories of psionics. **Note:** The character also selects a new psychic ability from one of those categories at levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

Skill Modifier: Reduce the number of Elective Skills by two and Secondary Skills by two.



Physical Psychic P.C.C.

"Thanks to that guy on TV and the talk show mediums, most people hear the word 'psychic' and think it's all about predicting the future, mind-reading, and seeing ghosts."

"Well that is a lot of it, isn't it?" commented Mr. Sheridan.

"Yeah, a lot of it, but not all of it. People seem to forget about mind over matter. You know, control over your own body to do the impossible."

"You mean like walk across burning coals and sleep on a bed of nails?"

"Yeah, I guess. But that's mostly showmanship, you know. A way to demonstrate what we're all about without freakin' people out, or a way to make a few bucks as an entertainer."

"And what are you all about?"

"Discipline and kicking demonic ass." said Jackson Geller with a wink. "We Physical Psychics put the muscle into the paranormal and the hurt on supernatural evil. You'd have to see one of us in action to get the whole picture. Our abilities, um, jump when we're dancin' with the devil, if you know what I mean. That's when we really make our presence known."

The Physical Psychic is a master of *psychokinesis*, or *PK*, in which a person is able to exert influence over the physical world with the power of his or her mind. This is also known as "mind of matter," and may involve the manipulation of one's own body to negate pain, fight disease, and survive under impossible conditions, to feats of Levitation, Telekinesis and even influence over physical forces such as electricity.

In ancient tribal times, the Physical Psychic was a likely candidate for war chief, demon slayer, shaman or wise elder. Unlike the Psychic Sensitive and other psychics with sensory type abilities, the vast majority of the Physical Psychic's powers affect his own body and the physical world around him. In this sense, the Physical Psychic, whose extrasensory psi-powers are directed *outward*, is almost the opposite or counterbalance to the Psi-Sensitive, whose mental powers of extra-sensory perception are directed *inward*. Many of the Physical Psychic's abilities induce some sort of physical change or create a physical force that can affect the material world. They are manifestations that can be seen, heard and felt by anyone they are directed at or within visual range, though the source of the physical incident (i.e., the Physical Psychic) may not be obvious. However, like so many other elements of the paranormal, the powers of the Physical Psychic seldom leave any lasting, physical evidence. Furthermore, many of the psychic's powers can be replicated by stage magicians and tricksters, providing skeptics with the ammunition they need to explain or debunk alleged physical manifestations.

The Physical Psychic is a character who has focused his Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) into the area of physical psychic phenomena. Telekinesis, for example, enables him to open a door without touching the knob or carry a book to him without ever leaving his seat. Levitation may allow the character to rise into the air to see over a fence, while Pyrokinesis and Electrokinetics give the character mastery over energy, Hydrokinesis over water, and numerous other abilities provide astonishing



control over his own body. The Physical Psychic adds a new dimension to mind over body and mind over matter phenomena.

Physicality is the Character's orientation. The Physical Psychic tends to be, well, physical. About 25% have a body-builder's physique like Mr. Universe or professional wrestlers. Most others are lean, athletic, strong and healthy without being musclebound. Most have hobbies that involve exercise, running, walking, hiking, biking, skiing, spelunking, swimming, aerobics, racing cars, sports, and similar. The physicality of the Physical Psychic also means they tend to be geared toward action. They like to be doing something, not sitting around and discussing theories, weaving elaborate schemes or wringing their hands. They tend to be direct, honest go-getters who like to be in the thick of the action and don't fear mixing it up with supernatural beings. While some are indeed jocks, most also have a good head on their shoulders and are not stupid, foolish or reckless. Physical Psychics tend to use their brains, brawn and physical powers. About 25% are downright scholarly and excellent strategists and tacticians. Most Physical Psychics understand their connection to the supernatural, accept it and respond accordingly as *Psychic Warriors*, people with abilities to challenge and fight supernatural predators, demons and supernatural evil.

The abilities of the Physical Psychic can seem deceptively powerful, and are, with the possible exception of psi-healing, the most flamboyant of all psychic categories. Unlike the Psychic Sensitive, whose abilities to see, feel and sense emotions, energies and the paranormal are self-contained, the Physical Psychic directs his powers or draws on abilities that enables him to affect or strike outward into the world. He is actually closed to *sensations* of the supernatural and cannot feel evil nor See the Invisible, because his link and focus is to the physical world. It is his strength and his weakness, for despite the Physical Psychic's impressive powers, he, like most of us, is blind to the supernatural forces around him.

The Physical Psychic must exercise caution when using his natural psionic abilities in public. Anonymity can be lost in a single, careless instant. Also, because these powers affect the real world, careless or thoughtless use of them can cause destruction to property and injury and death to innocent bystanders and associates. However, used wisely, they can be a wonderful tool to help others and protect an unsuspecting humankind from supernatural forces.

Special P.C.C. Abilities

Starts with . . .

1. **Yoga Style Meditation and Trance States:** Special meditation techniques that provide the following. Note that there is *NO* I.S.P. cost, only an investment of time and concentration.

Complete Relaxation and Restorative Rest: A light trance in which the character can shut out the world and focus on calm, relaxation, and rest. Twenty minutes of meditation is the equivalent of two hours sleep and restores I.S.P. equal to that much sleep. Requires 10 minutes of preparation but there is no I.S.P. cost.

Curative Trance: Reduces the symptoms, damage and penalties of poison, infection and illness by half for as long as the character remains in his trance. May be maintained up

to a maximum of three days per level of experience as the poison or illness runs its course. However, the Physical Psychic is incapable of doing anything except his meditation and is completely unaware of what's going on around him. The character doesn't even dream while in this defensive state, except, perhaps of fighting whatever affliction is attacking his body. An empathic transmission or simple (brief) telepathic communique can both get through without difficulty and without breaking the trance, but the character cannot respond unless he comes out of his trance. In the alternative, a firm shaking and shouting for 1D4+1 melee rounds will snap the psychic from his trance, and so will physical pain (at least four points of damage, causing the character to awaken within 2D4 seconds). When the psychic comes out of his trance, he is completely alert and ready for action, though he will suffer from the full effects of the poison or sickness unless the duration of its effects have passed. No I.S.P. cost.

Complete Closed Mind Trance: In this state the Physical Psychic enters into a trance that completely seals him off from the physical and paranormal world. This altered state of sensory deprivation makes the psychic appear to be alive but in a deep coma. While in this condition the character hears words and feels sensations in a sort of dream state and is only vaguely aware of what's being said or done directly to him. However, the Closed Mind Trance completely blocks him from the supernatural and paranormal to the point that no type of psychic attack or communication can reach him, nor can Telepathy or Empathy penetrate his mental defense. It is as if he has disappeared from the psychic radar screen, and even Remote Viewing and Astral Projection cannot locate him. Similarly, a character in this state does not register on Presence Sense, and powers like See Aura, Psychic Diagnosis, and all types of probes (Sense Magic, Sense Evil, Detect Psionics, etc.) come up *blank*. The character is also impervious to Hypnosis, Nightmares, Psychosomatic Dreams, Possession, mind altering drugs and most other *mind attacks*.

Note: Limitations & Penalties: This trance can be achieved in as little as three minutes of preparation, but the psychic has limited control over the duration. The Closed Mind Trance will last a minimum of 1D8 hours at its shortest. Medium duration is 4D8+24 hours, a long duration is 1D8x10+48 hours and an extended duration is 2D8+16 weeks – the psychic usually has a duration time in mind when he enters the trance and that determines the duration. An additional negative is that the character is oblivious to the passage of time or world around him, and he cannot think and plot, scheme or listen and remember what's going on around him. He is completely shut off from the world. The Complete Closed Mind Trance is usually done to escape a psychic barrage, temporarily vanish from one's enemies or feign one's death, or as a result of tremendous trauma (i.e., the mind closes down to protect its sanity).

It is also important to note that this is not a true coma but a mind over matter state of being that also slows down the Physical Psychic's bodily functions, prevents muscular atrophy, and when the character awakens he is completely alert and cognitive. No I.S.P. cost.

2. **Summon Supernatural Strength:** The Physical Psychic can momentarily turn his normal physical strength into *Supernat-*

ural Strength to lift a superhuman amount of weight, to tear a door off its hinges, to inflict grievous damage upon a magical or supernatural foe, and similar feats of amazing strength.

Limitations: This ability can only be performed when facing a supernatural enemy or creature of magic, suffering through a terrible crisis, or when facing a life and death situation where superhuman strength would be a benefit. Even then, this powerful psychic energy surge lasts only for a few seconds and cannot be performed more than three times per 24 hours.

When this ability is called forth, the Physical Psychic's mortal Physical Strength (P.S.) turns into Supernatural Strength; see P.S. Attribute tables for the exact amount of damage that can be inflicted, weight lifted and other details.

Range: Self and hand to hand combat.

Duration: 15 seconds +3 seconds per each additional level of experience, starting at level two. This provides *one full melee round* worth of *physical actions* (tearing a car door off the hinges and throwing it or using it as a battering ram or weapon, holding a door shut against persistent opponents, lifting, carrying or throwing great weight, etc.) or *physical combat* with fists and feet or a handheld weapon such as a club or sword (not applicable to guns, projectile weapons or casting magic spells). The additional three seconds per level of experience goes into the *next melee round*, giving the psychic the equivalent of one melee action or attack worth of Supernatural P.S. per each level of advancement beyond one. So by sixth level experience, the character has Supernatural Strength for two full melee round (30 seconds), and at level 11 Supernatural P.S. lasts for three melee rounds (45 seconds).

Damage: Supernatural Strength can inflict incredible amounts of damage with punches and kicks as per the character's level of P.S., the higher his *P.S. attribute number*, the greater the damage. If using a handheld weapon such as a knife, sword, rock, club, chair, etc., add the Supernatural P.S. damage to the damage inflicted by the weapon.

I.S.P. Cost: 5.

3. **Standard Meditation** is an automatic, intuitive ability.

4. **Select one of the following additional P.C.C. abilities at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, and 14:**

Ambidextrous: Can use either hand equally well and automatically gets the *W.P. Paired Weapons* skill. No skill penalty if his primary hand (e.g., most people are right handed) is injured and he has to use the other to perform a skill, write, shoot, etc. +5% bonus to the following skills: Art, Climb, Concealment, Palming, Pick Locks, Pick Pockets, Whittling, Rope Works and any Piloting skill.

Extra Fast Runner: +1D6+8 to Spd attribute and +1 to dodge when running or leaping when up against supernatural or magical forces and during high adrenaline moments (like running for help or running to help, running from monsters, etc.). Furthermore, running speed, swimming and heavy exertion can be maintained for twice as long as normal before suffering from fatigue. The character can also leap 30% farther than most other people during high adrenaline situations and when combating (or fleeing from) supernatural forces.

Extra Strong: This guy or gal may look like a weight-lifter with muscular arms and upper body strength, or not, but in either case, he or she is stronger than their appearance might suggest; +1D6+2 to P.S. attribute and +1 to P.B. Though stronger than the average person, the P.S. is *not* Supernatural.

Extra Tough: +1D4 to Hit Points per level of experience, starting with the level that this ability was selected, and a one time bonus of 4D6 S.D.C.

Incredibly Flexible and Limber: +2 to roll with impact/punch/fall, +5% to the skills: Escape Artist, Acrobatics, and Gymnastics. In addition, the character can fold his legs, Hindu style, and bend and stretch without pain, difficulty or fear of pulling a muscle.

Iron Constitution: +4 to save vs disease, +1 to save vs poison, and +2 to the P.E. attribute.

Levitation Enhanced: Costs half the usual I.S.P., and +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

Quick Reflexes: +2 on initiative and +1 to strike or parry (bonus applies only to one of the two).

Restorative Trance: Requires 10 minutes of preparation and 20 minutes of meditation (30 minutes total) to restore 1D4+3 I.S.P.; must be meditating, not sleeping, and because the focus is on recovering I.S.P., not relaxation, the character does get the rest and other benefits of sleep when he comes out of the trance. No I.S.P. Cost.

Physical Psychic P.C.C.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to P.S. and +1D4 to P.E. or P.P. (pick one).

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +1 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact/punch/fall, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +5 to save vs possession and disease (including magic disease), +4 to save vs Bio-Manipulation, +3 to save vs hypnosis, mind control and illusions, +1 to save vs Telepathic and Empathic probes and attacks, and +2 to save vs magic and curses.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural. Although the Physical Psychic possesses psi-powers, he is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal. He is simply not "tuned in" to the psychic vibrations and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, the invisible or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him.

Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It means the physical focus and closed psyche shields the character from supernatural forces providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks (see P.C.C. Bonuses, previously). This natural resistance coupled with the character's own psi-abilities can make him a dangerous opponent to supernatural creatures. Ironically, this defense also makes the

character vulnerable, because he lacks the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

Each psychic attack or use of a psionic ability counts as one of the character's melee attacks or actions.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D4; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his physical and mind over matter abilities.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 2D4 +2 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus. The Physical Psychic is one of the rare P.C.C.s to automatically get the *Meditation* ability. *Advanced Meditation* and/or *Restorative Trance*, however, are practiced abilities that must be *selected* in order for the character to possess one or both of them.

Selecting Physical Psychic Abilities: Psi-powers for this character include the Special P.C.C. Abilities listed previously, plus a selection of Physical Psychic abilities. Select 1D4+4 Physical abilities at level one. The character gets one additional Physical Psychic ability per level of advancement, starting at second level.

Occupation: Most Physical Psychics tend to be jocks and like to work with their hands and bodies. This makes detective and police work interesting, as well as professional and semi-pro athletic competitions, and skilled occupations like mechanic, construction worker, crane operator, carpenter and electrician, to high school sports coaches or gym teacher, truck driver, factory worker, and other manual jobs that require a strong back and brawn. That having been said, most Physical Psychics are NOT big, dumb, musclebound lugs, if for no other reason than their psychic abilities have made them open-minded, curious and compassionate.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D6 year old sports car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, basic portable tool kit (set of

screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, hammer, scissors, ice pick/hole punch, battery operated drill, duct tape, a small selection of nails and screws, etc.) in a hard plastic case, a pair of sunglasses, baseball cap, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace or pocket-size item (six inches/15 cm), optional.

Two simple melee weapons like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation: See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.

The Psi-Mechanic P.C.C.

"Sure the paranormal is real, though I can't explain it and I find some of it confusing. Ya see, I tend to be a hands on kinda guy, myself. I work on pure inspiration and intuition to whip up... well, gadgets to emulate psychic ability. Kinda wild and wacky stuff, that I can use just fine, but most other people have a considerable amount of trouble using, if they can use 'em at all. I'm told that it's because I have some sort of psychic affinity with machines and that my mind bridges gaps in real science to make my devices work when they shouldn't. Personally, I'd like to think it's because I'm a bit of a genius."

The Psi-Mechanic is an eccentric character with his own view of the world. Like the alchemist of old, the Psi-Mechanic melds the unknown with the scientific to build machines that will help him tap into his psychic potential. A character tanta-

lized by new ideas and concepts, like a child with a new toy; clever, inventive, resourceful, excited by the sheer adventure of it all and ever driven to explore.

The Psi-Mechanic is another type of Physical Psychic, only this character's focus is machines and electronics. The character has an affinity for machines and has always enjoyed taking machines apart, fixing them, building them, souping them up



and tweaking them to increase their ability or range of abilities. The paranormal enters the picture in ways that enable the psychic to do things with machines that shouldn't be possible.

As a gadgeteer, machines are the focal point of the Psi-Mechanic's psychic abilities. This peculiar fellow may be a distant cousin to the alchemist of old, weaving science and the psychic together. The only real drawback is that only he, or possibly another Psi-Mechanic or Latent Psychic, can use his creations. A normal man or woman, psychic or mage can't use a psi-device at all.

How or why these machines work for the Psi-Mechanic is a mystery in itself. Often the working parts do not conform to conventional science or mechanics, and they may not even have a recognizable power source (i.e., uses an ordinary crystal, a pyramid wire construct, an enchanted item, and so on). The most likely explanation is that there are two hidden elements at play. The first is the Psi-Mechanic's belief in the device, which draws I.S.P. or P.P.E. from him and places it into the gizmo as its secret, true power supply. This is why only other Psi-Mechanics and Latent Psychics, both with untapped P.P.E., can use the bizarre machines. The second hidden element is that the Psi-Mechanic almost certainly etches a psychic imprint into the device. An imprint that acts as a combination trigger and psychic circuit board.

Building Psi-Devices

The character can build a device that emulates a broad range of psychic abilities. When the machine is built, the Psi-Mechanic is drained of some of his P.P.E. The P.P.E. is gone until the device is destroyed, at which point the energy returns to the psychic. The expenditure of P.P.E. creates the psychic circuit board which gives the machine its power. The P.P.E. cost to instill a device with a specific power is listed, along with the available psi-abilities. Each individual machine will require P.P.E. However, to build a duplicate device costs half the P.P.E. of the original. Multiple psi-powers can be built into the same device, but it is costly in both P.P.E. to create it and I.S.P. to operate (each power will require I.S.P. to activate).

The machine should suggest some scientific common sense. For example: To *see* the invisible, a pair of goggles or glasses or headgear with a visor and/or HUD mechanism (Heads Up Display) is required. The end result could be an "enhanced" pair of infrared or passive nightvision goggles with some sort of extra doohickey (psi-powered) that provides conventional optical enhancement, as well as the psychic ability to See the Invisible (or See Aura).

A psychic sensory device meant to detect a supernatural presence might include multiple psi-powers, such as Presence Sense, Sense Evil and/or Sense Magic. This sensory device is likely to look and function like a Geiger counter or some type of sensory device with digital displays, counters, dials, indicators, and even sound. A psi-device that provides Empathy, Telepathy or some other mental ability should fit over the head like a helmet or wild-looking, thinking cap. To invoke a Mind Block or cause Levitation might require a headband-like device or another type of helmet or hat. To fire a bolt of steam (Steam Blast) or energy bolt (Electrokinesis), a gun (even a squirt gun) type delivery system is likely to be necessary. Get the idea?

The ability of the psi-device is identical to the natural psionic power it is meant to emulate.

Initial Creation Cost: 2 P.P.E. per psionic power replicated in the machine; one point per power to make a duplicate psi-device. Remember, once spent, the P.P.E. is permanently gone until the device is destroyed.

A Psi-Mechanic may start with as many as three psi-devices with 1-3 abilities in each device, and can immediately build a new device with each new level of experience, or opt to save all or part of the additional P.P.E. available from level advancement as needed.

The only restrictions are that: 1) Enough P.P.E. is available to make the device and 2) the Psi-Mechanic spends 1D4 days on concept development thinking and imagining the device, and 3) at least 48 work hours actually building the item. That's 48 hours of actual labor, not just two days' time. A typical day's work building a psi-machine is 10 to 12 hours, which would mean four or five days of intense activity. A rush job will require more work hours per day (18 maximum), which will result in a finished machine in two and half days, but an exhausted Psi-Mechanic.

Psychic abilities that can be duplicated in a psi-device:

Fire Walker Abilities: Burst of Light, Fire Bolt, Impervious to Fire (full body suit & gas mask), and Steam Blast.

Healing: Detect Psionics only.

Machine Psionics: Telekinetic Bullets only.

Physical Abilities: Bio-Stasis Trance (requires a deprivation tank or similar enclosure), Electrokinesis, Hydrokinesis, Impervious to Cold, Levitation, Meditation: Advanced (requires a deprivation tank or similar enclosure), Resist Fatigue, and Telekinesis (basic).

Sensitive Abilities: Empathy, Mask I.S.P. & Psionics, Mind Block, Presence Sense, See Aura, See the Invisible, Sense Evil, Sense Magic, Telepathy.

I.S.P. Cost to Use the Psi-Device: Half the usual I.S.P. for that ability.

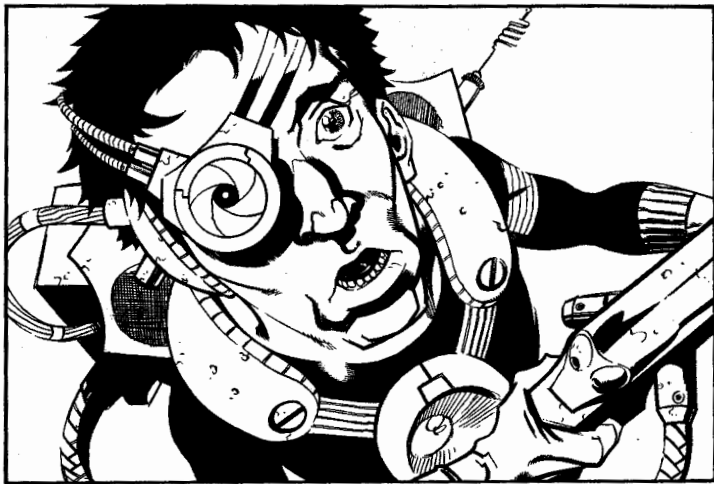
Who else can use the device: The Psi-Mechanic is the only person who can use his odd creations without effort. Non-psychics cannot use them at all, nor can most psychics or supernatural creatures. However, with proper instruction from a Psi-Mechanic a *Latent Psychic*, a *Ghost Hunter*, another *Psi-Mechanic* or an *Autistic Psychic Savant* should also be able to use the psi-device; 01-80% chance provided the character has sufficient P.P.E. or I.S.P. to activate the *special psionic power* of the machine. Without instruction from the creator that chance is reduced as follows: 01-40% for a fellow Psi-Mechanic or Ghost Hunter, 01-20% for a Latent Psychic, or 01-60% for an Autistic Savant (the Savant knows how to use it on an intuitive level).

There is one more character who may be able to use the machine, a child 6-12 years old, who like the Autistic Savant, can figure it out on an intuitive level (01-60% chance).

All percentile rolls should be made in front of the Game Master. Scientists and mechanical engineers will *not* be able to find a way of making the device work by conventional means.

Special: Recognize Magical Devices and Enchanted Objects: 40%/20% +5% per each additional level of experience. The first number is to determine that the device is magical or enchanted, the second number is to accurately figure out what

the device does and what magic powers or psychic equivalent powers it may possess or unleash.



Psi-Mechanic P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to I.Q. or M.E., +1D6 to P.S. or Spd, +1 to P.P. and +1D4 to Hit Points and S.D.C.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +2 on Perception Rolls in general, +4 on Perception Rolls involving machines and traps, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs possession, +2 to save vs Bio-Manipulation, +1 to save vs hypnosis, mind control and illusions, +1 to save vs Telepathic and Empathic probes and attacks, and +1 to save vs magic and curses.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: 1. The most obvious weakness is that the character has no special psychic powers without the aid of his devices. On the other hand, the character can effectively simulate a large range of psychic abilities in his machines and possesses a number of unique Machine Psionics of his own.

2. Because of the unusual focus, the Psi-Mechanic does not have any innate sensitivity and is effectively Closed to the Supernatural. He is simply not "tuned in" to psychic vibrations and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, the invisible or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him. Being closed to the supernatural is not all bad. It means the physical focus and closed psyche shields the character from supernatural forces, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks (see P.C.C. Bonuses, previously). This natural resistance coupled with the character's own psi-abilities can make him a dangerous opponent to supernatural creatures. Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he lacks the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

Each psychic attack or use of a psionic ability counts as one of the character's melee attacks or actions.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Permanent Base: 1D4+2; not available for making psi-devices.

P.P.E. Available for Making Psi-Devices: 1D8+2 at level one, plus an additional 1D4 P.P.E. per each new level of experience starting at level two. Note that any P.P.E. held in reserve for a psi-device to be made at a later date are doubled at the moment of the character's death along with the Permanent P.P.E. Base. That means a large reserve of P.P.E. may make the psychic an inviting target of supernatural forces or a target for ritual blood sacrifice.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 1D8+3 at level one, +1 per level of level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x10) The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Every time a Psi-Mechanic uses a psi-power or one of his devices, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus.

Selecting Machine Psionics: In addition to being able to make psi-powered devices, this character also gets two *Machine Psionics* of choice at level one, and one additional Machine Psionic ability per level of advancement, starting at second level.

Occupation: Any, but lean toward mechanics, electronics, repairs, and construction work.

Common Skills: All.

Skill Bonus: +5% to all mechanical and building related skills like Jury-Rig, Carpentry, etc., including Demolitions skills.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D4 year old sports car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, basic portable tool kit (set of screwdrivers, pliers, wrenches, hammer, scissors, ice pick/hole punch, battery operated drill, soldering iron, duct tape, a small selection of nails and screws, etc.) in a hard plastic case or metal toolbox, a box of 100 plastic gloves, a pair of goggles, sunglasses, baseball cap, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace and/or pocket-size holy symbol (six inches/15 cm), optional.

Two simple melee weapons like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length

of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation: See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.

Psychic Healer P.C.C.

"I believe I've been blessed with the greatest gift of all, the power to heal."

The pages of history contain the stories of countless shaman, wizards, holy men, priests, prophets, and psychics, with the ability to heal. These individuals usually exude a dynamic all their own and carry themselves with an aura of confidence, strength, gentleness and compassion. Like the other psychics, the ability to heal is a matter of channeling and focusing the individual inner strength, only in this case that energy goes from the healer to his patient. In some respects the Psychic Healer is a physical psychic, because he or she physically influences others, but the distinctiveness of the healer's powers places him in a category of his own.

There are many theories regarding the powers of the Psychic Healer. Some believe the powers are an advanced form of hypnosis or power of suggestion. That, via the power of suggestion, the psychic actually stimulates the focus of a person's own psychic energy (P.P.E.) to heal himself. Another theory is that the Healer can manipulate physical matter, much like the Physical Psychic, and directs his own psychic energy into others to induce increased healing and other biological effects. To use his powers, the Healer seems to require greater concentration and time to focus the healing energies. This means that the psychic will often lapse into a meditative trance or semi-trance.

The Psychic Healer's powers are often subtly "boosting" the healing capabilities of another person, bringing someone out of a coma (which may be seen as a coincidence of timing with no evidence to show the Healer was responsible) or invisibly stimulating the healing process so an individual touched by the psychic survives the poison or infection in his system, or heals two or three times faster than normal and with minimal scarring or side effects (again, no proof the Healer is responsible). Similarly, the character's powers to sense disease, injury and other maladies are also invisible and hardly incontrovertible proof of his abilities – it could have been a lucky guess, a good medical evaluation (even if the character "claims" to have no medical training) or the alleged healer may have researched his target and uncovered medical information from the individual's confidential files or from a family member or friend.

The spectacular use of psychic healing only occurs at places of power, including ley lines, and when the character's I.S.P. has been boosted by the presence of the supernatural (and/or magic). This natural boost occurs whether the source of the P.P.E. is evil, good or impartial. **Note:** A Psychic Healer may realize that another character is a disguised or concealed supernatural being if his healing ability does not work on the person.

Special Healer P.C.C. Abilities:

1. **Resistance to Magic Illness and Curses.** *Magic/supernatural* induced curses, illness, disease, insanity, confusion and similar maladies, last only half as long as usual and have only half the usual symptoms, damage and penalties on a Psychic Healer.

2. **Miraculous Healing Trance.** This miraculous self-healing trance can restore Hit Points (or S.D.C.), close and heal wounds, stop internal bleeding/injury and purge the psychic's body of poisons or drugs. To accomplish this incredible healing, the character slips into a deep, uninterrupted, meditative trance. The progress of the unwanted chemicals is instantly stopped and damage is reversed, healing 3D6+3 points of damage within eight minutes. This trance can also be used to purge himself of mind control, possession, magic disease or magic curse, but takes twice as long. **Note:** There is *no I.S.P. cost* to heal himself in this manner, however, the Psychic Healer can only perform a Miraculous Healing twice per 24 hour period, feels weak for 1D4+2 hours afterward and suffers the following penalties for the entire duration: Reduce Spd by 30%, -1 attack per melee round, -2 on initiative and Perception Rolls, -1 on all combat bonuses and -10% on all skills. **Special:** Miraculous Healing may be performed on another, mortal person (or animal), but costs 20 I.S.P. and leaves the Healer very weak (double all the penalties above). Both the Healer and the patient will remain in the trance the entire time and it must not be interrupted for the healing to work.

In the alternative, the Healer can make himself impervious to fire, smoke and cold (all three) by doing a Miraculous Healing Trance on himself first; takes the full 8 minutes of meditation and the benefits last four minutes per level of experience. Or he can instead survive without air for the full eight minutes of the trance.



Psychic Healer P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled, Scrupulous), or Unprincipled, while the daring doers may be Unprincipled or Anarchist (may thrive on action, mayhem and crisis situations). The character's bond with life makes him keenly aware of pain and suffering. These individuals are rarely of an evil alignment, tend to be extremely sympathetic and compassionate to others, and detest all forms of torment, physical and psychological.

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section for details, bonuses and other elements.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to M.A. and P.E.

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +1D4 to Hit Points, +8 to save vs possession, +4 to save vs mind altering drugs, +4 to save vs poisons/toxins and disease, +1 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs magic curses and diseases, +15% to save vs coma/death, +1 to save vs Horror Factor and +2 to Perception Rolls that involve injury, illness, disease or dead (i.e., examining a death body or crime scene).

+5% skill bonus to any and all Medical skills the Healer may know, even if they are Secondary Skills like First Aid.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: Closed to the Supernatural.

The character is *not* receptive to the subtle sensations or emanations of the supernatural or paranormal and cannot sense or see the invisible, auras, ghosts, or magical radiation. However, his enemies may be able to sense him. Being closed to the supernatural does shield the character from supernatural forces, however, providing a natural defense to possession, magic and psychic attacks (see bonuses). Ironically, this defense also makes the character vulnerable, because he may lack the ability to see or sense the presence of his inhuman foes until they take a visible form or he is guided by a Psychic Sensitive, making teamwork essential.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D8; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his healing and mind over matter abilities.

Base I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points): 2D4 +3 per level of experience: (x2, x4, x6, x10) Every time a psychic ability is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. Major psi-abilities can be quite costly in I.S.P., while others require only two or three I.S.P.

When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended Base I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics, but not all. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will usually restore *one* I.S.P. per each full hour of uninterrupted rest, however the Psychic Healer recovers *two* I.S.P. per hour of rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two* I.S.P. per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus. Advanced Meditation will recover even greater amounts of I.S.P.

Selecting Healing Psychic Abilities: *Psychic Diagnosis, Stop Bleeding (Others), Exorcism, Resist Fatigue (Physical)*, and 1D4+3 Healing abilities of choice at level one. The character gets one additional healing power per level of advancement, starting at second level.

Occupation: Any, but tends to be attracted to occupations that involve medicine, science and helping others. Many are Professional Psychics.

Common Skills: All.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D4 year old car, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, first aid kit, 1D4 extra rolls of bandages, 1D4 rolls of Ace bandages, large flashlight, small flashlight, one disposable butane cigarette lighter, two blankets, a roll of duct tape, pocket knife (1D4 damage as a weapon), a pair of sunglasses, jacket, heavy coat, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one expensive suit, and some personal items. A cross or other holy symbol as a necklace and/or pocket-size item (six inches/15 cm), optional.

One simple melee weapons like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one:

1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$800 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1100 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2600 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation.

Money in Savings: Highly Skilled Occupation: 2D8x\$1000.
Modest Skills: 1D6x\$1,000, and Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.

Psychic Medium P.C.C.

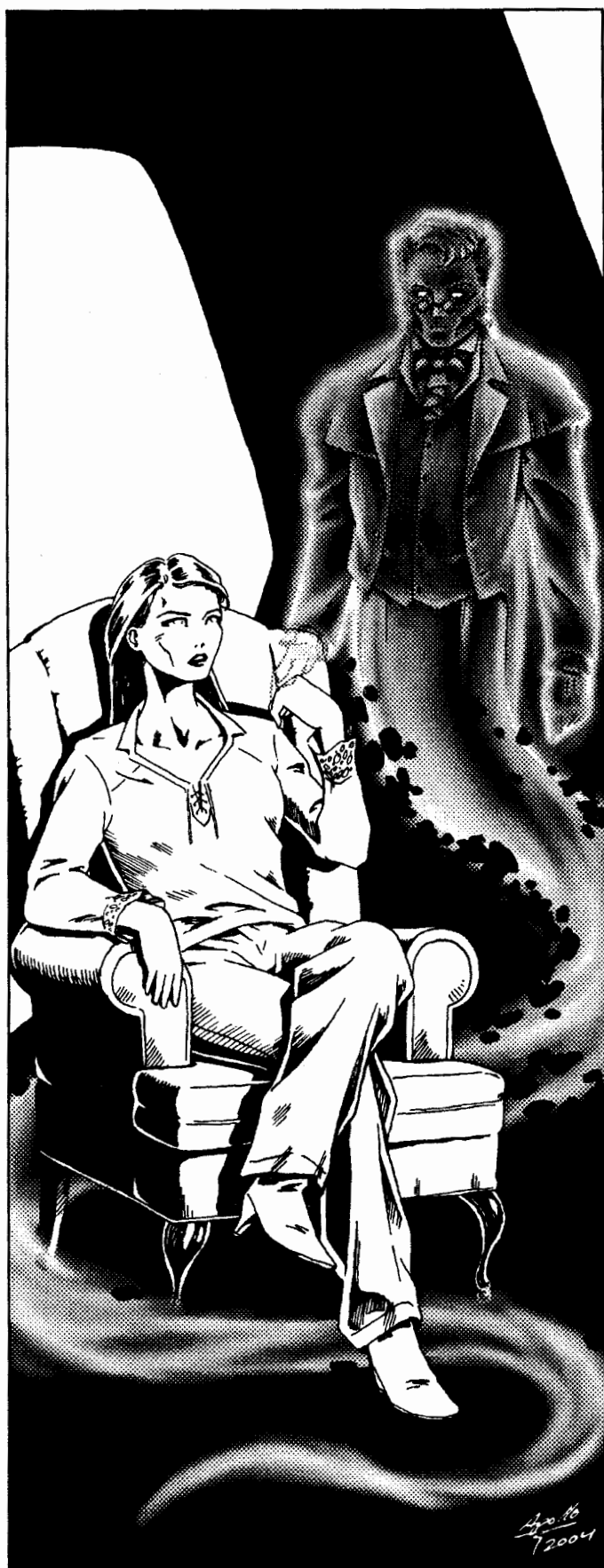
"Our realm of existence is much more complicated than science currently recognizes. We actually straddle and touch several different dimensions and realities. That's where supernatural beings come from. I also believe time works differently than we understand, which may explain how I can get readings from the past."

"My 'gift' enables me to see and communicate with these shadows from the past. Ghost images of people and events that have been left behind as psychic imprints trapped at a specific location like an invisible audio or visual recording. Imprints that are sometimes seized and relived by Haunting Entities who most people know as scary ghosts. I don't pretend to understand most of what I can do, so I don't know if there is truly an after-life or if the 'spirits' I communicate with are truly ghosts of living souls or imprints from the past seemingly given life by my own mind as if they were independent spirits. There are many Mediums convinced of the eternal soul, spirits and life after death, but for me there are no absolutes. My Spirit Guide, though wise and good, seems to know my thoughts before I express them, which makes me wonder if she might not be an aspect of my own mind. My conscience given its own personality, like Jimminy Cricket, from shadows and imprints of the past I have picked up and subconsciously made my own. Whatever the truth, I have grown to appreciate my Spirit Guide and trust her wisdom and guidance. With her as my guide I am a better, stronger person."

The Psychic Medium is uniquely able to see, communicate with, and get impressions from the *past, dead and ghosts*. The Medium is psychically linked to an otherworldly spirit and it is through this "Spirit Guide" that the psychic is able to communicate with other spirits and get information. According to Psychic Mediums, the Spirit Guide is a "ghost" of someone who lived in the past. It may be a deceased loved one, friend or relative, or the spirit of someone completely unrelated and previously unknown to the psychic. Ancestral spirits are said to guard over and help their descendants, but are never an immediate relative such as a parent or sibling, but someone a bit removed like a cousin, uncle, aunt, great grandparent, or even a great, great, great grandparent. In fact, a Spirit Guide is almost always 2-5 generations removed. It is the bond of kinship and commitment to the family that brings the spirit to the psychic and binds them together.

The unrelated Spirit Guide will always be a person from a particular occupation, place or time period in which the psychic has always been fascinated. That similar interest completes the link between these two kindred spirits, one deceased and one living. The unrelated ghost may have died recently or herald back to a time hundreds, even thousands of years ago. It can originate from anywhere on the planet, including foreign countries and places such as Atlantis and Lemuria that have never been proven to have existed at all. In all cases, regardless of the Spirit Guide's origin or age, it is benevolent and friendly, come to help the psychic, and represents the character's *conduit* to the past and other spirits.

Parapsychologists insist the Spirit Guide is the subconscious or *psychic manifestation* of the Medium's own mind, perhaps



his inner child or subconscious id, or even a form of schizophrenia with a positive twist. No one knows, not even the Medium, though most firmly believe it is the spirit of a deceased person. While the debate rages among Mediums, other psychics and

scholars whether the Spirit Guide is a genuine ghost or a figment of the psychic's own imagination, the bottom line is this: if there was no Spirit Guide the Psychic Medium would be powerless, blind to the realm of the supernatural and unable to use his special abilities. Thus, real or imagined, the two are irrevocably dependent on each other. Without one, the other is powerless.

The Spirit Guide

Number of Spirit Guides: One.

Alignment: The same as the Medium or a superior one (i.e., a character with an Anarchist alignment is likely to have a Spirit Guide with an Unprincipled or good alignment. Many Spirit Guides are Principled and Scrupulous; and most are compassionate, caring, and driven to help the living as well as spirits in turmoil.

Attributes: Not applicable.

Hit Points: There are creatures, magic and psionic attacks (the Spirit Strike being one of them) that can hit and hurt spirits. Thus, for the purpose of combat, the Spirit Guide has half as many Hit Points (no S.D.C.) as the Psychic Medium to whom it is linked. Most vanish when they lose half their Hit Points, returning when the enemy is gone or has been otherwise subdued. If the Spirit Guide loses all of its Hit Points, it vanishes for 24 hours. In this case, the Psychic Medium retains all of his paranormal powers, but suffers a penalty of -10% to all skills and -1 on all saving throws for being without his spiritual counselor. **Note:** Spirit Guides are seldom targets of attacks because they don't represent a threat to beings in the physical world, thus they are usually ignored by other spirits, supernatural beings and practitioners of magic.

P.P.E.: 2D6 points. **I.S.P.:** None.

Gender: 01-50% Male, 51-100% Female.

Kinship to the Psychic: 01-50% Ancestor/family member. 51-100% No blood ties; an unrelated stranger.

Age (i.e., when the ghost died):

01-25% Child: 2D6+5 years old (reduce skill knowledge to 10 Secondary Skills).

26-50% Young Adult: 2D6+17 years old. Pick an occupation but reduce Elective Skills and Secondary Skills by half. Only 1D4 level.

51-75% Adult: 3D6+28 years old. Pick an occupation and the usual range of skills. 1D4+4 level.

76-100% Aged: 4D6+50 years old. Pick an occupation but reduce Elective Skills and Secondary Skills by half. 1D4+8 level.

Cause of Death: Whatever the cause, the spirit has come to terms with it and does not suffer any lingering trauma.

01-20% Natural causes, peaceful.

21-40% Accident.

41-70% Disease/illness.

71-85% War or violence.

86-100% Murder; deliberately killed or unjustly executed.

Nationality: That choice is the player's. Whatever the nationality the Spirit Guide communicates in the language of the Medium.

Time Line: When the Spirit Guide walked among the living.

01-30% Modern Day: Died only 5D6 years ago, within a generation or two (a generation is typically 20 years).

31-60% Turn of the century: Died 1D4x10+60 years ago.

61-90% Olden days: Died 1D6x100 years ago.

91-00% Ancient times: Died 1D4x1000 years ago.

Personality Traits:

01-10% Paternal, kind and caring.

11-20% Mentor/teacher type, but patient and kind.

21-30% Mentor/teacher type, but impatient and stern. Not bossy or mean, but there may be times when the Spirit Guide voices its frustration or disapproval.

31-40% Quiet and shy, but not afraid to speak his or her mind.

41-50% Positive and jovial; the glass is always *half full*.

51-60% Pragmatic and reserved, stoic even; the glass is often *half empty*.

61-70% Inquisitive and caring; likes a challenge, puzzles and new ideas and experiences. Encourages the same in its living partner.

71-80% A generous and kind people person (er, ghost) who likes to help others. Believes people (not things or personal reputation or reward) come first. Very empathic to the plight of his or her living partner and other people.

81-90% Artistic and sensitive. Enjoys life, creativity and beauty. Hates and is saddened by death, cruelty and ugliness.

91-00% Science and fact minded. Likes to see the proof/evidence and details. Doesn't trust strangers or practitioners of magic, but trusts his or her living partner completely (and vice versa).

Availability of the Spirit Guide. The Spirit Guide is usually present and accounted for 80% of the time, standing at the Psychic Medium's side or nearby. The Guide shares a similar alignment and outlook as the Medium, and both work toward the same goals. However, the ghost is sometimes *unavailable* or *unable* to offer advice, either because it doesn't know what to say or lacks a proper frame of reference. It may also *refuse* to speak or help when it is angry or disappointed with the Psychic Medium, at which point it seems to disappear and cannot be seen by the Medium. There are also times when the Spirit Guide vanishes for a period of time and just isn't available. Where it goes is unknown. The Spirit never says where it has been or what it was doing, only that it could not be at the psychic's side for a time. End of story. Similarly, there are times when the Spirit Guide will inform the Medium that it cannot accompany the character into a particular environment or situation, or that it is being held at bay, kept away by magic or supernatural forces. The Psychic Medium will have to proceed on his own, the Spirit Guide reappearing at his side when he exits the area protected from spirits. However, in all instances where the Spirit Guide is not talking or is otherwise unavailable, the Psychic Medium's paranormal abilities remain intact and operational. **Note:** Psychic Mediums feel less confident when their Spirit Guide is missing in action, and suffer a penalty of -10% to all skills and -1 on all saving throws.

Spirit's Link to the Physical World: The Medium is the ghost's connection to our physical world. If the Medium dies, the Spirit Guide vanishes.

Influence Over the Physical World: None! The Spirit Guide cannot touch, attack or influence the physical world. It is a shadow, a specter from the past. Nor can the Spirit Guide scout ahead, peek around corners, sneak under doors to see what's on the other side, or spy on others. It is always at the Medium's side and only sees and hears what the Medium experiences.

Friend and Mentor/"Guide": Fundamentally a guardian spirit, the Spirit Guide is usually (80% of the time) at the Medium's side, standing just behind or to the side of the Psychic Medium. Wherever the Psychic Medium goes the Spirit Guide follows right on his heels. Whatever the Medium experiences, the Spirit Guide bears witness. The Spirit Guide, regardless of its alignment, is completely loyal to the Psychic Medium though it will *not* lie or do anything contrary to its alignment. **Note:** Only its living partner, the Medium, can hear or see it. The term "partner" is used because man and spirit work in concert toward the same goals, and most Mediums consider their Guide to be a trusted friend and confidant.

As a mentor or life guide, the spirit's goal is to make the Medium a better person and realize his full potential. Thus, it never provides the Medium with answers and outright information, but *guides*, nudges, and encourages the character along life's paths to be a good person. It may offer advice, but more often than not, engages in philosophical discussion, speculation, and poses questions. Rather than point out specific things or tell the character what to do, it asks questions like, "What do you think," "Why would she do that," etc., or says things like, "That doesn't make sense to me," "That seems likely," or offers advice like, "You're thinking with your heart, not your head," or "You're not seeing the forest for the trees," or "Maybe you should go back to the scene of the crime," or "review the evidence, I think you're missing something," and sometimes offering its own ideas, "What if . . ." – but even then leaving the character to draw his own conclusions. The Spirit Guide may also take the role of the character's conscience or parent figure, "How could you say that, you owe so and so an apology," or "That's not like you, what are you thinking?" or "Are you sure you want to do that?" In fact, most discussions sound as if the character is talking to himself. ("Yep, you're right, that's something to consider. Or what about X? That's a possibility. Hmm, wait, is that what I think it is? It is. Then that can only mean Y, don't you agree?"). The Spirit Guide may communicate one on one, in dreams or by sending a blast of inspiration.

Dreams are when and where the Spirit Guide is most likely to appear in person and engage in friendly discussion and exchanges of ideas. Sometimes the Medium will remember the dream vividly, and other times he'll remember only a few key ideas or notions, and sometimes feel the gist of the discussion as inspiration or an idea.

Phantom Voice While Sleeping: The Spirit Guide can call its living partner's name or shout a single word or two or three ("Kevin!" Wake up," "Get out," "Fire," "Danger," "Demon," "Ghost," "Answer the phone," and similar) to wake the Psychic Medium up, alert him to something or to warn him of danger while he sleeps, dozes or daydreams. Only the Psychic Medium hears the call.

Random Thought: The Spirit Guide sometime pipes in with a random thought, "Yes, that's it." "No, that can't be right" "Slow

down.” “Be careful.” “What about the book?” “Think about what you’re saying.” “Stop it.” “Don’t do it.” And so forth. Only the Psychic Medium hears the words.

One on One Discussion: The Medium can verbally speak to the Spirit Guide at any time, but the spoken response from the ghost is heard only in the Medium’s mind. Furthermore, most Spirit Guides tend to avoid long, drawn out discussions, figuring the Medium should pay attention to his own thoughts and the living. Thus, the spirit always tries to stay in the background and make comments and suggestions when it is *most* needed. It’s all part of the mentoring process. As noted earlier, lengthy discussions may occur in a dream.

Special P.C.C. Abilities of the Medium

1. **See Other Spirit Guides.** A Psychic Medium can see or sense the presence of the Spirit Guides of other Mediums, though they can’t speak to them. Supposedly, this is because each Spirit Guide is linked to one specific individual, and is unable to communicate directly with any other living person. The ghost serves as the Psychic Medium’s direct link to the other side, and the Medium serves as the ghost’s direct link to the world of the living. A bond shared exclusively between those two beings. No I.S.P. cost.
2. **See & Communicate with Other Spirits.** The Psychic Medium’s link to the other side via his Spirit Guide enables the character to sense the presence of other Spirit Guides, ghosts and Entities. He can even see Entities when they are in their invisible energy form. This ability is automatic and does not require any special focus or concentration. If a pair of Poltergeists are playing in the room, he’ll sense them from outside (within 200 feet/61 m) and see them the moment he enters the room. Likewise, if a Haunting Entity (a sort of ghost) walks past the door, the Medium will see it in whatever manifestation the Entity has currently taken for itself.

Poltergeists will listen to the Psychic Medium like playful puppies and will obey him if told to behave or sent away to another part of the house or area. *Haunting Entities* are the most cooperative, and will speak to the Medium as if he were a long lost brother, telling him everything they know, though their information will be interlaced with their own tragic history, woes, fears and desires (which may enable the Psychic Medium to help them and free the Entities from their bondage on Earth). Extremely overwrought, hate-filled and evil Haunting Entities will speak to the Medium, but may refuse to help or only offer a tiny bit of helpful information. Some may even threaten the psychic and his comrades, but are likely to be more talk than action, because the creature will sense that the Medium can hurt them with his Spirit Strike.

Syphons, *Tectonic* and *Possessing Entities* will stop, listen and consider what a Psychic Medium has to say, but they are the most powerful and evil of the lot and are not compelled to obey or do anything asked of them. **Note:** The Psychic Medium can see a *Possessing Entity* when inside a host body as well as in its energy form. Other Spirits may also stop, listen and consider what a Medium has to say, but remain free to do as they will. No I.S.P. cost to see or communicate with spirits.

3. **Spirit Channeling/Seance.** This ability is reminiscent of possession in that an Entity, spirit or splintered life essence of an

Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence enters the Medium’s body to communicate with humans. It is distinctly different, however, because the Medium willingly allows himself to be used as a vessel for communication, the possessing force can use the body to point or flail around but cannot actually attack anyone, and the possession is always temporary, seldom lasting more than 10 minutes.

To channel, the Psychic Medium goes into a light trance (requires 1D4+1 melee rounds of preparation) and opens himself to become a living conduit through which spirits and energy beings may enter his body and use it to communicate with the living. The spirits can sense this opportunity and are attracted to the open vessel. A spirit may be friendly and cooperative, mean and belligerent, cocky and snide, spiteful or helpful. Good or needy spirits (the latter are in need of help from the living) may answer questions truthfully and genuinely try to help, but malevolent spirits may twist the truth, lie, mislead, mock or threaten.

To attract a specific spirit, the Medium softly speaks the name or basic identity of the spirit with whom contact is desired as if it were a mantra (i.e., “Fred Bishop, Fred Bishop, Fred Bishop,” or “the spirit of the sad little girl,” etc.) and waits (1D6 melee rounds). Meanwhile, the other participants should also concentrate on making contact with the ghost. The more positive and unified the group is, the better the chances of contact. A Nega-Psychic in the group is likely to keep spirits at bay.

Spirits are unused to speaking and being heard by the living, thus, they do not usually lead the conversation and wait to be asked questions by those involved in the seance. The Medium can’t ask questions because he is the vessel through which the spirit speaks, so others must do the questioning. Only one person should speak at a time, and the more specific and to the point the better. If several people talk at once, the ghost becomes confused and frustrated, and it may leave without saying much of anything. Likewise, even a rude or nasty spirit should not be insulted or it is likely to vacate the Medium before it has provided the information it may know.

Note: Just because contact is made with a spirit, it doesn’t mean the spirit has the information the player characters seek or that it will understand what they want of it. More than one spirit may be attracted to an open Medium (think of the spirits as being moths and the Medium being a flame), and a stronger, more aggressive spirit may chase another spirit out of the Medium’s body so it may speak. Consequently, it is not uncommon to have 1D4 spirits speak through a Medium during a seance. Sometimes that’s hard to tell because the spirits don’t usually identify themselves.

Duration of Contact: 1D6+2 minutes before the Entity/spirit pulls back its energy.

Success Ratio: 60% +3% per level of experience, +20% if the spirit desires to communicate. Penalties: -20% if the spirit is reluctant or unwilling, -5% for each skeptic or participant who does not want to make contact, -20% for each Nega-Psychic in the group or within range of his negative influence.

Requirements & Restrictions: One Psychic Medium to open himself to the spirit world, and at least one person to ask the questions, but may accommodate as many as 12 people in the

actual seance group and there can be an audience of as many as 5000 people provided there aren't any (or many) Nega-Psychics around. The Medium can only perform Psychic Channeling *once* for each level of experience per 24 hour time period, and needs a short, 5-10 minute break between each experience to rest and recover his energy.

I.S.P.: 5

4. **Auditory Reading:** Emotions, experiences, and trauma leave an invisible, psychic impression on physical places like an invisible afterimage, psychic scar or imprint visible only to certain types of psychics. Some supernatural beings, like the Haunting Entity, can sense these impressions in a profound way, are attracted to them like flies to honey and assume one of the strongest personalities and reenact one of the more profound/dramatic events. The Psychic Medium can also pick up on little snippets of information from the past by entering into an Auditory Trance and hearing it for himself.

An Auditory Reading lets the Medium tune in to the psychic vibrations of a room or small area. The entire experience takes 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds), though it usually seems more like 2-5 minutes to the psychic. The trance momentarily shuts out the rest of the world as the Psychic Medium hears a cacophony of sound rushing past him as if someone were fast forwarding an audio tape. Most of the sounds are muffled, pushed into the background and are mostly indistinguishable. The Psychic Medium might be able to recognize laughter, voices speaking, the sounds of a party, a television in the background, a dog barking, birds chirping, a thunderstorm, and similar sounds, but cannot actually hear the words being spoken, until one particular sound, phrase, sentence or brief exchange stands out like a cannon blast.

The identifiable sound(s) could be a gunshot, crying, glass breaking, or a scream to actual *words*. Whatever the sound is, the Medium knows it is always an important clue to what happened, who died, who committed the evil act, where it happened, why it happened, where the victim or perpetrator might currently be located, and similar. The Medium may also get a sensation of anger, fear, hate, joy, love, concern, etc., but not always (G.M.'s discretion).

The name, word, phrase or sound is always information not yet known, providing a new clue/lead, or filling in a missing piece of the puzzle ("Carolyn," "Kent," "upstairs," "outside," "Mike's," "Chicago," etc.). A phrase or sentence may indicate even more, including time, motive, or unknown details. ("Frank, it's 1:15, we have to go," "open the safe," "Randy, what are you doing?" "give me the book," "you shouldn't have threatened Tony," "never double-cross the Consortium," "I'm calling the police," and so on.) **Note:** Words are always heard in the voice of the person who spoke them, which may be a clue all by itself, indicating the person's gender, emotional state, general age, ethnicity (via accent), and similar. The Medium will also hear and remember any significant background noise, like voices or crying, or the crash of breaking glass, the chime of a clock or church bells, geese outside, gasping for air, a body hitting the floor, and so on. All of which may provide additional clues to what happened.

The Medium remembers the sounds and words clearly and correctly, so a phrase will not be forgotten or jumbled, and

the psychic *may* recognize the voice or sound he heard in the trance the instant he hears it again while in the real world. The recollection is so vivid that the Medium has a 01-80% chance to recognize the specific voice (or sound) if he hears it again within the next 96 hours, +15% if the voice happens to speak the exact same word(s) or a very similar phrase, or is a threat directed at the Medium. The character must hear the words himself to recognize them.

Success ratio based on the passage of time: 94% for events that occurred within the last 48 hours, -10% for events within the last two weeks, -20% for events of the last two months, -30% for events of the last two years, -40% for events of the last two decades, -60% for events that occurred in the last two centuries, and -80% for events that happened in the last two thousand years. A specific person, event or time must be part of the focus, such as trying to discover what happened when so and so was attacked or murdered, and the more recent the event/incident/time period, the better the result.

I.S.P.: 4.

Limitations: 1) A successful Auditory Reading provides the Medium all there is to learn. Additional readings only repeat the same thing. A different Psychic Medium can try his luck, but if he too is focused on the same person, same event or same time-line, he is likely to get the same sound bite/clue. Failure to get a reading means the Medium may try again, but he must wait at least 12 hours. Other Psychic P.C.C.s can try using their different abilities to get additional clues and insight.

2) An Auditory Reading is limited to one specific room or area such as the front or back porch, basement, attic, patio, backyard, the south end of a parking lot or construction site, a specific street corner, the scene of the crime, an automobile (must be inside it), etc.

3) Only the Psychic Medium hears the sounds or words.



5. **Olfactory Symbols & Omens:** Scientists agree that the sense of smell is strongly tied to memory and recollection. A particular smell might remind you of Grandma's house and unleash a torrent of fond memories and warm emotions. The smell of antiseptic mingled with blood might remind you of the intensive care unit or the death of a loved one. Meanwhile, the aroma of fresh baked bread might remind you of the bakery you passed every day on the way to school or of mom's home cooking.

The Psychic Medium's link to his Spirit Guide provides the character with additional information, clues and warnings through the character's sense of smell, but not ordinary smells, these are *phantom odors* that hold special meanings.

Phantom odors do not occur on a regular or constant basis. Phantom odors only happen when the Psychic Medium is

concentrating on a specific problem, he spends two I.S.P., and is actively searching for clues. If the phantom odor is strong, the danger is immediate or a supernatural presence close at hand. A slight smell is likely to indicate a presence or involvement of the supernatural in the past.

I.S.P.: 3. Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

Note: Phantom smells *may* also occur as an *automatic warning system* (at no I.S.P. cost) to alert the character to immediate danger from supernatural evil or magic.

Notable Phantom Odors: Each smell symbolizes a specific good or bad, happy or sad, innocent or deadly situation.

Alyssum: A little white flower, symbolizing life and purity.

Apple or Fruity: Goodness, sweet, tasty, desire.

Baby Smell/Baby Powder: Human birth, infant or young child.

Baked Bread: Hearth and home, and comfort.

Chamomile: Healing/recovery.

Chemical Smell: Sanitized, hospital, and sickness.

Cinnamon: Good fortune, on the right track.

Citrus: Natural freshness and cleanliness.

Coffee: Morning, starting the day. A strong or burnt coffee smell represents a long workday, staying awake, sleeplessness.

Cut Grass: Summertime and goodness.

Diesel Exhaust: Big cities.

Lilac & Blossoms (apple, cherry): Springtime and rebirth.

Musty: Ancient or forgotten.

Peppermint: Freshness and the wind.

Roses: Love, family, closeness and happiness.

Sweat/Body Odor: Hard labor or confinement.

Vanilla: Cooking, warmth and prosperity.

Wood Burning: Purification through fire (a lighter smell, hickory or pine, perhaps), or destruction by burning if a heavy, smoky smell.

Olfactory Omens of the Supernatural: The phantom smell marks the creature's passage or that it was involved or present at a specific event. A strong phantom odor appears, at no I.S.P. cost, automatically to warn a Medium when a supernatural being is close by, within 60 feet (18.3 m), but it could be outside, upstairs, on the roof, etc. The odor also automatically appears at no cost when inside a creature's *lair* and makes the Medium cough (-2 on Perception Rolls and Initiative while in the lair).

Charcoal or Coal Burning: Fire-based supernatural being or Elemental.

Damp Earth: Earth Elemental or earth-based supernatural spirit.

Feces/Excrement: Deevils, Lesser and Greater.

Garlic: Vampires/the undead.

Incense (light): A smoky perfume smell that indicates ghosts and Entities that are not an immediate threat or danger (includes Poltergeists and Haunting Entities).

Incense (heavy): A smoky perfume smell that symbolizes wicked ghosts and Entities that hurt people (includes Syphons, Possessing Entities, etc.; Tectonic Entities have a *metallic* odor).

Machine Oil and/or Burning Wire/Plastic: Gremlins.

Musk: Were-Beasts and other Supernatural Predators.

Ocean/Sea (has a tinge of salt to it): Water Elemental or water-based supernatural spirit.

Onions: Caution, something is not right, beware.

Ozone: Indicates the use of magic; especially strong when dimensional portals and Teleportation are involved, but may also indicate an Alien Intelligence or Sowki.

Rotting Human Flesh: Murder, death and corpses.

Rotting Meat/Dead Animal: Ghouls (including the Dybbuk, Dimensional Ghoul and Grave Ghoul), but also the Nacarant.

Skunk: A bad omen, turn back, go away.

Sour Milk: Warns of evil and Witchery.

Sulfur/Brimstone/Rotten Egg: Greater Demons and Ancient Evil.

Urine (cat urine specifically): Lesser Demons.

Wet Dog (stinky): Hell Hounds.

- 6. Spirit Strike:** The Psychic Medium not only sees and communes with invisible spirits and energy beings, but can attack them as well. To attack, the Medium must will his inner strength to produce a damaging energy that can touch spirits. Each touch, punch, kick, or attack with any type of handheld melee weapon (club, knife, sword, chair, etc.) can hit the otherwise ethereal energy being and inflict damage. The energy of the Spirit Strike can also be released as an *energy blast*, but such a ranged attack does half damage and has a limited range of 15 feet (4.6 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience starting at level two.

Damage (Touch): 2D6 points +1 per level of experience (half as an energy blast or when used on demons and other supernatural beings in physical form). Damage is direct to Hit Points and affects even the splintered essence or avatar of an Alien Intelligence. No effect on mortals or creatures of magic.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 10

- 7. Hear Death Rattle.** The Psychic Medium can hear the *death rattle* of the dying. The Medium starts hearing the death rattle one minute before the individual expires, so he knows the person is about to die, and knows that when the sound stops, the person is dead. Only exceptional means (immediate medical intervention, heart massage, CPR, etc.) *may* bring a character from his deathbed back to the living, depending on the injury, available medical help and circumstance. No I.S.P. cost; hears the Death Rattle whether the Medium wants to or not, provided the character is within range (50 feet/15.2 m). Also hears the wail of the Banshee as if it were a siren up to a half mile (0.8 km) away.

- 8. Object Read the Dead.** The Medium can touch the remains of a body (whole or part) and know the person's first name, gender, age, cause of death (disease, suicide, murder, etc.), and whether or not the supernatural was involved, actually seeing the face of the creature responsible. Takes one melee round to get this info. +10% bonus to summon this spirit later in a seance.

I.S.P.: 5

Psychic Medium P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute Bonuses: +2 to M.E. or M.A. (pick one).

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses):

Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +1 on initiative, +3 to save vs illusions, +1 to save vs all types of mind control, +2 to Perception Rolls, +2 to save vs Horror Factor (+6 when it is a spirit/ghost), and is *impervious* to all forms of possession. Never bothered by Poltergeist or Haunting Entities.

Neither completely Opened or Closed to the Supernatural.

Open enough to commune with spirits, and able to sense certain things.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D4+1; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on psychic abilities and skills.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 2D6 +2 per level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x8) Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.



Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics, but not all. *Total relaxation* or *sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is an automatic ability of the Medium and a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation; no I.S.P. cost to perform.

Selecting Physical Psychic Abilities: The Psychic Medium's abilities have to do with the dead, the past and the Spirit Guide, *all* described under this P.C.C. The character does not get any additional psychic powers or abilities.

Occupation: Any, but lean toward scholarly occupations and those that involve investigation; many are Professional Psychics.

Common Skills: All.

Skill Bonus: Two additional skills from Paranormal Studies or Rogue (+5%), and one additional Secondary Skill.

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D4 year old car, SUV or van, cell phone, personal computer with monitor and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR or DVD player (also back home), backpack or duffle bag, large flashlight, small flashlight, wristwatch, digital camera, tape recorder and 1D6+6 tapes (often tapes seances and records notes), pocket notebook and 1D4 pens, a mechanical pencil and 24 replacement leads, sunglasses, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, two suits, some personal items, a cross or other holy symbol as a necklace and a pocket-sized cross (six inches/15 cm).

One simple melee weapon like a baseball bat (1D8 damage), axe handle/wooden club (1D8 damage), crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or one revolver or pistol (typical damage: 3D6 or 4D6). G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$550 a month. Utilities are extra.

2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation: See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation or if a Professional Psychic: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.



Psychic Sensitive P.C.C.

"I can't escape it, Mr. Sheridan. A Psychic Sensitive's Third Eye is so wide open we can never escape the supernatural. We feel every little sensation. Even if you try to hole up in your home, the paranormal world reaches in to rattle your psyche and demand your attention."

"I'm not sure I understand," said the reporter.

"It's simple. Once a Psychic Sensitive opens up to the supernatural, he can't close himself again. It's like a window that's stuck wide open. That open window's not so bad on a sunny, summer day, but it's a nightmare when the rain, sleet, winter's snow and icy wind, all come pouring in. And because you can't ever close the damn window, you just have to put up with a pile of snow in your front room."

"Um . . . okay."

"What I'm trying to say is that a Psychic Sensitive can't hide from the world around him. He's constantly awash with sensations, warnings, visions and feelings that are impossible to ignore. When a demonic being enters my range of psychic senses I

don't just know about it like a pop up message on a website, I feel it. Its presence cuts through me like an icy wind, and its evil wells up inside my stomach like bile. My skin crawls and no matter how loud I turn up my television I can still hear its footsteps and feel its sick desires. I find myself awash in emotions and sensations that are so base and revolting that they make 'me' feel filthy and violated just sharing them for an instant. These demonic beings know no shame and make no effort to hide their vile and wicked nature. It's impossible to ignore a menace so utterly evil and all consuming, especially when you realize that everyone around you is blissfully unaware. It's like watching a train wreck, but I'm the only one who sees it unfolding. Everyone else just stands in its path, oblivious to the horror racing toward them. I can't just walk away, because people will die. I can't just stand helpless and watch either, and even if I did, I would feel the agony of the victims mangled under the wheels of destruction. So I try to make a difference. I try to pull people out of the path of destruction, even though they fight me all the way to safety. Or I try to derail the train before it can crush those in its path, or destroy it first. And because I, better than anyone, know how terrible the creature is, it is my turn to feel no regret for ending its abysmal existence. Like I said, it's really not much of a choice, I do what I can. On a good day I save lives or allay fears. On a bad day . . . you know, you try not to think about the bad days."

The **Psychic Sensitive** has the mixed blessing of psychic insight – to see and feel the world as few of us ever will. This individual can sense the presence of others, feel evil, see the invisible, glimpse the future and ride the Astral Plane. He is blessed with expanded senses that make him keenly aware of the natural and supernatural world around him. Thus, the character tends to be extremely observant, alert, open-minded and inquisitive. However, that same awareness also reveals the dark and evil forces that stalk the unsuspecting. This instills the character with a discreet vigilance, caution and heedfulness. Better than any other psychic class, the Sensitive is aware that there are many aspects of our existence which people can't explain and science does not yet understand. That there are indeed creatures befitting the name *demons* and *monsters* that prey upon human beings the same as a wolf preys upon a rabbit.

The Sensitive has a greatly enhanced perception of energy and forces that most normal people can not see or understand. It is a heightened sensitivity to the unknown that the Tibetan wise men call "the Third Eye." A figurative representation of the Sensitive's ability to "see" what others cannot. Actually, this is a very apt analogy, for the Psychic Sensitive can, indeed, glimpse into the world of the supernatural. They can feel the presence of evil, just as you or I can feel the wind. The stench of evil is as tangible as the smell of rotten eggs, the aura of magic an unmistakable light flickering in darkness, the human spirit (complete with its emotions and intellect) as real yet intangible as water flowing through your fingers. These extra senses enable the Psychic Sensitive to understand, see, feel and track supernatural forces better than any other P.C.C. They also make them potentially the most important and most fragile of the psychic character classes, often targeted by supernatural forces who fear their power to see them for what they really are.

The psionic powers of the Psychic Sensitive are all relegated to mental, sensory and information gathering type capabilities.

The Psychic Sensitive is not unlike a living, human, sensory receptacle that can pick up, pinpoint, interpret, recognize and understand supernatural transmissions and energies. None of the Psychic Sensitive's powers have any extensions in the physical world. That is to say, they do not directly influence physical matter. The psychic cannot make a coin dance across a table, close a wound, make a candle's flame turn into a fire bolt or a machine obey his will. Such powers are manifestations of mental energy turned outward to touch the physical world. The Psychic Sensitive's powers are turned *inward*, drawing energy to him and making the psychic a receiver of psychic emanations, emotions, thoughts and sensations. In short, the open sensitivity of this character enables him to see, sense and know things that should be impossible.

Special Sensitive P.C.C. Abilities

1. Sense Supernatural Evil. The Psychic Sensitive is keenly aware of the world around him, thus, he or she feels or senses any major disturbances nearby. One such disturbance is the presence of supernatural evil. All supernatural beings radiate their alignment, most are evil. The Sensitive can feel that evil like an icy chill cutting through him and taste their vile thoughts like vomit. The sensation is unmistakable, costs no I.S.P., and is automatic, meaning the character does not have to open himself, nor be actively try to sense anything. The evil washes over the character, warning him like an alarm that supernatural evil is present. Range: Senses any supernatural evil within a 300 foot (91.5 m) radius +50 feet (15.2 m) per additional level of experience starting with level two. However, the sensation is very general. The location and nature of the evil is unknown. To identify the cause and pinpoint its source, the psychic must *open* himself and use the "Sense Evil" psi-power. No I.S.P. cost.

2. Opening Oneself to the Supernatural. The root of the Psychic Sensitive's power is his inquisitive mind and willingness to drop his natural mental and emotional defenses to satisfy that curiosity. By opening himself, the psychic enlarges his picture of the world and feels the forces at play within it. In an *open state*, the character can continue to Sense Supernatural Evil as described previously, but also other sensations. He can "feel" large fluxes of energy, magic power, P.P.E. (20 P.P.E. or more), the opening of dimensional portals, the arrival of Ancient Evil, the flow of ley line energy, electromagnetic energy, electrical energy and the general location of intersecting underwater streams (a ley line related energy). Range: 600 foot radius (183 m), +100 feet (30.5 m) per additional level of experience starting with level two. No I.S.P. cost.

The psychic must *open himself* to use any of his sensory abilities, including: Empathy, Clairvoyance, Object Read, Sense Evil, See Aura, Sixth Sense and Telepathy. To close oneself off is like putting on a gas mask and then trying to smell an aroma in the air. To experience and identify the smell, the gas mask must be removed and the aroma breathed deeply. Likewise, the Psychic Sensitive must let down his guard to experience psychic sensations/emanations and insight. Of course, the risk of removing the protective psychic defenses means the character is vulnerable to the very forces he hopes to breathe in and identify.

- The very act of opening up requires concentration, just as you might have to focus your full attention to identify an unusual smell, and even more concentration to pinpoint its place of origin. When a Psychic Sensitive opens himself to paranormal vibrations, he must concentrate, sometimes lapsing into a semi-trance state. His psychic sense, or "Third Eye," is then able to see and feel sensations that momentarily overwhelm the other five senses. Reaction time and awareness are reduced, just as it may take you a moment to realize someone is talking to you when you are deep in thought. Consequently, the character loses any chance for initiative and forfeits one attack/action per melee when in sensing mode. However, he is +3 on Perception Rolls involving the supernatural, the paranormal or any specific focus. **Note:** When open to supernatural evil, the character can follow the energy and sensations of the evil and trace them to wherever the creature is located, provided it is within range. If a distance away, or in a building with many rooms, it could take the Sensitive a while to track the fiend. And just as the psychic can sense he is getting closer to it, an intelligent supernatural being can sense that the psychic is closing in, and will have time to hide, prepare an ambush or an escape, or be prepared for trouble.
- Opening to the paranormal means intentionally lowering one's natural defenses and becoming a potential target for psionic attacks. No bonuses to save vs psychic attack apply when in sensing mode, but the psychic still gets to save on a roll of 10 or higher. Thankfully, demonic possession is an exception, and the Psychic Sensitive has his full range of bonuses to save against possession by a supernatural force.
- Sensitivity to the supernatural is a *two-way* street and it is only a matter of time before the inhuman creature senses the presence of the Psychic Sensitive! Since the Sensitive is likely to be the only person to identify, see and locate a supernatural being, he is also regarded as a natural enemy and likely to be one of the first people targeted by intelligent beings. Players will be wise to remember this and take measures to protect the Psychic Sensitive in their group.
- 3. Recognizes Possession.** The Sensitive can recognize when a human or animal is possessed. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per each additional level of experience.
- 4. Recognizes Magic Enchantment.** The psychic can feel strong magic energies and can tell if they are intended for good or evil. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per each additional level of experience, +10% if the magic is evil/hurtful and +20% when a magic item is possessed by an evil supernatural being.

Psychic Sensitive P.C.C.

Alignment: Any, but heroic characters tend to be one of the good alignments (Principled or Scrupulous), reluctant heroes (Unprincipled) or daring doers (Anarchist).

Attributes: Standard 3D6 determination; see Character Creation in the rules section.

Attribute Bonuses: +1D4 to M.E. and +1D4 to I.Q. or P.E. (pick one).

P.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psychic attacks, +3 on Per-

ception Rolls, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs possession, +1 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs mind altering drugs, magical charms and mental confusion.

P.C.C. Limitations and Penalties: *Open to the Supernatural.*

Described above. -2 to save vs illusions, Hypnotic Suggestion, Telepathy, Empathy, Empathic Transmission and similar Telepathic and Empathic probes and attacks. Each use of a psionic ability counts as one of the character's melee attacks or actions. **Note:** Cannot shield his presence from the supernatural unless a Mind Block is up, but when the Block is in place the Sensitive cannot use any of his psi-sensory abilities.

P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) Points: Roll 1D6; most of the character's P.P.E. has been spent on his psychic abilities.

I.S.P. (Psychic Inner Strength) Points: 1D6+6 at level one, and +2 per each additional level of experience. (x2, x4, x6, x12) The multipliers in parentheses indicate the level of increased I.S.P. depending on the supernatural threat. The greater the threat, the higher the I.S.P.

Every time a psychic power is used, the character expends a certain amount of I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points). Each specific power will indicate exactly how many I.S.P. are needed to perform that ability, how long it lasts, damage, range, effect, etc. When the psychic has exhausted all of his or her I.S.P., sleep or meditation is required to regain the temporarily expended I.S.P. No available I.S.P. means the character cannot use any psychic abilities that require I.S.P. to activate.

Recovering I.S.P.: The recovery of I.S.P. is a natural process and is the same for most psychics. *Total relaxation or sleep* will restore *one I.S.P.* per each full hour of uninterrupted rest. *Meditation* is a superior form of relaxation and alignment of mind and body, thus, it restores *two I.S.P.* per thirty minutes of meditation. The recovery of I.S.P. through meditation and sleep is an automatic process and costs no I.S.P. to perform, only time and focus. The Sensitive Psychic is one of the rare P.C.C.s to automatically get the *Meditation* ability. *Advanced Meditation*, however, is a practiced ability that must be *selected* in order for the character to possess it.

Selecting Psychic Sensitive Abilities: Psi-powers for this character include the Special P.C.C. Abilities listed previously, plus *Meditation: Advanced, Empathy*, and 1D6+5 additional Psychic Sensitive abilities at level one. Gets one additional Psychic Sensitive ability per level of advancement, starting at second level.

Occupation: Any, though most Sensitives lean toward work that involves medicine, counseling, helping or protecting others, and creative occupations (artist, writer, entertainer, etc.). A good number are Professional Psychics and Psychic Investigators. Most are extremely open-minded, curious, compassionate and respectful of others.

Common Skills: All.

Skill Bonus: Lore: Demons and Monsters (+20%; or one of choice if this skill is available as an occupational skill).

Standard P.C.C. Equipment: Basic gear to start. 1D6 year old sports car, van, SUV or pickup truck, cell phone, laptop computer and printer, high-speed internet connection (but it is at home), cable or satellite TV and VCR player or TiVo (back home and/or at the office), backpack or duffle bag, large

flashlight, small flashlight, disposable cigarette lighter, tape recorder and 1D6+6 tapes, a small good quality digital camera, first aid kit, a pair of sunglasses, a box of 100 plastic gloves, jacket, basic wardrobe, some dress clothes, one suit, some personal items, pocket mirror, a silver cross or other holy symbol worn as a necklace, a pocket-sized silver holy symbol (six inches/15 cm), and 1D6 vials of holy water.

Melee weapons: A silver-plated dagger (1D6 damage; double to creatures vulnerable to silver), a wooden club like a baseball bat (1D8 damage) or axe handle (1D8 damage; double damage to creatures vulnerable to wood), 1D6+1 wooden stakes and a mallet, crowbar/length of pipe (2D6 damage), large shovel (1D8 damage), hammer (2D4 damage), length of chain (2D4 damage) or knife (1D6 damage).

One modern weapon: Hunting rifle (typical damage: 7D6) or a revolver or pistol (typical damage: 4D6), including 48 silver bullets. G.M.s note that most average citizens can NOT carry a concealed weapon (revolver or pistol) without a permit on file with the police. Only a few States in the USA allow their citizens to "carry" a weapon for purposes other than hunting and sports/target shooting.

Note: Weapons and equipment are probably kept in the trunk of his car, at least when participating in an active investigation.

Housing: Pick one: 1) A two bedroom apartment or flat (the upstairs or downstairs of a house) in a rundown part of town for a cost of \$600 a month. Utilities are extra.

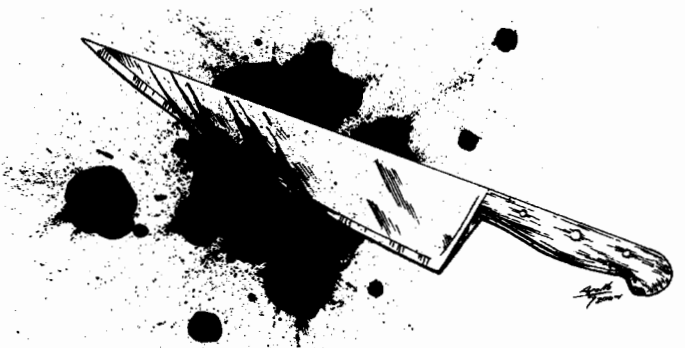
2) A two bedroom apartment or flat in a blue collar neighborhood that is well kept and safe for a cost of \$750 a month. Utilities are extra.

3) A two bedroom apartment or flat in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$1000 a month. Utilities are extra.

4) A roomy, three bedroom, luxury apartment, condo, duplex, or a house in an upscale part of town for a cost of \$2500 a month. Utilities are extra.

Pay: Varies with occupation: See descriptions of occupations in the rules and background section.

Money in Savings: Highly skilled occupation: 2D6x\$1000. Moderately skilled occupation: 1D6x\$1000. Unskilled: 6D6x\$100.



Psionic Descriptions

Note: The number in parenthesis indicates the amount of I.S.P. needed to use that power.

Fire Walker/Pyrokinetic

Alter Air Temperature (8)	Impervious to Fire (6)
Burnt Offering (15)	Impervious to Smoke (4)
Burnt Message (4-8)	Incinerate Paper (5)
Burst of Light (4)	Meditation (0)
Circle of Fire (15)	Part Fire (8)
Create Fire (6)	Self-Combustion (12)
Draw Fire (8)	Set Supernatural Ablaze (25)
Eat Fire (3)	Shed Light (4)
Extinguish Fire (5)	Smoke Signal (4)
Fire Bolt (10)	Snatch Fire (2)
Fire Omen (7)	Spontaneous Combustion (4)
Fire Walk (2)	Steam Blast (5)
Fuel Flame (3)	Thermal Imaging Vision (6)
Heat Point Focus (5)	Throw Fire (7)

Healing

Attack Disease (12)	Meditation, Advanced (2)
Bio-Regeneration (Self; 6)	Mind Block (4)
Coma Consciousness (3)	Psychic Diagnosis (4)
Cure Insanity (Temporary; 15)	Psychic Purification (8)
Deaden Pain (4)	Psychic Surgery (7+)
Detect Psionics (6)	Resist Fatigue (4)
Exorcism (10)	Restore P.P.E. (4)
Healing Touch (6)	Stop Bleeding (Self; 2)
Increased Healing (10)	Stop Bleeding (Others; 4)
Induce Sleep (4)	Suppress Fear (8)
Medicinal Hypnosis (2-4)	
Meditation (0)	

Machine Psionics/Psi-Mechanic

Bend Metal (3-8)	Open Lock (6)
Charge Battery (6)	Psychic Repair (20)
Electrokinesis (varies)	Telekinetic Bullets (20)
Energy Conduit (10)	Telemechanics (10)
Living Battery (4+)	Telemechanic Mental Operation (12)
Machine Activation (5)	Telemechanic Paralysis (20)
Machine Psychic Diagnosis (5)	Telemechanic Possession (50)
Mental Electronic Messaging (6)	Thoughtography (6)

Physical

Alter Aura (2)
Biofeedback (8)
Bio-Stasis Trance (5)
Deaden Senses (4)
Death Trance (1)
Demon Punch (6)
Dessication Touch (20)
Ectoplasm (6 or 12)
Ectoplasmic Disguise (12)
Electrokinesis (varies)
Hydrokinesis (varies)
Impervious to Cold (2)
Impervious to Fire (4)
Impervious to Poison (4)
Leidenfrost Effect (2)
Levitation (varies)
Meditation, Advanced (2)
Mind Block (4)
Nightvision (4)
Resist Fatigue (4)
Resist Hunger (2)
Resist Pain (6)
Resist Thirst (6)
Rope Trick (4)
Stop Bleeding (4)
Summon Inner Strength (4)
Telekinesis (varies)
Telekinetic Leap (8)
Telekinetic Lift (7)
Telekinetic Punch (6)
Telekinetic Push (4)

Sensitive

Astral Projection (10)
Clairvoyance (6)
Commune with Spirits (6)
Dispel Spirits (10)
Empathy (4)
Group Mind Block (22)
Group Trance (15)
Hypnotic Suggestion (6)
Mask I.S.P. & Psionics (5)
Mask P.P.E. (4)
Meditation (0)
Meditation, Advanced (2)
Mind Block (4)
Mind Block Auto-Defense (special)
Mind Bolt (varies)
Mind Bond (10)
Mind Wipe (special)
Object Read (6)
P.P.E. Shield (10)
Precognition (8)
Presence Sense (4)
Psychic Invisibility (12)
Psychic Literacy (7)
Read Dimensional Portal (6)
Remote Viewing (20)
See Aura (6)
See the Invisible (4)
Sense Dimensional Anomaly (4)
Sense Evil (2)
Sense Magic (3)
Sense Time (2)
Sixth Sense (2)
Speed Reading (2)
Telepathy (4)
Telepathic Projection (4 or 12)
Thought-Reading (10)
Total Recall (3)

Fire Walker

Pyrokinetic Abilities

Alter Air Temperature

Range: 20 foot (6.1 m) radius around the psychic or up to 30 feet (9.1 m) away.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 8

The Fire Walker can reduce or increase the air temperature of a given area by five degrees Fahrenheit (2.8 Celsius) every melee round up to 30 degrees (16.7 C) one way or another and maintain the desired temperature for several minutes. This can make conditions sweltering or freezing to chase people away, create a distraction, fake a cold spot, etc., or to make an area more comfortable or even survivable. **Note:** If the temperature around the character is altered, then the Fire Walker feels the effects along with everyone else.

Burnt Offering

Range: Immediate area; must be in the presence or near the presence of the being to which the offering is being made (100 foot/30.5 m radius).

Duration: A 2-6 minute ritual or mock ritual with results that could last minutes, hours, days or permanently.

I.S.P.: 15

The Fire Walker has an ability that borders on the mystical, to burn offerings made to spirits in an attempt to appease them. The scope of this power is limited but can be effective, particularly when dealing with Entities, Ghostly spirits, Scurriers, Stealers and Supernatural Predators. The Fire Walker can often appease a Haunting Entity and similar ghosts by finding and burning an object that represents the emotional *link* that binds the spirit to the Earth. This could be a photograph of a lost loved one or an enemy, a toy, a favorite book or object, and so on. The Fire Walker needs to make an impassioned ceremony about how this act will free the spirit (a 2-6 minute long presentation should do the trick and other characters can add to the mock "event") and then burn it, saying something like, "as the smoke from this object rises to the heavens, so may your soul be set free." Nine out of ten times the *Haunting Entity/Ghost* or angry spirit is released and set free, returning to its natural dimension! This should also work on Poltergeists and other types of spirits, including various *Nature Spirits* (though grain, fruit, flower petals, incense, a certain wood, and similar things must be burned) and *Banshees* (must burn the bones of an animal or human).

Likewise, burning the bone or skull of a human or animal will make restless or hostile *Grave Ghouls* calm and docile (stop causing trouble for at least 1D4x10 days), burning money (at least \$100) will calm and perhaps earn the cooperation of an *Imp* (at least for a day or two), burning a wooden cross will silence a Banshee for one night and hold *Zombies*, *Animated Dead* and *Undead/Vampires* (except the Master Vampire and the Alien Intelligence that spawned them) at bay (100 yards/meters, at least until the cross stops burning; the larger the cross, the longer it burns), and burning other items in specific magic or

religious ceremonies may keep away or send away other dark spirits and lesser supernatural beings. Such "burned offerings" can be found in legends, myths, lore and tomes on monsters, faeries and magic.

Burnt Message

Range: Touch or by motion (writing in the air) to mark an object up to 20 feet (6.1 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: As permanent as the medium inscribed.

I.S.P.: 4 I.S.P. for letters or markings smaller than four inches (10 cm) tall, or 8 I.S.P. for letters or markings 6-12 inches (15-30 cm) tall, say burned into wallpaper or wood paneling or a door.

The Fire Walker can inscribe wood, paper, fabric and other combustible materials with writing that appears to have been written with a soldering iron or hot poker, the words actually burned or charred into the material (ruining the item). This is usually done for dramatic effect or to leave a marker (an arrow pointing the way, an X marking the spot, a line, a circle, a simple insignia or symbol), word, name or short phrase (no more than six words).

Burst of Light

Range: Touch or up to six feet (1.8 m) away; line of sight. Area of effect is 12 feet (3.6 m). Anyone caught in the flash is affected.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: Victims need to roll a 17 or higher to save.

I.S.P.: 4

The psychic can make any source of existing fire, as small as a candle's flame, explode into a blinding burst of light. Everyone caught in the flash is blinded (-10 to strike, parry, dodge and other combat rolls) for one melee round.

The flash extinguishes tiny fires like candles and oil lanterns, but has no significant effect on a bonfire or fireplace.

Circle of Fire

Range: Touch.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 15

An impressive ability that only becomes available at x4 Threat Level or higher. The Fire Walker can create a circle of fire by tracing his finger along the ground or floor. The fire is only one foot (0.3 m) high and does not cause the floor or grass it is on to burn, but when another human or a supernatural being comes within a couple of feet (0.6 m) of the circle, the flames shoot up to six feet (1.8 m) tall as a warning. Stepping through the flame in any way does considerable damage to the individual. Has no effect or damage on energy beings, ghosts or Astral beings.

Damage: 3D6 to humans, 1D6x10 to the supernatural and creatures of magic (double damage to creatures vulnerable to fire).

Create Fire

Range: Touch. At fourth level the Fire Walker can make fire appear up to 10 feet (3 m) away; line of vision.

Duration: The flame lasts for a few seconds without a wick or fuel to burn.

I.S.P.: 6

The psychic creates a small tongue of fire the size of a candle's flame. The small fire needs combustible material to keep it lit and burning or it will go out in a matter of a 1D6+1 seconds. Great for lighting candles, cigarettes, and starting campfires.

Damage: None until it grows and spreads. Growing from a small fire to a large one takes several (2D4+1) minutes and requires the proper combustibles.

Draw Fire

Range: Small Flame: 6 feet (1.8 m), Medium Flame: 20 feet (6.1 m), Large Flame: 50 feet (15.2 m), or a huge flame (burning building, inferno): up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away, +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience starting at level two.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 8

The Fire Walker can make fire come to him in a relatively straight line. This can be a thin trail that runs down a lit candle and to his feet (or a hand on the table) to a wall of flame from a bonfire or burning building. In addition, he can make an uncontrolled fire come in his direction and/or stay around him and not spread to other locations or items, without actually touching him. The Psychic must be in a fixed position and cannot walk around with a fire trailing behind him like the pied piper. Often used to contain a fire, cover an escape, dramatic effect, etc. **Note:** The trail of fire will set any combustibles it touches on fire and will continue to burn until extinguished.

Eat Fire

Range: Self.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 3

The character can extinguish candles and burning objects by putting them in his mouth like a carnival fire eater. May be used for entertainment (and earning money as a fire eater) or to genuinely extinguish burning items. Can also douse candles and matchsticks by squeezing the fire between his finger and thumb without injury to himself, and can drink boiling hot water and edibles.

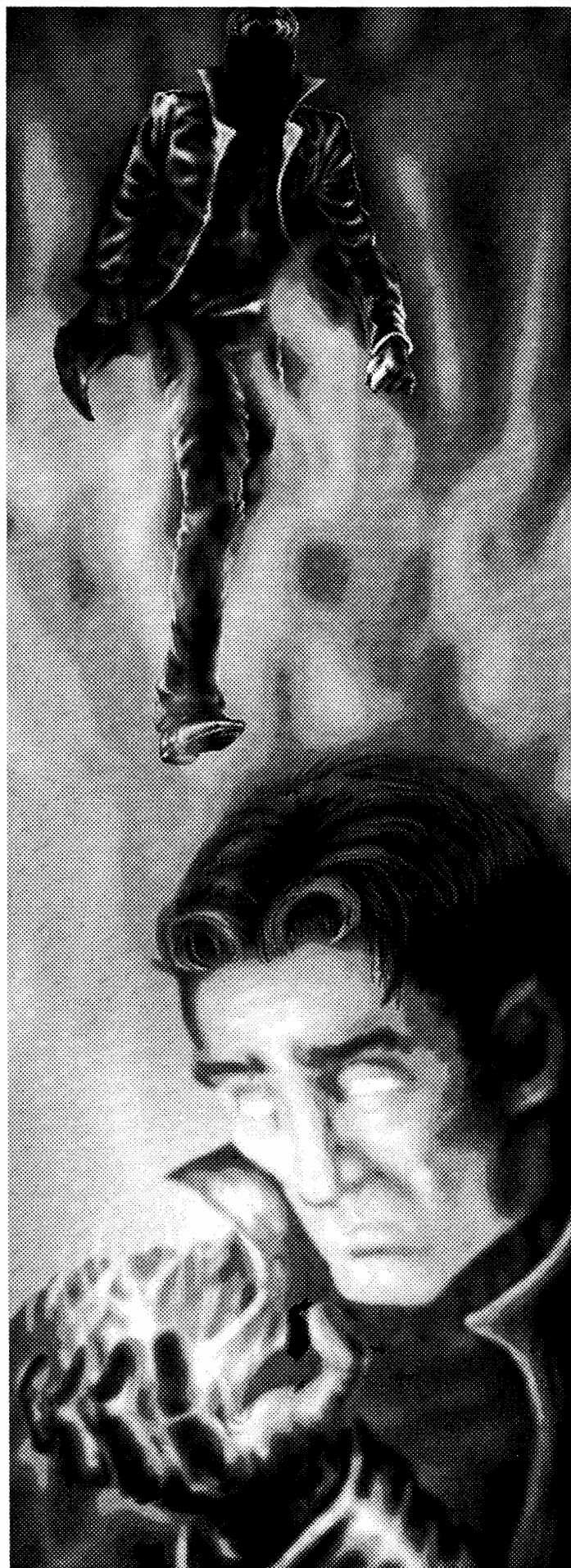
Extinguish Fire

Range: Line of sight up to 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Instant results, though the extinguished fire can be relit, and an out of control fire may spread back to that area within 1D6 minutes.

I.S.P.: 5

The psychic can instantly extinguish a 10 foot (3 m) diameter area of fire +5 feet per additional level of experience starting at level two. If directed at one specific controlled flame that is



smaller than 10 feet (3 m) in diameter, i.e., a torch, oil lantern, bonfire, fireplace, etc., the psychic can completely extinguish it in a heartbeat. Larger fires will have to be extinguished one section at a time. Similarly, the Fire Walker can simultaneously extinguish as many as a dozen tiny fires per level of experience, such as candles, within his area of influence; all go out at once.

Fire Bolt

Range: 20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round (15 seconds); each Fire Bolt counts as one melee attack/action.

I.S.P.: 10.

The psychic can create a flamethrower-like burst of flame that shoots from his hands. The effect is dazzling and impressive, but is only truly effective against the supernatural and creatures of magic.

Damage: 1D6 points of damage per level of experience to supernatural beings, creatures of magic, and Witches and others who have willingly merged with the supernatural. Two points of damage total, regardless of level, to humans/mortals. The fiery blast looks dangerous and frightening to humans and animals, so the first two times a Fire Bolt is shot at someone, ordinary people will dodge it, losing one melee attack/action, or be stunned in fear (Horror Factor 13), losing initiative and 1D4 melee actions/attacks from fear. However, sharp humans will quickly realize that when the fire bolt hits them it singes their clothing and creates a shower of harmless sparks, nothing more. (Inflicts M.D. in Mega-Damage game settings like *Rifts*®.)

Note: The Fire Walker is +3 to strike when using this attack.

Fire Omen

Range: Self.

Duration: 2-6 seconds.

I.S.P.: 7

The character can divine fire by infusing it with his will and I.S.P. to create a reaction, face or image in the fire that has a certain meaning. The way a fire moves/reacts when this is done warns the Fire Walker of different things. The fire may be as small and simple as a candle, to a campfire, bonfire or burning building. Typically one or two omens will appear, one right after the other, to warn or alert the Fire Walker of impending danger or trouble. The psychic instantly knows the meaning of the omen and knows the threat will exist within the next 24 hours (could be one minute from now, 24 hours later or anything in between).

Typical Omens: The fire splitting in two and the two tongues of flame spreading apart from each other means someone or something is trying (or plans on trying) to separate or pull the group apart.

When the flame goes out or dies down to almost nothing, it means danger and/or death lays ahead.

When the flame flickers or flutters it means darkness is trying to overcome the light; evil is trying to overcome good.

When the flame suddenly increases in intensity, rising up tall, it means unnatural forces (magic or supernatural) are at work. The taller the flame the greater the evil force.

When the flame suddenly goes flat or forms a line, it means humans are responsible, and though magic and/or the supernatural may be involved, they serve or answer to a *mortal* master.

When a face seems to appear for a moment, it means a greater supernatural force is at work, tentacles indicate an Alien Intelligence.

No response indicates things are in motion that cannot yet be predicted or that there is a pause in events and there is no immediate danger or trouble. Immediate being the next 24 hours.

Fire Walk

Range: Self.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

The psychic can walk on hot coals, the smoldering remains of a fire, hot ash, a burned out building or surface that's still burning hot, through a cloud of steam, as well as across a thin coating (no more than four inches/10 cm) of boiling liquid or molten material without pain, injury or ill effect.

Fuel Flame

Range: Line of sight up to 30 feet (9.1 m) +10 feet (3 m) per additional level of experience, starting at level two.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience, unless there is more physical fuel (wood, gasoline, etc.) for the fire to consume and grow larger or grow further.

I.S.P.: 3

The Fire Walker can feed any existing fire, doubling it in size and intensity.

Heat Point Focus

Range: 10 feet (3 m) +3 feet (0.9 m) per level of experience, starting with level two.

Duration: 30 seconds with instant results at the end of that time.

Requirements: Clear line of sight of the intended target. Thirty seconds (two melee rounds) of concentration during which the psychic can do nothing but focus (can't talk, eat, move, etc.).

I.S.P.: 5

A targeted attack that can be directed at an object, hand or other body part to make it burn, but not catch on fire. The psychic can make a glass of water boil, or melt ice, give someone a hot foot, burn a hand to make a person drop what he's holding, and similar. Highly combustible liquids like lamp oil, gasoline, and kerosene will ignite and burn, but not explode, and can only be ignited if the liquid is exposed to open air, i.e., spilled on the ground, an open container (not a sealed container or automobile's sealed gas tank), etc.

Damage: 1D4 points, but a *hot foot* (or most other areas of the body) will cause the victim to jump, look at his foot and lose 1D4 melee attacks/actions and he'll be -5 on Perception Rolls (i.e., it's a good distraction). *Burning the hand* will have a similar effect and penalty, but will also cause the victim to drop whatever he was holding (keys, gun, etc.). *Igniting a candle* or

oil lamp to light is also a good distraction and may be used to eerie effect. This ability can also be used to light a fuse and boil a glass or cup of water.

Impervious to Fire

Range: Self.

Duration: One minute per level of the psychic.

I.S.P.: 6

No damage from heat and fire up to 2000 degrees Fahrenheit (1093 C), enabling the character to walk through fire, handle burning hot objects, put his hands in boiling liquid, etc. Can also drink boiling hot drinks without injury. **Note:** Magic fire does one third the normal damage.

Impervious to Smoke

Range: Self.

Duration: Two minutes per level of the psychic.

I.S.P.: 4

The psychic suffers no damage or penalties from smoke inhalation; can breathe smoke like you or I breathe clean air, and can see through smoke up to a distance of 20 feet (6.1 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of additional experience starting at level two.

Incinerate Paper

Range: Touch, at level six by pointing and being within eight feet (2.4 m) of the target; line of sight required.

Duration: Instant; burnt to ash in 1-4 seconds.

I.S.P.: 5

The Fire Walker can make a sheet of paper or anything made of paper or parchment (cardboard, Kleenex, napkin, post-it note, calendar or magazine page, cigarette, cigar, thin cardboard box or lid, etc.) burst into flame and be completely consumed within 1-4 seconds. This is great for getting rid of "paper evidence," destroying a scroll or key page in a book/diary before they can be read or used by an enemy, or creating a distraction (equal to a Horror Factor/surprise of 11). The psychic can incinerate three sheets/pages of paper (or the equivalent) simultaneously per level of experience. **Note:** The incineration of a page(s) does NOT start other papers on fire and the psychic can burn just the top sheet on a stack of paper without damaging any other page. Goes from paper to ash in seconds.

Meditation

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed, requires at least one hour of meditation.

I.S.P.: None, zero.

Meditation is a trance state of consciousness in which the individual can calm his emotions and focus on relaxation of mind and body. In a meditative state, the psychic finds peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and it is in this state of being that he can regenerate his Inner Strength (I.S.P.). Other forms of meditation can increase healing and evoke other mind over matter phenomena. See the *Physical Psychic P.C.C.* for details.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per hour of meditation. Some P.C.C.s, like the Autistic Savant and Physical Psychic for example, have the ability to recover a greater amount even faster. **Note:** *Advanced Meditation* is not available to the Fire Walker P.C.C.

Part Fire

Range: Self, the fire parts for 10 feet (3 m) ahead of the psychic and continues to do so in whatever direction he goes. Or the psychic can Part Fire from a distance; requires line of sight up to 100 feet (30.5 m) away from the psychic parting the fire.

Duration: One melee round per level of the psychic.

I.S.P.: 8

Makes the fire of even a raging inferno move aside to create an open path, like Moses parting the Red Sea. Fire, heat, and smoke down the path are all minimal. Ideal for rescuing others and showing off. (Not to mention luring an enemy down the path only to close the path and let the fire consume whatever is within it. Victims will take 1D8x10 damage from a raging inferno, i.e., traveling through several dozen feet of fire, or 3D6 damage for running through a wall of fire.)

Self-Combustion

Range: Self only, one mile (1.6 km) teleportation distance.

Duration: 15 seconds.

I.S.P.: 12

The psychic appears to burst into a pillar of flame with blast furnace heat so intense that nobody can come within 20 feet (6.1 m) of him. It lasts for 15 seconds (one melee round) and when the fire suddenly goes out, all that remains is some burnt scraps of clothing, charred and melted shoes and a pile of ashes. Everything else, wallet, weapons, and any furniture and the area within four feet (1.2 m) of the character are charred. The body of the psychic is gone, presumably burnt to a cinder!

In reality, the psychic is teleported one mile (1.6 km) away. The character always appears outdoors, naked, all his clothes and possessions on hand at the time are gone, burned to ash. **Note:** The character cannot grab an opponent and barbecue him. If clutching another person when the Self-Combustion power is activated, it won't work. Anyone dumb enough to try to resist the staggering heat of the inferno takes 6D6+10 damage every three seconds (nobody is stupid enough to do that).

Set Supernatural Ablaze

Range: Touch.

Duration: Instant for the attack, but the blaze remains until the fire is dowsed.

Saving Throw: Parry or dodge at -4; must avoid being touched by the hand, but there is no indication the attack is coming so the creature should not be trying to avoid the psychic's touch unless it has already seen the character set a comrade ablaze.

I.S.P.: 25

This devastating attack only works on supernatural creatures and objects (including magic items) that are possessed/inhabited by a supernatural force or otherwise cursed and empowered by

the supernatural. The Fire Walker must grab or touch the creature (or object) to cause it to burst into flame, its entire body consumed by the fire. While consumed by fire the creature is in agony and should seek to extinguish the fire, but should it continue to fight, attacks per melee round are reduced to only two, the creature loses all combat bonuses, performs skills at -60% and cannot cast magic, though it may continue to use psionic powers and natural abilities (without bonuses).

Damage: 1D4x10 initial damage direct to Hit Points plus an additional +2D6+10 damage direct to Hit Points per melee round until the fire is extinguished to most supernatural beings (Predators, lesser and greater demons, etc.), Witches and mortals who directly get their power from demonic forces.

1D8x10 initial damage direct to Hit Points to Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences plus 1D8x10 damage per melee round until the fire is extinguished. **Note:** Has no effect on energy beings, ghosts, or Astral Travelers. (Inflicts M.D. in Mega-Damage game settings like **Rifts®**.)

The blaze and additional damage continue until the fire is extinguished with water (50 gallons/190 liters minimum for a human sized victim), fire extinguishing chemicals, or being smothered with dirt or sand (at least 100 lbs/45 kg for man-sized beings) or smothered with a blanket. Smothering fire takes at least two melee rounds, and any mortal trying to do the smothering suffers 2D6 damage per melee round and any supernatural being takes 4D6 damage per round.

Penalties of Surviving: Should the supernatural being manage to smother the fire and survive, it will be wracked with pain and unable to focus clearly. Reduce all combat bonuses by half, -50% on skill performance, can only cast one spell per melee round, and -2 attacks per melee round until at least two-thirds of the Hit Points lost to the fire are bio-regenerated or magically restored.

Shed Light

Range: Immediate area.

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds) per level of the psychic, twice as long if double the I.S.P. is spent.

I.S.P.: 4

The psychic must snatch a tongue of fire in his hand from an existing, physical source, and then throws it up into the air, to light up an area as large as 10 feet (3 m) in diameter, +5 additional feet (1.5 m) per each additional level of experience starting at level two. The light is bright enough to read by and is roughly equivalent to a moderately well lit room. The light is fleeting, one minute per level of the psychic, and unleashes a silent drizzle of tiny sparks that fall from the preternatural light source, vanishing about halfway to the floor. The sparks do not have any chance of starting a fire even when lit up above flammable material, and increase in number and speed as the duration of the light comes to an end. The psychic who created the light can also end it in a heartbeat at any moment he desires, as quick and easy as flipping a light switch.

Smoke Signal

Range: Touch.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

The psychic must have a source of fire for the smoke or an existing source of smoke. He can then make the smoke curl in an unusual shape/pattern and change/tint the color to make it white, red, blue, or green, attracting attention to it and pinpointing the location of the source. May be used as a signal or a marker.

For an additional four I.S.P. (8 total), the psychic can form one or two simple words or a simple/insignia out of smoke. The letters may be stylized and drift apart in a matter of 3-5 seconds, but for an observant character (or a partner who knows what to look for) it can make an effective silent message or signal, and to an outsider, an eerie message or warning.

Snatch Fire

Range: Self.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: 2

At first glance, this may seem like a parlor trick in which the psychic can snatch a flickering tongue of flame from a candle, cigarette lighter, oil lamp and similar source, snuffing the lit item (i.e., snuffing the candle), and seem to hold it in his clenched fist. The snatching motion is the same as one might use to grab a moth or grasshopper from its perch. The stolen flame is held tightly in the hand, its light shining through parts of the fist and peeking through the cracks of the fingers. The flame remains alive and fed as long as the fist is held tight, and does not burn or hurt the psychic in any way. If the hand is opened, the light is released in a dim pulse-like flash and a tiny puff of smoke. The flash is not nearly bright enough to blind anyone, even in the dark, and seems more of a cute parlor trick than a power.

Snatching Fire can be used to light something else (a different candle, lantern, campfire, piece of paper, etc.) and entertain, as well as being able to instantly extinguish candles and tiny fires as long as the flame is not larger than his open hand. The held fire can also be used to *Throw Fire* without having to find a fire source at some moment in the future and adds 1D6 damage and 10 feet (3 m) to the throwing range when the fire is "snatched" first and additional I.S.P. spent to "throw" it.

Spontaneous Combustion

Range: Touch or eight feet (2.4 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: 4

By concentrating and touching a combustible material like paper, rags, straw, dry grass, candlewick, lamp wick, etc., the character can ignite it. Likewise, he can also ignite combustibles he is holding in his hand. **Note:** Counts as two melee attacks/actions. Can also ignite something combustible up to eight feet (2.4 m) away by staring at it and concentrating, but this uses up all melee attacks for the round; takes 15 seconds. Also see, *Create Fire*.

Steam Blast

Range: Five feet (1.5 m), +1 foot (0.3 m) per level of experience starting with level two.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: Dodge at -4.

I.S.P.: 5

The psychic can either direct steam from an existing source (boiling water, steam engine, etc.) or create steam by throwing a pot of water on a fire and directing it. A steam attack causes damage and surprise, or may be used to steam windows, mirrors, or glass, clouding them for one minute (four melee rounds) or until someone wipes them off. The act of wiping counts as three melee attacks (roughly 8-10 seconds) and requires more than one's hand or shirt sleeves; needs a rag/towel, or similar material to wipe the surface *clear*.

Damage: 2D6 points, but the victim should also recoil from the blast of steam, losing initiative and one melee attack. If the steam is shot into the face (requires a Called Shot and a roll of 16 or higher to strike by the psychic), the victim is also blinded for one melee round (15 seconds) and is -10 to strike, parry, dodge, etc. for that short duration.

Thermal Imaging Vision

Range: The ability only works on the Fire Walker, and the range of vision is 200 feet (61 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

Can see heat images/radiation the same as high-tech thermal imaging goggles and optic systems, only without the equipment. This enables the character to see through smoke, tell if an engine has been recently running or not, if a gun has been recently fired (within the last 15 minutes), see the heat signature of warm-blooded animals and people in total darkness, and see infrared beams (common among older gun sights, night binoculars and security systems).

Throw Fire

Range: 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Instant; counts as one melee attack.

Saving Throw: Dodge at -3.

I.S.P.: 7

The psychic snatches a tongue of fire from an existing physical source of fire (a candle, lantern, or from a larger flame like a campfire) in his hand and quickly throws it at a specific target up to 10 feet (3 m) away. (That's 10 feet/3 m per level of experience.) The thrown fire looks like a miniature fiery comet with a spherical front and a tapering tail of flame behind it. **Note:** The Fire Walker is +2 to strike when using this attack.

Damage: Against mortals the fire bolt bursts into a shower of sparks upon impact and inflicts one point of damage. However, when used against the supernatural or the magical, the fire bolt does 1D6 damage +3 per additional level of the Fire Walker. (Inflicts M.D. in Mega-Damage game settings like **Rifts®**.)

Healing Abilities

Attack Disease

Range: Touch.

Duration: Special.

I.S.P.: 12

The psychic can reduce the symptoms of disease in a debilitating psionic melding. The psychic touches his patient, linking himself to the sick individual, and draws part of the illness into his own body (this takes 1D4 minutes of concentration). Once the sickness has been drawn into the psychic, it reduces the effects, penalties and normal duration of the disease in the sick individual by half. Likewise, the psychic also exhibits the symptoms and penalties of the disease but also at half the normal severity, and his symptoms last only 1D4 hours. This power does *not* work against magic diseases and curses, nor lethal and chronic diseases like cancers, tuberculosis, polio, Alzheimer's, Parkinson's disease, ebola, and similar.

Bio-Regeneration (Self)

Range: Self.

Duration: Permanent.

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: None.

This is the ability to mentally heal *oneself* of disease, poison, or physical damage. Unfortunately, this ability can *not* be used to help others. The process requires one full minute of concentration, meaning the character cannot use any other psionic power during that time. Bio-Regeneration does not restore missing limbs, but it does restore 2D6 Hit Points or 3D6 physical S.D.C. points per minute. In addition, when cuts and scrapes are healed through Bio-Regeneration there is *no* scarring. This power can be used as often as once every *two* minute (every eight melee rounds). **Note:** Recovering more than half of one's Hit Points or S.D.C. this way in less than an hour takes a toll on the character, causing some weakness for 1d4+2 hours: reduce the P.S., P.E. and Spd attributes reduced by 30%. Adjust attribute bonuses accordingly.

Coma Consciousness

Range: Self only.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 3

The psychic can remain relatively conscious, aware and alert even though Hit Points are zero or less and he should be unconscious and in a coma. Indeed, the character is groggy, combat bonuses are -10, attacks/actions per melee are reduced to two, but he is awake, aware of what's going on around him, can talk and even perform skills that don't involve physical stress or mobility. (**Note:** Skills are performed at half their usual percentage.) However, the character cannot use any other psychic ability nor stand or move much without help. This ability is ideal for telling allies or authorities what happened, that people

are still trapped or missing (and where they might be, if the injured character knows), or reporting who was responsible, issuing a warning, telling paramedics what his own injuries are or those of a fallen comrade, making a call for help on a cell phone/telephone, and perhaps even driving to a hospital, hitting an alarm button and similar simple but critical actions. To cover distance, the Coma Conscious character can only crawl on his belly at a Spd of 1D6 and has only two melee actions/attacks per round. At the end of the psionic ability's duration, the character falls unconscious.

Cure Insanity (Temporary)

Range: Other by touch.

Duration: Varies; 1D8x10 hours.

I.S.P.: 15

Saving Throw: Standard; insanity is not an easy thing to deal with and the victim's subconscious and irrational fears and desires may fight and resist even a temporary fix.

The Psychic Healer can temporarily push back and seemingly cure one of the following mental illnesses for 1D8x10 hours: Phobia, Obsession, Neurosis, Affective Disorder or addictive behavior and cravings. Unfortunately, it is only temporary relief and the affliction will resurface within 14 days. **Note:** To temporarily cure an insanity, the psychic must know it exists. Only one insanity can be momentarily cured per expenditure of 15 I.S.P.

Deaden Pain

Range: Self or other by touch or close proximity (within 3 feet/0.9 m; line of sight).

Duration: One hour per level of experience.

Length of Trance: Two minutes (8 melee rounds).

I.S.P.: 4

The ability to Deaden Pain can be used as a painkiller which temporarily negates existing pain or as an anesthetic to be used for surgery.

Detect Psionics

Range: Self. Sensing range is 30 feet (9 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

This is a mental probe that will indicate the presence of psionic energy within the immediate area. The probe cannot be used to pinpoint the exact location of psychic energy nor the level of power other than a vague sense of weak, medium, or powerful.

Detect Psionics will indicate whether an individual is psychic when the probe is directed at a specific individual. However, while it will indicate the character possesses psychic ability, it does not reveal the type or strength of the character's powers other than low, medium, or high. It will also indicate whether a Group Mind Block is in effect and if a person is *psionically possessed*.

Exorcism

Range: Immediate area, touch or within 8 feet (2.4 m).

Duration: Instant, if successful.

Requirements: 30 minutes of preparation by the Psychic Healer and 6D6 minutes spent with the possessed person or animal.

Note: Can only exorcize the living and mortal beings.

I.S.P.: 10

The psychic can perform a Rite of Exorcism that uses psychic energy to expel the loathsome supernatural being from its mortal host body.

A completely successful Exorcism frees the victim of the supernatural force that controlled him, and sends it back to its own non-earthly realm.

A partially successful Exorcism will drive the evil force out of the possessed person or animal, but does not send the damnable thing back to its own dimension. Thus, it can *try* to possess the Psychic Healer or flee to wander the Earth in search of a new victim. An Exorcism can only be used on living people and animals whose bodies are inhabited by a supernatural entity or other type of invasive spirit, not symbiotic organisms or psychic possession.

Roll to determine success for an Exorcism at the end of the time period. First, roll to see if the being has been expelled from its victim's body. **Success Ratio:** 28% +7% per each additional level of experience. **Success Ratio Bonus:** +3% for every M.E. attribute point of the Healer that is above 20 (i.e., M.E. 21 = +3%, M.E. 22 = +6%, M.E. 23 = +9%, and so on).

Second, roll to see if the thing is forced back into its own dimension. **Success Ratio:** 21% +7% per each additional level of the psychic's experience. A failed roll means the creature can remain in our dimension, but it must leave the area and cannot possess the same individual for at least six months. **Note:** The chance of a successful Exorcism when dealing with a Dark God or Alien Intelligence is reduced by half, as is the success ratio for sending the being back to its own dimension.

During the Exorcism the possessing force can use whatever powers it may have, as well as physical attacks or any special psychic abilities of its *host body*. Fortunately, the Rite of Exorcism weakens the creature, reducing its number of attacks per melee by half. It is wise to always have one or more assistants to help defend against the being's attacks and actions. Sedating the physical host body will immobilize it, but will not prevent psychic attacks or the creature's use of its own natural powers (if any). Too many assistants or spectators can be a liability, for the creature may attempt to flee by possessing one of them. An Exorcism can be attempted on the same individual as often as the healer desires.

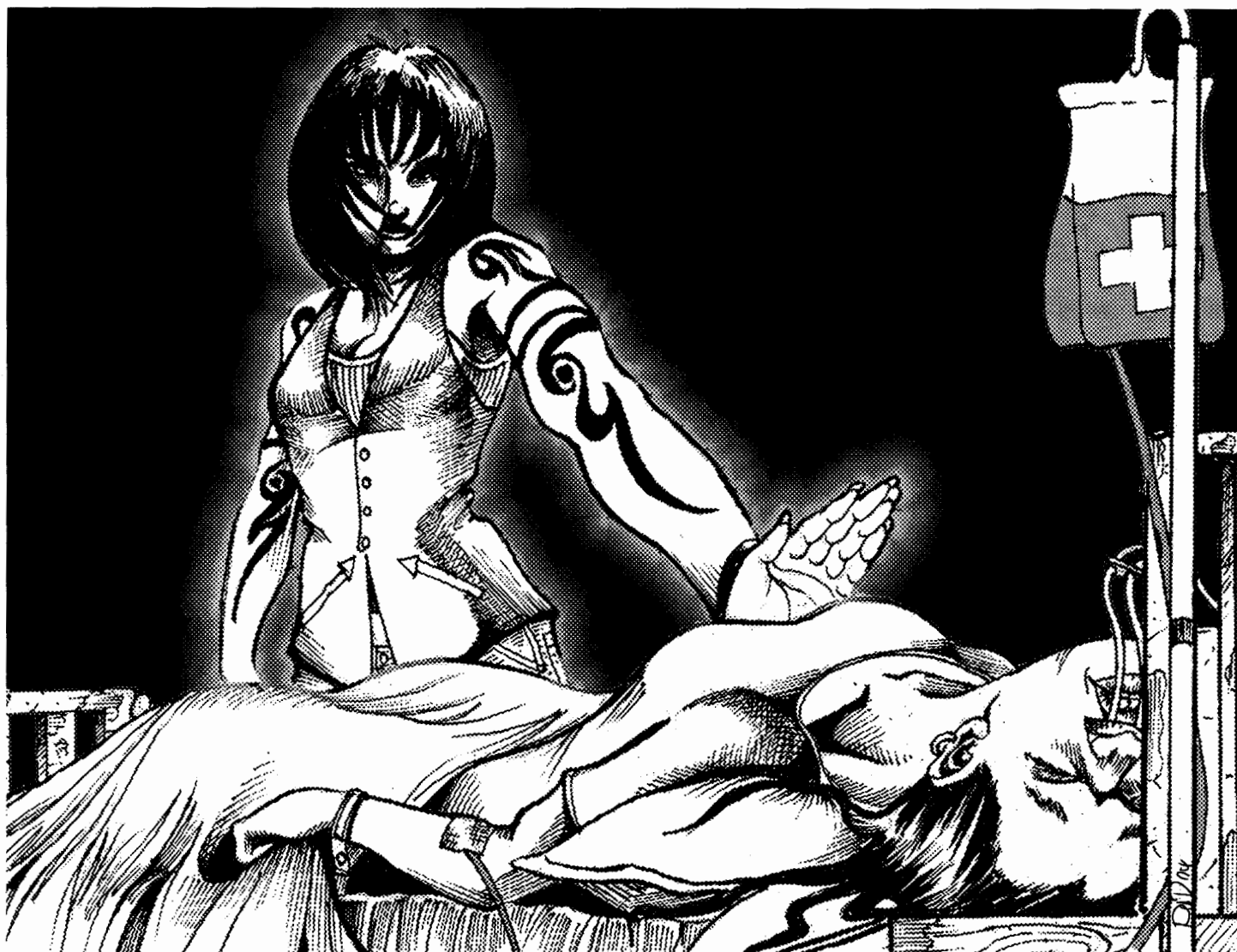
Healing Touch

Range: Touch.

Duration: Instant, with lasting effects.

I.S.P.: 6

The Healing Touch is a remarkable healing ability that can instantly heal cuts, burns, bruises and similar physical wounds. The touch restores 2D4 Hit Points or 2D6 S.D.C. The Healing Touch can only be used on *other* living creatures, never on the



psychic himself. **Note:** The Psychic Healer needs to spend two minutes on preparatory meditation with the patient nearby before he can perform a Healing Touch. This process is required for every patient or repeated laying of the hands on the same patient.

Increased Healing

Range: Touch or within 3 feet (0.9 m).

Duration: 2D4 days.

I.S.P.: 10

The healer is able to stimulate another person's healing energies, dramatically increasing his recuperative powers. Hit Points and S.D.C. recovery are double the normal professional treatment rate. That's recovery of four Hit Points a day for the first two days and 8 H.P. for each subsequent day until restored to full strength or the psychic healing energy fades (2D4 days duration), whichever comes first. S.D.C. is healed at a whopping 12 points per day from the very beginning. **Note:** The Psychic Healer needs to spend 1D4 hours on preparatory meditation before he can lay healing hands on the patient for Increased Healing.

Induce Sleep

Range: Touch or within 6 feet (1.8 m).

Duration: One hour per level of experience of the healer, or until awakened.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None for a willing patient. Standard save +5 for unwilling patients.

This is not an offensive ability, but a recuperative power to induce sleep for those who are ill, exhausted, or suffer from insomnia. The character being treated falls into a normal, restful sleep from which he can be easily awakened. Unwilling victims of the Induce Sleep psi-power get a +5 bonus to save. A character must want rest and plan on sleeping (*cannot* be involved in combat or some other activity and be forced to fall asleep).

Note: The Psychic Healer needs to spend two minutes on preparatory meditation with the patient nearby before he can Induce Sleep.

Meditation

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed; at least one hour of meditation is required.

I.S.P.: None, zero.

Meditation is a trance state of consciousness in which the individual can calm his emotions and focus on relaxation of mind and body. In a meditative state, the psychic finds peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and it is in this state of being that he can regenerate his Inner Strength (I.S.P.). Other forms of meditation can increase healing and evoke other mind over matter phenomena. See the *Physical Psychic P.C.C.* for details.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per hour of meditation. Some P.C.C.s, like the Autistic Savant and Physical Psychic for example, have the ability to recover a greater amount even faster. Also see *Advanced Meditation*.

Meditation, Advanced

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed, one hour minimum.

I.S.P.: 2

Just as the name suggests, this is an advanced form of meditation in which the psychic enters a deep trance state for the purpose of finding peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and regenerating his Inner Strength (I.S.P.) at an accelerated rate.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per 30 minutes or eight points per hour of meditation, but requires two I.S.P. to delve deep inside oneself so quickly and effectively.

Mind Block

Range: Self.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4 (per each duration period).

This is the ability to completely close or block oneself from all psychic/mental emanations. When intentionally closed to supernatural or psychic forces, the character cannot sense anything, cannot use psychic abilities, nor be influenced by others. A Mind Block will prevent penetration of Telepathy, Empathy, Hypnotic Suggestion, and Empathic Transmission. It can be an invaluable protective mask when dealing with malevolent psychic forces. Adds a bonus of +1 to save vs all psychic and mental attacks.

Psychic Diagnosis

Range: Touch or within 3 feet (0.9 m).

Duration: Immediate knowledge.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None; except for the Nega-Psychic who gets a standard save plus any applicable bonuses.

The Psychic Healer can sense physical trauma/damage and pain, external and internal injury, poisoning, disease and possession with absolute clarity. This pinpoint accuracy enables the

psychic to suggest treatment or to conduct psychic surgery or other healing. **Note:** The Psychic Healer needs to spend two minutes on preparatory meditation with the patient nearby before he can make a diagnosis.

Psychic Purification

Range: Touch.

Duration: Immediate.

Length of Trance: 3D6+3 minutes of meditation.

I.S.P.: 8

Saving Throw: None; except for the Nega-Psychic, standard.

The healer can use his abilities to slow a person's metabolism and destroy chemicals, drugs, poisons, venom, and toxins in the body. The effects of the drug, poison or toxin are immediately halted at the beginning of the meditation, and completely destroyed/removed/negated by its end. Damage sustained prior to the psychic's intervention still remains. **Note:** The Psychic Healer immediately places the patient and himself in a trance state that lasts for 3D6+3 minutes. Both snap out of the trance at the same time and the patient is cured. The healer can attack and destroy one chemical/poison within the patient per each one of his (the Psi-Healer's) experience levels.

Psychic Surgery

Range: Touch.

Duration: Varies with injury.

I.S.P.: Simple Surgery: 7, Common Surgery: 14, Serious: 28.

Psychic Surgery is used to repair broken bones and internal injuries, and for the removal of foreign objects (bullets, arrows, etc.) using only one's bare hands; no tools or instruments. Can also be used to heal a character who has suffered so much damage that he or she has lapsed into a coma (zero Hit Points or less). Psychic Surgery is the equivalent of "professional hospital" treatment. The recovery from a coma (near death) is equal to treatment from a hospital, 01-66%. Note that there is minimal bleeding and pain, and absolutely no scarring from Psychic Surgery (*no pain* if the Deaden Pain ability is used).

Note: A Psychic Diagnosis must be made before surgery is possible and then the Psi-Healer must meditate for 10 minutes with the patient nearby before he can start the surgery. The length of time for the Psychic Surgery itself is amazingly short compared to conventional medicine – *Simple Surgery*: 1D4 minutes; *Common Surgery* (minor internal injury, removing a bullet, repairing a torn muscle, setting a broken bone, etc.): 2D6+6 minutes; and *Serious, Difficult or Demanding Surgery* (multiple injuries, multiple bone fractures, coma/death, work on the lungs, heart, brain and other internal organs): 1D6x10+12 minutes. Success for recovery is the same as top-flight, state of the art hospital treatment.

Resist Fatigue

Range: Self.

Duration: One hour plus 20 minutes per level of experience.

Length of Trance: 1D6 melees of preparatory meditation.

I.S.P.: 4

A mind over matter discipline which enables the character to engage in physical activity without suffering from exhaustion. However, fatigue is only temporarily suspended, so the psychic feels extremely tired and may even collapse when the duration of this power elapses. P.S., P.P., P.E. and Spd attributes are all temporarily reduced by half, skill performance is -20%, and the character sees all bonuses and his attacks/actions per melee round reduced by one point for the next for 1D4 hours.

Restore P.P.E.

Range: Touch.

Duration: Permanent.

I.S.P.: 4 plus the amount of P.P.E. transferred.

This power allows the psychic to convert some of his I.S.P. into P.P.E. energy and transfer that energy to another person. Two I.S.P. counts as one P.P.E. point. In addition, the conversion and transfer costs four I.S.P. to initiate. For example, 10 I.S.P. converts into five P.P.E. and costs an additional four points to make the transferal and conversion, for a total cost of 14 I.S.P. A Mind Block will prevent this energy transfer. **Note:** P.P.E. can *not* be turned into I.S.P.

Stop Bleeding (Self)

Range: Self only.

Duration: Six minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

Another type of bio-feedback, mind over matter power, in which the psychic stops bleeding from wounds and internal injury using the power of his mind. This means stopping additional damage from blood loss and being able to function relatively unimpaired. As impressive and potentially lifesaving as this ability may be, it is only a stopgap measure. The injury is NOT being healed and the character still needs medical attention or he will, eventually, die from his injuries. If rendered unconscious, the bleeding and blood loss damage immediately begins. **Note:** Stops the bleeding from all sources, however, additional/new Hit Point damage suffered after the Stop Bleeding (Self) requires additional concentration and another three I.S.P. to stop the bleeding from the new wound(s).

Penalties: Furthermore, the psychic must continue to concentrate on stopping the bleeding, which means his number of attacks per melee round and all combat bonuses are reduced by half, but skill performance and other abilities function at normal capacity (he can run, leap, climb, swim, drive, operate machinery, etc. at full tilt, for example).

Stop Bleeding (Others)

Range: Other by touch; cannot be performed on oneself.

Duration: Indefinitely, as long as the healer keeps his hand on the injured individual and concentrates on stopping the bleeding. Four minutes per experience level of the Psi-Healer if the character uses this temporary tourniquet and leaves his patient to do other things.

I.S.P.: 4

Basically the same as Stop Bleeding (Self), only it is performed on others by the laying of hands from a Psi-Healer.

Suggestion (Medicinal Hypnosis)

Range: 12 feet (3.6 m) or closer and requires eye contact.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: 2 for each hypnotic "suggestion." 4 for each psychic power state.

Saving Throw: None for willing subjects. Standard save for those afraid or unwilling to be hypnotized.

"Hypnosis" is Greek for the word "sleep," but all forms of hypnosis place the subject in a state of consciousness somewhere between sleep and full mental awareness. In fact, modern science cannot fully explain how or why hypnosis works, only that it does. Victor Lazlo and other researchers of the paranormal suspect the hypnotic state taps into the subject's remaining Base P.P.E. to do extraordinary things which should be impossible. This explains how those under hypnosis exhibit improved memory, increased strength and endurance, no sense of pain, and even select *psychic powers*. Typically an ability or state similar to *Coma Consciousness*, *Deaden Pain (self)*, *Impervious to Cold*, *Impervious to Fire*, *Resist Fatigue*, *Resist Pain*, *Resist Thirst*, *Suppress Fear*, *Total Recall*, and *Summon Inner Strength*, but only while in a trance-like state and under the direct influence of the psychic hypnotist.

The Psychic Healer uses hypnotic suggestion for medicinal and helpful purposes and seldom to manipulate others or for entertainment value. One can see how being able to induce any one or two of the above conditions could help the Psi-Healer work on a patient without discomfort or pain. In addition, the power of Suggestion can do the following: 1. Eliminate ordinary headaches. 2. Reduce the pain of a migraine, injury, and hangovers by half. 3. Reduce the symptoms and penalties of fever by half. 4. Get a patient to relax and remain calm (doesn't work on Horror Factor). 5. Get a patient to remember exactly what he has eaten in the last 48 hours or if he has suffered an insect or animal bite, odd accident, or experienced something strange during that time (which could indicate demonic possession). 6. Implant suggestions like, "you'll go home and rest," "soak your foot," "remember to take your medicine twice a day," and similar.

In all cases, the Psychic Healer must create the conducive hypnotic state, ask the right questions ("I want you to think back. What did you eat that was unusual?") or say the right thing to get the desired response/result. ("Listen to my voice. You're feeling relaxed, sleepy, calm." and/or "You can feel the pain in your head getting softer, going away, getting smaller and smaller, and smaller, until you can't feel it at all. It's gone." and so on.)

Note: Can only influence one patient at a time.

Suppress Fear

Range: Self or others by touch.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 8

This power temporarily suppresses the chemical and psychological components of fear in the recipient. As a result, the character is unable to feel fear or is barely frightened even if intellectually he realizes he is in grave danger, or is facing a terrifying monster or situation. This enables the character to think rationally and take calm, calculated action, rather than respond

with the typical “fight or flight” reactions of those who are scared. While this power is activated, the character automatically succeeds on any roll to resist *Horror Factor*, even if magically induced. This power can be used on the psychic himself or on one or two others.

Machine Abilities

Psi-Mechanic Psionics

Bend Metal

Range: Touch or up to five feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; line of sight – must be able to clearly see the item to be bent.

Duration: Takes 1D4+3 seconds and counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Limitation: Effects only one object at a time.

I.S.P.: 3 or 8.

The psychic can bend small or thin metal objects such as spoons, keys, nails, metal hangers, curtain rods, wire, the hands of a clock, and similar items at a cost of 3 I.S.P. In addition, the character can crumple a soda pop can, pop the flip tab, straighten a paperclip and work a (single) nail out of wood without touching it.

Thick and heavy gauge metal items like a slide bolt on a door, spike, knife, screwdriver, metal rod, outdoor TV antenna, and hard steel alloys cost eight I.S.P. and cannot be thicker than one inch (2.5 cm) in diameter.

In both cases, the act of bending takes only a few seconds of concentration and focus. To unbend the item requires another expenditure of I.S.P., and only one metal item can be influenced at a time. The bend is seldom more than a 45 degree angle, but enough to make a key, knife or tool unusable, a slide lock stuck, or chain link weakened or even undone. **Note:** This power can also be used to undo, unlock traditional metal handcuffs.

Charge Battery

Range: Touch.

Duration: Gives the battery 10 minutes of life/power per level of experience; double if charged on a ley line, triple on a ley line nexus.

I.S.P.: 6

The Psi-Mechanic can give a dead battery renewed life, charging it with the touch of his hand and focused mental energy (the expenditure of six I.S.P.).

Electrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies as noted.

Same as the description under Physical Psychic.

Energy Conduit

Range: Self, via touch.

Duration: As long as he serves as the conduit and functions as a living conduit/connector.

I.S.P.: 10

By touching an active energy source (battery, generator, live wire, electrical outlet, fuse box, live circuit, transformer, underground cables, etc.) and a mechanical or electronic device that needs power to work, a Psi-Mechanic may become the living circuit or conduit by which power is channeled to the device. This requires the character to enter a semi-trance state in which he must focus on keeping the connection open and channeling the necessary power – and it is always the right amount of energy, no fear of overload or insufficient energy. While channeling energy, the psychic is reasonably aware of what’s going on around him and may talk, instruct, encourage or warn others, but he cannot use any other psionic power, is -5 on Perception Rolls, and cannot use his hands (one must remain touching the energy source and the other hand touching the device receiving the power) which means combat or skills requiring the hands cannot be performed without breaking the connection and shutting down the device. The psychic is not harmed by the electricity streaming through his body.

Living Battery

Range: Touch.

Duration: 20 minutes per level of experience.

Requirement: The psychic must be holding or using the device for it to work. The instant he lets go or breaks contact it stops working.

I.S.P.: 4 to power a small or low power item like a flashlight, tape recorder, Walkman radio, cell phone, digital camera and similar devices; 12 I.S.P. to run mechanisms that require more energy like a television, desktop computer, printer, space heater, refrigerator, power tools, or even an automobile with a dead or missing battery; 24 I.S.P. to power heavy power tools (jackhammer, high-powered lights like those used for highway work at night, a small, light generator, and similar).

The Psi-Mechanic is able focus his Inner Strength to become a living battery and power as many as three different electronic items at a time. Any electronic device that needs to be plugged into an electrical outlet or requires a battery can be powered simply by the psychic holding or touching it. The device will continue to function as if plugged in or completely charged as long as the psychic is touching or using it, and channeling psychic energy into electrical energy. The character can even make a light bulb shine by holding it in his bare hands or putting it in his mouth, as well as start and drive a car with a dead or entirely missing battery or spark plugs, and similar feats. As many as three different devices can be used in this fashion as long as each can be held or touched by the psychic, but that’s all. A good rule of thumb is that the psychic can serve as a *Living Battery* for common electronic devices, the kinds of items one can find at *Wal*Mart* or an *electronics store*, including any handheld battery operated devices, but not large generators, heavy machinery, etc.

Penalties: The character's split focus means he is -1 attack/action per melee round, -1 on all bonuses and saving throws, as well as -3 on Perception Rolls, and -10% on skill performance. All resume to normal as soon as he stops being a living battery.

Machine Activation

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

Duration: One melee round (15 seconds).

I.S.P.: 5

This very simple power can have impressive results. The Psi-Mechanic can use his mind and focus to turn electronic machines and devices on and off. This means he can flip a light switch, turn on a printer, or a microwave, or television, or radio, or a battery operated toy, or start (or turn off) a car or machine without a key, and so on. The character must be able to see the device he is turning on or off, must be within range, and the device must have power (unless one of the previous psionic abilities is also being used to give it power).

Note: Each action of turning a machine on or off counts as one of the Psi-Mechanic's melee attacks/actions. Machine Activation is limited to common household and business machines and not complex alarm systems, power grids, transformers, heavy equipment, and similar heavy-duty, large or powerful devices. And while the psychic can turn a computer on and off, he cannot operate it or affect the data unless he has the appropriate computer skills, nor access programs that require special knowledge or codes to use.

Machine Psychic Diagnosis

Range: Personal inspection.

Duration: Immediate knowledge, but the psychic must study and focus on the machine for at least 1D6+2 minutes (or meditate over it for 1D4 minutes).

I.S.P.: 5 per individual machine inspected.

The Psi-Mechanic's affinity with machines is such that he or she can sense mechanical and electronic problems, sabotage, system failure, faulty components/parts, and low power supply, as well as outside psionic control (Telemechanics) or supernatural possession (certain supernatural beings can control or inhabit machines) with absolute clarity. This pinpoint accuracy enables the psychic to suggest the proper course of action and make repairs himself in *half* the usual time necessary for a top-flight mechanic. **Bonuses:** When this ability has been used to determine the problem and necessary repairs, it adds a +10% bonus to any Mechanical, Electrical or Technical skills required to get it working again.

Meditation Note

Meditation *psi-abilities* are not available for this P.C.C., but the Meditation *skill* is available.

Mental Electronic Messaging

Range: Varies. Mind alone: 100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience and knowledge that the "target" is within range or visible; line of sight.

Using an electronic transmitter (i.e. a simple cell phone, radio, or laptop): 1000 miles (1600 km) per level of experience. By channeling through the device, the psychic can send his mental message to *any* of the electronic devices listed, even if they are normally incompatible (e.g., a cell phone to a TV or clock radio).

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds), with each text message or image counting as one melee action/attack. The psychic may choose to devote that entire time to message sending, or loop the message to repeat over and over again (the latter uses up all of the psychic's attacks/action for those four melee rounds). Or each short message can count as one of the character's melee attacks/actions, enabling the character to do other things than just send messages for the entire minute (four melee rounds). Remember, each short message or phrase counts as one melee action/attack.

I.S.P.: 8

The Psi-Mechanic's influence over machines and electronic devices enables him to send telepathic-like messages, not to another person's mind, but to his cell phone, beeper, radio, computer, laptop, handheld videogame or any wireless device (an N-Gage, for example), and even a television or GPS system. It can be a text message or a mental *image*, like a still photograph, or, if audio is available, spoken words. Sometimes the written word or an image is more effective, eerie and personal than the spoken word (a picture, after all, is said to be worth a thousand words).

The correspondence is limited to one minute maximum, though the psychic can always *call back* at the cost of another 6 I.S.P.

Text & image messages. Number sequences up to 24 digits and short phrases are most common, with each set of numbers or words counting as one melee action/attack. This makes it easy to gauge and account for each message in a game setting. A text message can be a single word to as many as ten ("Go," "die," "get out," "be careful," "go to 12455 Universal Drive, Kevin needs you right now," "Trent senses evil inside the house," "Susannah is a shape shifter," "get out now!!!", "I know what you did," "I'm coming for you," "Now you die," etc.), as well as send static/snow or an image or image sequence (one image per message sent, each changing as a new image comes in, and each snapshot-like image counting as one melee action).

As the examples show, Mental Electronic Messaging has a number of applications. It can be used to harass, frighten or challenge an enemy or victim, warn or inform a comrade, or be used as a means of silent communication with associates via cell phone, electronic notebook, laptop, GPS, and similar modes of electronic communication, offering both image and text capabilities.

The spoken word can be mentally sent to any electronic device that has audio capabilities, including radio alarm clocks, Walkman radio or CD players, most computers, videogame devices, etc. The conversation is two-way like a telephone, only the incoming signal from the Psi-Mechanic cannot be traced and

may not involve a physical device at all! The maximum conversation is one minute, but one can say quite a bit in one minute. Reading this paragraph aloud is about 25-35 seconds depending on how quickly it is read.

Like the text or image messages, a voice message can be used to harass, scare, or intimidate an enemy or victim, communicate with allies, or (more so than silent text or images) be used to *trick* superstitious or confused people (and true believers) that it is the voice of God, an angel, a demon, spirit, or ghost of the dearly departed, or an anonymous friend.

Untraceable. Text, image or spoken messages sent via *Mental Electronic Messaging* are completely untraceable. There isn't even a radio, phone or television signal in the first place. Similarly, the message is NOT stored on the receiving device and vanishes after one minute as if it never existed.

Open Lock

Range: Self.

Duration: One melee round.

I.S.P.: 6

This psi-ability may be thought of as the Psychic-Enhanced Pick Locks skill. All the Psi-Mechanic has to do is touch the lock and focus on picking it. *Key locks* require a lock pick tool, but something as simple as a paperclip will do. Somehow the psychic gets a mental image of the lock mechanism and exactly how to manipulate the pick to open it. Applying this power to *tumbler locks* the psychic actually sees the next number in the combination as he turns the tumbler. Both have an equivalent base skill of 80% +2% per each additional level of experience.

Electronic locks are trickier and using this psi-ability in concert with the Locksmith skill provides a +15% bonus. If the Locksmith skill is not known, the psychic has only a 15% chance of success.

Psychic Repair

Range: Touch.

Duration: Two minutes when used by someone other than the psychic who made the repairs, or as long as the psychic is touching or using the device. If it is put down for more than one melee round (15 seconds), or packed away, the psionic repairs vanish and the Psychic Repair ability will have to be performed before it can be used by the character again.

Requirement: Must first perform a Machine Psychic Diagnosis (5 I.S.P.).

I.S.P.: 20

Once the character knows exactly what's wrong with the broken weapon or device, he can make a mental picture of the necessary repairs, and invest the 20 I.S.P. into the device to get it to work without any physical parts or repairs! **Note:** This power does NOT supply bullets/ammunition or a missing power supply (but another psi-ability might).

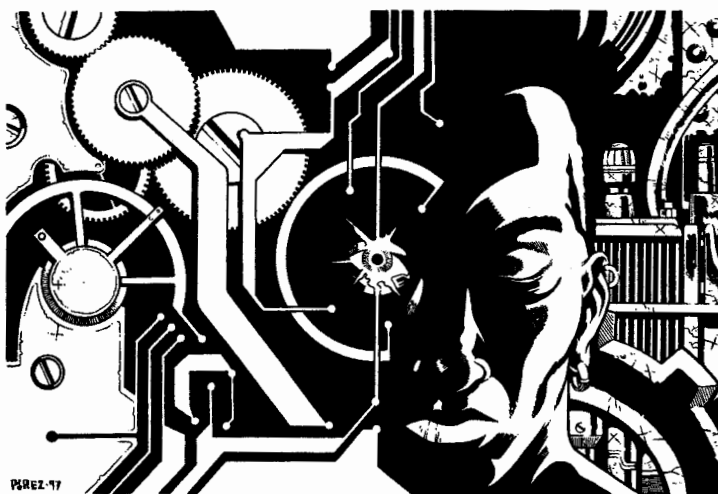
Telekinetic Bullets

Range: Touch.

Duration: One minute per level of experience or until fired, whichever comes first.

I.S.P.: 20

The psychic can mentally create one bullet per level of experience out of sheer mental force of will. This Telekinetic or TK bullet will inflict the same damage as the normal round for that weapon, because the physical gun is the psychic's frame of reference and the bullet must fit within that weapon's capabilities. Fires from any ordinary gun; bullets appear right in the chamber or magazine. (Special bullets like dumdums and Teflon coated shells can *NOT* be created). TK bullets will work on mortals, magical and supernatural creatures, including Entities, spirits, Astral Beings, and the undead/vampires.



Telemechanics

Range: By touch or up to 5 feet away (1.5 m); line of sight.

Duration: 10 minutes, plus 2 minutes per level of experience starting at level two.

I.S.P.: 10

Saving Throw: None.

This ability allows the psychic to mentally communicate with, and understand, machines. This psi-power is a bizarre combination of Object Read and Telepathy, except that it applies to mechanical devices only.

By touching any non-intelligent machine, whether it be a bicycle, gun, car or airplane, the psychic instantly has a complete (although temporary) knowledge of exactly how the machine operates. The psychic knows *everything* about the machine: the complete schematic diagram and operation knowledge are clearly seen in his mind's eye. The level of skill/expertise using an unfamiliar machine is equal to 80%, and if the character has personal knowledge and experience with the machine his skill at using it goes up to 95%.

When touching an artificially intelligent machine, i.e., computers and robots, the psychic not only understands everything about its operation, maintenance, repair, access codes, etc., but can actually communicate with it telepathically. This means he can tap into a computer's data files without using a terminal be-

cause the information is sent directly into the psychic's mind. Remember, the telepathic link and memory are temporary abilities and the psychic will remember the general context and certain bits of info that made an impression on him. Of course, the character can take written or verbal notes (on a tape recorder), and using *Total Recall* should enable the character to call up additional small bits of key info and details for up to about 48 hours after accessing the computer files, but after that it's all a blur. The psychic's telepathic computer skill is equal to Computer Operation, Programming and Repair, each with an 88% skill proficiency. Computer Hacking is not available unless the psychic also has that skill; the telepathic application of "hacking" is at a skill proficiency of 78% even if his formal skill is higher or lower.

Telemechanic Mental Operation

Prerequisite: Psychic *must* also have the Telemechanics power.

Range: Touch or 20 feet (6.1 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

Duration: 2 melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of the psychic.

I.S.P.: 12

Saving Throw: Special. Regular, non-intelligent machines cannot save vs Telemechanic Operation. Cybernetics and bionics attached to living flesh, sentient machines and magic items and devices are impervious.

This power is a step beyond the mere understanding of machines granted by Telemechanics, it allows the psychic to telepathically *operate* machines with his mind! As long as the machine is turned on, is operational, and he knows how to use it, the psychic can manipulate it with his mind as if his fingers were on the controls! This means he can operate computer key pads, set/program an alarm clock, change the radio station, operate a VCR or television, operate a press, fire a gun, drive a car (even if there is already a driver, but at -30% when usurping the pilot), turn off (or on) a surveillance video camera or make it turn away and hold that position (assuming it's on a swivel and not fixed in one position), and so on.

The Telemechanic Mental Operation power will only work on machines that have an electronic or power source of some kind or another. This ability does not work on artificially intelligent machines (i.e. intelligent computers, robots, etc.), nor on cybernetics, bionics, machines possessed or controlled by the supernatural or already controlled by a Psi-Mechanic, nor magic devices and items. **Note:** Also see *Telemechanic Paralysis* and *Possession*.

The psychic can use other psionic powers and engage in other activities while controlling the machine, but must maintain some level of mental concentration and contact to maintain control. During this period he is -1 melee attack/action and -5% on skill performance. He must also stay within range. If he steps out of range or loses concentration, the machine returns to normal in 1D4 seconds.

Telemechanic Paralysis

Prerequisite: Psychic *must* also have the Telemechanics power.

Range: Touch or 40 feet (12.2 m).

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 20

Saving Throw: No save applies to everyday, non-intelligent machines, but artificial intelligences, advanced computers, cybernetics and bionic devices attached to living flesh, sentient machines and robots, magic devices and machines already possessed or controlled via psionics are impervious.

This is a form of techno-manipulation whereby the psychic is able to mentally bond with the machine and momentarily prevent it from functioning. The psychic blocks the transmission of signals along the device's mechanical "nervous system," effectively incapacitating it. This means the power is only effective against machines that require an energy source. Simple devices like wind-up toys, scissors, revolvers and pistols, swords, knives, crossbows, and similar items cannot be affected. The paralyzed machine freezes in place, vehicles will stop, and the mechanism does not respond to any controls or prompts until the psionic influence comes to an end.

The psychic can use other psionic powers and engage in other activities, but must maintain some level of mental concentration and contact to keep the machine inactive. During this period, he is -1 melee attack/action and -5% on skill performance. He must also stay within range (40 feet/12.2 m). If he steps out of range or loses concentration, the machine returns to normal in 1D4 seconds.

Telemechanic Possession

Prerequisite: Psychic *must* also have Machine Psychic Diagnosis (or Object Read) and Telemechanics.

Range: Touch or 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melee rounds) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 50

Saving Throw: No save applies to every day, non-intelligent machines, but artificial intelligences, advanced computers, cybernetics and bionics devices attached to living flesh, sentient machines and intelligent robots, magic devices and machines already possessed or controlled via psionics are impervious.

The psychic mentally possesses a machine, overriding any preset controls, programming and human operator/driver, and controls it like a puppet or as if the machine were now his body. The possessing psychic is, in effect, an immaterial pilot who controls the machine as he desires. Computers, factory equipment, non-intelligent robots, vehicles, sensory devices, guns, a toaster, etc., all do as the possessing psychic desires, which may include presenting false readings and data.

While the psychic possesses the machine, it responds to the character's thoughts and does whatever he desires. Of course, the machine can only respond within its physical and mechanical parameters. Thus, if the machine needs a power source and that source is canceled (unplugging the machine) it stops working, though the possessing psychic may remain inside if he so desires. For example, the psychic may be able to take possession

of an automatic rifle and make it shoot (or not) seemingly of its own volition, but he cannot make the rifle aim, move or hop around, nor can he reload the weapon or make ammunition appear inside. Likewise, if the device is unplugged or runs out of fuel, the machine is deactivated with no ill effect to the psychic, except he cannot make the machine do anything. Similarly, if a vehicle needs wheels to move, destroying the wheels will cripple it, and so on.

Mental possession of a simple machine gives the psychic complete awareness, knowledge and control over the machine itself, but he has only a vague awareness of the surroundings of the machine and sees, hears and feels things around the machine as if in a cloud or haze (-5 on Perception Rolls). However, if the machine has optics and/or sensors, he is able to use them like his own natural eyes and senses for total awareness. The machine, regardless of its capabilities and programming, has attacks and actions equal to those of the character possessing it.

If the possessed machine is destroyed while the psychic's mind is still inside of it, the character loses one third of his Hit Points (skips S.D.C. and goes direct to H.P.) from the shock and pain of the surrogate machine body's destruction. Furthermore, the psychic is stunned for 1D4 minutes: reduce attacks per melee, speed, combat bonuses, and skill performance by half while stunned.

Note: During the period that the machine is possessed, the psychic's natural body falls into a coma-like state and is vulnerable to attack unless protected by others. While inside the machine, the psychic has no idea what might be happening to his natural body. If the body is destroyed, the character's mind is torn from the machine and he dies. Also note that the psychic cannot use any other psychic abilities while possessing a machine.

Thoughtography

Range: Touch or 10 feet (3 m) away.

Duration: Permanent results.

I.S.P.: 6

The power to imprint film, as in camera film and videotape, with one to ten symbols or words, an insignia or design, and even an image such as a face, drawing or picture though it will be a high contrast image and lacking detail. Some psychic researchers have speculated that the Shroud of Turin (reputed to be the burial cloth Jesus was wrapped in and which bears his image) might be a form of Thoughtography.

For double the I.S.P. cost, the psychic can do the same psychic imaging on a blank computer disk/CD or digital camera, as well as rice paper, brass (appears as tarnish), eggshell and soft clay or putty. In the latter case, the image or words appear to have been pushed and shaped into the clay or putty by invisible fingers.

Physical Psionics

Alter Aura

Range: Self.

Duration: One hour per each level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

Saving Throw: None.

According to psychics who can see such things, all living beings possess an aura – a colorful energy field that is invisible to the naked eye and most conventional forms of photography and sensors. The development of Kirlian photography (discovered by accident in 1939 by Russian electrician Semyon Kirlian) claims to show some sort of electromagnetic energy field around living creatures, and would seem to support the claims that living beings have auras.

This psychic ability does not allow the psychic to see auras, but to alter his own. Most common among Physical Psychics, the character can manipulate his physical energy field to *appear* different (stronger, weaker, sickly, lacking psionics, evil rather than good, etc.). The altered aura sends the wrong message to those humans and supernatural beings who can see auras and use the information they glean from them to assess an opponent or find a kindred (evil or psychic) spirit.

Alterations include:

- The general level of experience can be made to seem much lower (level 1 or 2) or much higher (1D4+3 levels higher) than it really is.
- Conceal one's true alignment and cover it with a false one (any).
- Conceal the presence of psychic ability (the aura appears to be a normal human) or show I.S.P. levels to be much lower than they really are (but not higher).
- Conceal the amount of base P.P.E.; seems to be only 1-2 points.
- Conceal the presence of magic.
- Conceal true Physical Attributes, making them appear to be half of what they really are, or 30% higher.
- Alter Aura to appear weak and fatigued or sickly.
- Alter Aura to appear emotionally or mentally agitated or unstable, or depressed and withdrawn (not aggressive or alert).
- And for triple the usual I.S.P. (6 points) the psychic can adjust the aura to appear as if he is possessed or terminally ill.

Biofeedback

Range: Self.

Duration: Permanent results.

I.S.P.: 8

Accelerated physical healing via a trance-like state. The character can restore one Hit Point or 1D6 S.D.C. per every hour of Biofeedback meditation. A maximum of 20 points can be restored this way, plus there is minimal scarring. It takes 10 minutes to get into a Biofeedback trance and the psychic needs one full hour of uninterrupted meditation to heal a single Hit Point or 1D6 S.D.C.

In the alternative, 30 minutes of Biofeedback meditation will reduce the symptoms, penalties and damage from disease/illness or drugs or poisoning by 75%. The reduced suffering and ailments last for one hour per level of experience of the psychic. At the end of that period, the symptoms, penalties and damage reappear in full force. Another 30 minute Biofeedback session is necessary to reduce them again. **Note:** Although the symptoms, damage and penalties are reduced by this process, it does nothing to cure the illness or reduce the duration of illness or problem – the disease or poisoning must run its normal course. In fact, because the Biofeedback enables the psychic to function close to normal, the character inevitably overdoes it when he should be getting bed rest and/or medical attention, which weakens the body's ability to fight off the problem. Ironically, this means the typical duration of the illness, drug or poison is *extended* by 1D4x10%. Furthermore, if the character's Hit Points are reduced to 10 or below while battling a disease, drug or poisoning via Biofeedback, he will collapse and fall into a light coma (+30% to survive with medical treatment or magical or psychic healing).

Bio-Stasis Trance or Tumo Mastery

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed.

I.S.P.: 5

This meditative trance is used as a survival mechanism in which the character alters the bio-rhythms of his body, reducing bodily functions (heartbeat, respiration, blood pressure, etc.) to a tiny fraction of the normal level (two heartbeats per minute and stops breathing) to create an altered state that is effectively, suspended animation. This all done by sheer force of will and mental focus – total control of one's body.

The Bio-Stasis Trance will make the character appear to be dead, not breathing, because the body is in a state of suspended animation. The stasis can enable the psychic to survive in an airless or poisoned air environment for up to one hour before it begins to have an adverse effect on his body (the psychic will die after another hour). A Physical Psychic can even survive being submerged underwater for up to 30 minutes and can slow the flow of poison, blood clot or foreign object in his bloodstream, effectively stopping it from doing damage for 30 minutes (and hopefully buying enough time for an ally to get him the antidote to the poison or the appropriate medical attention to save his life). Similarly, the Physical Psychic can go into stasis to survive extreme cold temperatures as low as 60 degrees Fahrenheit (-33.3 C) below zero without suffering from exposure, frostbite or any permanent damage for up to 24 hours per level of experience. The same is true of extreme heat, as much as 120 degrees Fahrenheit (48.8 C). The psychic can also go for 20 days without water and 80 days without food, and survive low to moderate levels of nuclear radiation for 24 hours per level of experience, all with negligible damage and suffering while in a Bio-Stasis Trance.

Unlike some of the other trance states, the psychic hears sounds and knows what's being said around him, and is able to receive Empathic and Telepathic messages while in stasis, but cannot respond without breaking the trance state. **Note:** See

Aura, Psychic Diagnosis and Presence Sense will ALL indicate that the character is alive.

Deaden Senses

Range: Others, up to 160 feet (48.7 m) away; line of sight.

Duration: 2D6 minutes; roll for random determination of duration.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: -1 to save.

A form of bio-manipulation that is so subtle that its victims seldom realize they have fallen under its influence. The psychic is able to induce a physical influence on a single character to make him or her momentarily less alert and attentive to the things around him. Small sounds, odors, movements, and details go unnoticed; other characters using skills such as Camouflage, Disguise, Concealment, Cardsharp, Forgery, Impersonation, Palming, Pick Pockets, Prowl, Seduction, and Surveillance/Tailing all enjoy a +10% skill bonus against this deadened character. **Penalties:** Furthermore, the victim is also slow to react: Reduce Spd by 10%, -1 on initiative, -6 on Perception Rolls, and -5% on skill performance. This power is typically used on guards, sentries, and investigators to make them miss something in a search, not notice the psychic, etc.

Death Trance

Range: Self.

Duration: Up to four hours per level of experience.

I.S.P.: One point.

The psychic can make himself appear to be dead by slowing the metabolism in a way similar to the Bio-Stasis, only in this case, he is not in stasis. This is a trick to fool an enemy. The psychic is completely awake, hears everything going on around him, and can think and plot while entranced. He can also be reached via Telepathy and Empathy, and respond, but can't actually use any of his own psionic abilities unless he breaks the Death Trance. The trance can be stopped anytime the character desires.

Demon Punch

Range: Physical combat.

Duration: One melee round (15 seconds).

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: None, but an opponent may attempt to parry or dodge.

A punch or kick attack with psychic energy to back it up. When used against supernatural beings and creatures of magic, the punch does 3D6 damage plus the character's usual P.S. damage bonus (if any). This attack can also be used against energy beings, entities and Astral travelers. Double damage (6D6 plus double the character's usual P.S. damage bonus) to Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences and their avatars! **Note:** The Demon Punch does not work against mortal opponents even if they are spell casting Arcanists, Witches, those possessed by demonic entities and humans who derive their power from the supernatu-

ral or magic. (Inflicts M.D. in Mega-Damage game settings like **Rifts®**.)

Dessication Touch (Supernatural)

Range: Touch.

Duration: Instant.

Saving Throw: Standard, but a successful save means the creature suffers half damage. If the thing knows the attack is coming, it can try to avoid being touched via parry and dodge.

I.S.P.: 20

This devastating attack only works on physical supernatural creatures and mortals possessed by supernatural or magical beings. The psychic need only touch the creature to inflict dessication. This causes the creature to immediately begin to shrivel as if it were a dried out corpse.

Damage: 1D8x10 damage to S.D.C. first and then Hit Points when used against most supernatural beings, including Predators, Pranksters, Lesser and Greater Demons, and Possessing Entities inside a human host (only in the latter case, damage is done directly to the entity, not the human's body). Witches and mortals who directly get their power from demonic forces are also affected but take *half* damage. Dessication can also affect creatures of magic, doing 1D8x10 to evil beings, and half damage to selfish or good creatures.

2D8x10 damage direct to the Hit Points of Ancient Evil (Dark Gods, Demon Lords) and Alien Intelligences, and their avatars! **Note:** Has no effect on energy beings, ghosts, or Astral Travelers. (Inflicts M.D. in Mega-Damage game settings like **Rifts®**.)



Ectoplasm

Range: 40 feet (12.2) +5 feet (+1.5 m) per level of experience.

Duration: 4 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P. (Vapor): 6

I.S.P. (Solid): 12 I.S.P.

This mystifying ability enables the psychic to create a slightly luminous, vapor-like substance that is exuded from the pores of his hands or from the eyes or mouth.

Ectoplasm has two forms: an invisible vapor and a luminous, solid state.

The vaporous form of ectoplasm is a sort of floating, probing finger that can snuff out candles, open doors, knock over or pick up small objects (weighing under 9 ounces/255 grams), tap somebody on the shoulder, rustle leaves and knock on a door. The ectoplasmic vapor can be seen only by its creator, other psychics and supernatural beings who can *See the Invisible*, as well as with infrared optic systems (including infrared camera lenses, infrared gun sights, binoculars, etc.) and Ghost Goggles. Ectoplasm, although an invisible vapor, has physical properties, which means it *cannot* go through walls or solid objects. Thus, a person walking into an ectoplasmic stream may feel a sensation like walking into a spider's web or brushing against a cotton ball. Often a person will unwittingly walk into and snag the stream of floating ectoplasm, pulling or stretching it along without being aware of it (can't feel it through clothes, especially a jacket). When this happens, the psychic must maneuver the snagged portion to loop around the human obstruction.

The creator of the ectoplasm vapor can control the full length of the vaporous stream like a floating tentacle. Although the ectoplasm cannot go through solid objects, it can slip through keyholes, cracks under doors or loose seals around a window or container, including drawers that aren't shut tight or locked. If a breeze can blow through, so can ectoplasm. The only drawback is that the psychic must be able to see the ectoplasm to maneuver it.

Solid ectoplasm can be a startling sight. In this form the ectoplasm can be shaped into an extra limb, such as an arm and hand, or just a hand or claw or tentacle, or even a foot attached to a long stream spooling out of the psychic. The ectoplasmic limb appears as a white, slightly luminous material that resembles stretched cotton or a stream of milk floating through the air as if there were no gravity. The ectoplasm stream trails back to its creator like a lifeline of silly putty. The ectoplasm hand or appendage and its connecting line hovers and floats, but can also fly at a speed of 18. The solid ectoplasmic limb has much greater strength and is able to carry, lift or hold as much as 40 lbs (18 kg), as well as pull open unlocked drawers, open doors, or fetch objects, but *cannot* squeeze through the tiny openings that the vapor can. An opening must be at least the size of a quarter for solid ectoplasm to fit, and then the limb must be turned into a thin tentacle and reformed on the other side of the opening. Ectoplasm can also be used to create a face or even a full figure, although detailed features are impossible. Ectoplasmic images may explain apparitions reported during some seances.

Ecto-Combat: The ectoplasm vapor and solid form both have an automatic dodge against all attacks directed at any of its length, including the life line connected to the psychic. That means an attempt to hack the middle of the ectoplasmic stream will see that portion of the ectoplasm suddenly swerve, loop or bend with a life of its own to avoid the attack. The dodge by the midsection (or anywhere else) does not count as a melee action but is an automatic response that has nothing to do with its creator.

However, the ectoplasm's creator can direct the appendage to hit back or pick up and use a weapon. The solid ectoplasm appendage is not a great tool for combat, however. It limits its cre-

ator's attacks/actions per melee and has minimal strength; roughly equal to a P.S. attribute of 4. A punch or kick from ectoplasm does a mere one point of damage. Damage can be increased by the appendage using any type of handheld weapon weighing under 40 lbs (18 kg) and smaller than five feet (1.5 m) long. Small modern weapons, such as a pistol or revolver, can be used, but are -10 to strike. Meanwhile, the vapor cannot use any weapons weighing more than 9 ounces (225 grams), and can inflict no damage of its own.

Ecto-Combat Statistics:

- A vapor or solid appendage must be controlled by its creator at all times (except the dodging reflex). Thus, each ectoplasm attack or action counts as one of its creator's melee attacks or actions. So, if the psychic has four attacks per melee, the ectoplasm appendage can be made to have four attacks.
- Vapor and solid get an automatic reflex dodge against all attacks, including multiple or simultaneous attacks.
- +5 to dodge for both vapor and solid.
- +1 to parry for both vapor and solid.
- +1 to strike for both vapor and solid.
- Vapor inflicts no physical damage, but can touch, tap or pick up and carry objects weighing 9 ounces (225 grams) or less.
- Solid ectoplasm inflicts one point of damage in combat or by weapon and can carry as much as 40 lbs (118 kg).
- A pair of Ectoplasmic limbs can divide their attacks but each attack/action counts as one of the psychic's.
- Ectoplasmic S.D.C. is 40 +1 Hit Point. Applies to vapor and solid. If the ectoplasm is destroyed the creator takes one Hit Point and 10 S.D.C. points of physical damage.
- Maximum range possible for vapor and solid is 40 feet (12.2 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.
- Sunlight or bright artificial light (250 watts) reduces the range to half.
- One full melee (15 seconds) is required to create an ectoplasm vapor or solid appendage. Half a melee (7 seconds) is needed to withdraw/return ectoplasm *into* its creator.

Ectoplasmic Disguise

Range: Self.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 12

This is an enhanced control over ectoplasm that gives the psychic the ability to cover and disguise his physical features. Ectoplasm is created as normal, with the mysterious substance rising from the pores of the skin. Instead of forming wispy tentacles, the ectoplasm covers the face. As it solidifies, it becomes a sort of putty-like material that can be mentally shaped and molded by the psychic. Once the desired shapes and features are achieved, the psychic can make the ectoplasm look like real flesh.

The best way to create an Ectoplasmic Disguise is for the psychic to look at a photograph or a frozen video image and concentrate on that image while the ectoplasm automatically molds into that shape/appearance, including skin color. Not only can the psychic create a mask to hide his facial features, but he can also change the shape and bulk of his body with ectoplasm, adding a pot belly, muscles, a tail or extra eye, etc.

Level of proficiency: 50% +3% per level of experience (add +16% if the character has the Disguise skill). This percentage applies primarily when trying to *accurately* imitate a specific person's identity. In most other cases, the disguise is successful in that it obscures the psychic's true identity.

Problems & Limitations: An Ectoplasmic Disguise is especially effective from a distance, but does not hold up under close scrutiny. The ectoplasm always has a bit of a "dull" and "pasty" appearance, regardless of skin color. If punched, cut, scraped, etc., the ectoplasmic covering will tear away and, in a matter of seconds, noticeably reform to cover the tear/damage.

The psychic must also concentrate on maintaining his disguise, which means his attention is divided and concentration hampered. While the disguise is maintained, the psychic suffers the following penalties: -3 on Perception Rolls, -4 on initiative and reduce all combat bonuses, attacks per melee, running speed and skill performance by half. To perform better, the character must relinquish some of his control over the disguise, with notable results, like features obviously shifting, drooping or even melting. If the character is seriously injured, knocked unconscious or slain, the ectoplasm melts away, turns into floating globs and disappears into him in a matter of 10 seconds.

Electrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies as noted.

Electrokinesis is a psychic power that allows the psychic to exert amazing physical control over electricity.

1. Electrical Resistance. The psychic can manipulate his body to become resistant to electricity. Up to 60,000 volts will inflict no damage or ill effect. Currents greater than 60,000 volts, including lightning and magic electricity, do half damage. **Range:** Self. **Duration:** 3 minutes per level of experience. **I.S.P.:** 4.

2. Electrical Discharge. The character can cause static electricity within a six foot (1.8 m) area, as well as emit an electrical discharge by touch. The discharge is a little one S.D.C. jolt to humans, but inflicts 2D6 damage to supernatural beings, including Entities and energy beings. **Range:** Touch or 10 feet (3 m) away. **Duration:** One melee round (15 seconds); each blast counts as one melee attack. **I.S.P.:** 8 per each discharge.

3. Manipulate Electrical Devices. Through focused thought the psychic can enforce a limited control over electrical devices, such as turn off and on light switches, computers, televisions, appliances, flashlights, toys (battery and plug types), windshield wipers, and all types of electrically operated devices. He can also manipulate the controls of the device, such as volume, channel selection, tuners, speakers, change speed, dim lights, and so on. A dozen different electrical functions can be manipulated each melee. This can mean flicking the light off and on six times (12 functions/6 off, 6 on) or turn on the T.V., turn its volume up to the max. and turn on 10 other appliances (12 functions in all). **Range:** 40 feet (12.2 m) +4 feet (1.2 m) per level of experience. The character does not need to see the devices to manipulate them. He can feel their presence. **Duration:** 30 seconds per level of experience. **I.S.P.:** 4.

4. Sense Electricity. The psychic can sense or feel electricity and pinpoint its exact location. Range: 45 feet (13.7 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience. Duration: 2 minutes of extreme sensitivity when he can pinpoint every source of electricity in the area. I.S.P.: 2 per every two minutes. Base Skill: 55% +5% per each additional level of experience. A failed roll means only 1D6x10% of all the electrical devices/sources of electricity could be sensed.

Hydrokinesis

Range: Varies.

Duration: Varies.

I.S.P.: Varies.

This ability enables the character to use psychic energy to sense and influence water.

1. Sense Chemical Impurities. The psychic can sense whether or not water or other liquids (soup, juice, soda, etc.) are polluted, poisoned or contaminated by foreign or dangerous substances, including drugs. The exact nature of the additive or pollutant may be unknown, but he will know that it is not completely natural and also sense if it is harmful. When sensing water, first roll to determine: A) Pure or Drinkable (nonhazardous/tap water) 70% +5% per each additional level of experience. B) Roll for general nature of the pollutant; this identifies whether it is a chemical/drug (not deadly, but will cause a reaction if drunk) or poison/toxin (deadly or harmful if swallowed). Success ratio in identifying the general nature of the pollutant is 35% +5% per each additional level of experience. Range: Self or up to six inches (0.15 m) away. Duration: One minute. I.S.P.: 2.

2. Boil Water. The psychic can increase the temperature of water, raising it to boiling level within one minute (four melee rounds). Up to one gallon (3.8 liters) can be affected. Once set to boiling, it will take the usual amount of time to cool. This power cannot be made to boil the water or blood inside a living creature. Range: Eight feet (2.4 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience; line of sight. Duration: One minute (4 melees). I.S.P.: 3 per gallon of water.

3. Water Spout. The psychic can create a spout of water as well as and hurl water. The effect can be used to make water bubble (but not heated), shoot straight up like a geyser or at an angle, shooting from a glass or water tap across a room like a short, powerful spray from a garden hose. Up to one gallon (3.8 liters) of water per level of experience can be manipulated and hurled up to a distance of 20 feet (6 m). Similarly, the psychic can make a glass or pitcher of water slowly come to him as if it were slowly sliding along across a smooth surface (Spd of 4). **Note:** In all cases, the fluid must be water or been made from 75% water to be controlled, such as hot coffee or tea, chicken soup, Kool-Aid, etc. Forget about hurling ice frozen water, it is beyond the scope of this ability. Milk, paint, gasoline, cake batter and similar substances can NOT be manipulated with this power, because they are not water.

Making water leap with a life of its own can be startling to others and can make a great distraction if handled right. Hurling normal water or a cool drink into somebody's face/eyes will momentarily blind and surprise the individual, causing him/her to lose initiative and one attack that melee round. Hurling hot or

boiling water on the body (especially the crotch or face) will make the victim lose initiative, lose all attacks that melee round, take 2D4 damage, and be temporarily blinded for 1D6+1 melee rounds (-10 to strike, parry, dodge, etc.). Characters of a good alignment will not hurl boiling water in the face of most opponents, though a monster may be another story, and an exception may be made for life and death situations, especially to save someone else.

Water Throwing Range: 20 feet (6.1 m). Duration: One melee round, with each attack counting as one of the character's melee attacks/actions. Making water bubble or rise up like a fountain can be maintained for up to 30 seconds (2 melee rounds). I.S.P.: 5. **Bonus:** +1 to strike. **Note:** The psychic can manipulate one gallon (3.8 liters) of water per level of experience up to 20 feet (6 m) away, whether he can see it or only feel its presence.

4. Sense Water. The character senses the presence of any water exposed to the open air at no I.S.P. cost. He can also sense and identify water damage (leaky roof or pipe, damage paper, mold caused by water/humidity, rotting wood, etc.). Range: 20 feet (6 m). I.S.P.: 4. **Note:** Underground rivers, closed water lines/pipes, water inside airtight containers, etc. cannot be sensed.

5. Underwater Invisibility. The psychic can turn invisible when completely submerged underwater and remain (relatively) still. The effect is ruined if doing more than paddling in place, but even then attackers are -3 to strike the submerged character because he is difficult to see clearly, the water seeming to reflect oddly making visibility difficult. Range: Self. I.S.P.: 6.

6. Water Stealth. The psychic loves the rain, enjoys swimming, water sports and being wet, and feels lucky when it is raining. In the rain, the character enjoys the following skill bonuses +10% to Disguise, Impersonation, Land Navigation, Prowl and Tailing. Furthermore, the character does not feel chilled or uncomfortable when wet, takes half damage from electricity, is +1 on Perception Rolls, suffers half the usual penalties from fog, and does not leave wet or muddy footprints when he comes in from the rain. Range: Self. I.S.P.: 6.

Impervious to Cold

Range: Self.

Duration: 20 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

A mind over matter discipline that enables the character to suffer absolutely no ill effects or discomfort from exposure to even the most extreme sub-zero freezing conditions.

Impervious to Fire

Range: Self.

Duration: 3 minutes per level of experience.

Length of Trance: 2D4 melees for preparatory meditation.

I.S.P.: 4

A mind over matter discipline enabling the psychic to endure intense heat, fire, boiling water, hot coals, and so on, without suffering pain, damage, injury or scarring. Magic fires inflict half damage.

Impervious to Poison/Toxin

Range: Self.

Duration: 2 minutes (8 melee rounds).

I.S.P.: 4

The character can negate the full effects of poisons and toxic chemicals which he has ingested (eaten or drank) or introduced into the bloodstream, as long as he has *advance knowledge* of its deadly properties. A poison, toxin, or drug which has been inflicted without advance warning (and starting to take effect) can be negated too, but will do half damage or effect before it can be completely negated. **Bonuses:** Identify poisons: 30% +4% per level of experience; +2 to save vs poisons and drugs whenever this power is in place.

Leidenfrost Effect

Range: Self.

Duration: One melee round (15 seconds) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

Saving Throw: No, but an opponent may attempt to parry or dodge.

A weird physical reaction that causes the psychic to draw ambient moisture to his extremities surrounded by an invisible, protective, psychic energy field that enables the character to walk across, sit on or handle, extremely hot, cold, or sharp objects without injury or pain. Cannot walk through fire, but can walk across hot coals or lay on a bed of nails, or juggle knives without fear of injury.

Levitation

Range: Self or object or other up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away; line of sight.

Height: 6 feet (1.8 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per each additional level of experience starting at level two. Double when on a ley line, nexus or place of power.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: Small: 2 I.S.P. Medium: 6 I.S.P. Large: 6 +1 I.S.P. for every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) over 20 lbs (9 kg). *Self*, regardless of personal weight, and including 20 lbs (9 kg) of clothes and gear: 10. +1 I.S.P. for each additional 10 lbs (4.5 kg) of gear.

Saving Throw: None, not even for animals or people caught in Levitation against their will.

Levitation is a limited form of Telekinesis used to take hold of an object or person and carry it/him straight up into the air and suspend it there as if on an invisible wire. Sideways movement is NOT possible, only up and down.

Small objects weighing two pounds (0.9 kg) or less are the easiest to levitate.

Medium-sized objects weighing 3 to 20 pounds (1.4 to 9.1 kg) are more difficult, requiring greater concentration and expenditure of I.S.P.

Large objects, animals or people weighing more than 20 lbs (9 kg) cost 6 I.S.P. +1 additional point for every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) beyond 20 (9 kg). Thus, a 125 pound (56.2 kg) weight would re-

quire 17 I.S.P. to levitate into the air, a 200 pound (90 kg) person would cost 24 I.S.P.; round up.

Meditation, Advanced

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed, one hour minimum.

I.S.P.: 2

Just as the name suggests, this is an advanced form of meditation in which the psychic enters a deep trance state for the purpose of finding peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and regenerating his Inner Strength (I.S.P.) at an accelerated rate.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per 30 minutes or eight points per hour of meditation, but requires two I.S.P. to delve deep inside oneself so quickly and effectively.

Mind Block

Range: Self.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4 (per each duration period).

This is the ability to completely close or block oneself from all psychic/mental emanations. When intentionally closed to supernatural or psychic forces, the character can not sense anything, can not use psychic abilities, nor be influenced by others. A Mind Block will prevent penetration of Telepathy, Empathy, Hypnotic Suggestion, and Empathic Transmission. It can be an invaluable protective mask when dealing with malevolent psychic forces. Adds a bonus of +1 to save vs all psychic and mental attacks.

Nightvision

Range: Self, visual range of about 600 feet (183 m).

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

The psychic can adjust his vision through a form of bio-manipulation, making the eyes much more light sensitive and able to see in the dark. It works on the same principles as passive night-sight goggles that super-amplify ambient light from the moon and/or stars or artificial light in the distance. Thus, a single candle in the distance is enough for this character to see clearly in the dark. There must be some source of light to see; cannot see in total darkness. **Note:** If suddenly exposed to light brighter than a single candle, the psychic is blinded for 3D4 melee rounds. The Nightvision power can also be used to change one's vision to *polarized sight*, reducing glare as would a pair of polarized sunglasses.

Resist Fatigue

Range: Self.

Duration: 1 hour +20 minutes per level of experience past the normal range for fatigue.

I.S.P.: 4

A mind over matter discipline that enables the character to engage in physical activity without suffering from exhaustion.

Although fatigue is temporarily suspended. After pushing himself beyond the normal limits of endurance, when the psionic power ends, the psychic feels extremely tired and may even collapse. Needs one extra hour of sleep or two hours of rest (sitting around) for every hour that the Resist Fatigue ability was used. Without that sleep or rest, the character's Spd and skill performance are -20%, and combat bonuses are -1, and double penalties for each day the character may go without proper recuperation.

Resist Hunger

Range: Self.

Duration: 24 hours per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

An impressive mind over matter discipline that subdues any feeling of hunger and symptoms of starvation, enabling the character to function at full effectiveness without nourishment. As long as the psi-power is maintained the character can continue to operate as if he were well fed and healthy; no weakness, no stomach pains, etc. However, the body *does* suffer. After the first four days, the character loses 2 pounds (0.9 kg) of weight per day. **Note:** A psychic can survive up to 40 days, functioning as normal, without any food by continually using Resist Hunger. On day 41, however, the body gives out and the character will lapse into a coma. Under this extreme condition of food deprivation while maintaining heavy physical activity, the character is -20% to save vs coma/death.

Resist Pain

Range: Self.

Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

The psychic is able to push pain out of his mind and stay on his feet even when Hit Points are reduced to zero! First, the character does not feel any pain or damage from attacks with rolls to strike under 13. When this psi-power is in place, the individual functions as if he has an extra *10 Hit Points* +2 per level of experience.

Damage and penalties inflicted from Evil Eye/Bio-Manipulation, torture, drugs, radiation exposure, poison and disease are reduced by half when this power is activated, but only for the duration of the psionic ability. When it elapses the character is overcome with pain and suffers the full extent of his injuries. The character will sense when the Resist Pain is about to wear off and can renew it, provided he has sufficient I.S.P.

In addition, the character is impervious to *piercing* of the body with needles, skewers, ice picks, nails and any object smaller than a half inch (1.27 cm) in diameter. Such needles and puncturing objects penetrate the skin but do *no damage*, do not cause bleeding and do not leave any scar whatsoever (the wound seals up as if it were never there within 15 minutes).

Note: Foes using the skill *Interrogation Techniques* that involve physical punishment and torture have a skill penalty of -40% against a victim with this power in place.

Resist Thirst

Range: Self.

Duration: 12 hours per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

A mind over matter discipline that subdues the feelings and effects of thirst and dehydration. Normally, muscles begin to cramp and the body to weaken after just a few days without water, especially if the individual continues physical exertion. This psychic ability prevents that and enables the character to function at full effectiveness without water. However, although the psi-power allows the character to act as normal, the body is still suffering from dehydration. The lips become dry and chapped, the skin loses its elasticity, and the character loses one pound (0.45 kg) of weight per day. **Note:** A psychic can survive up to 12 days, functioning as normal, without any water by continually using Resist Thirst. This period is increased by 50% (18 days) if the character rests most of the time and does little or no physical activity. At the end of this period, the character lapses into a coma, and under these extreme conditions of deprivation, the character is -30% to save vs coma/death.

Rope Trick

Range: Touch or by line of sight up to 15 feet (4.6 m) away. Applicable to ordinary rope, nylon, knotted rags/cloth, and other common material suitable for climbing, though nothing as heavy as metal link chain.

Height: Height is limited to the length of the rope, with the end touching the ground. Maximum height, regardless of the rope's length, is 12 feet (3.6 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One minute (four melee rounds) per level of experience, but only while the Physical Psychic is focused and concentrating to maintain the rope suspended in the air. The act of the psychic climbing the rope while it is suspended does not break his concentration. The levitated rope can support weight up to 400 lbs (180 kg), and others who can climb may use the rope if the psychic allows it (i.e., he maintains the levitation), provided the combined weight does not exceed 400 lbs (180 kg).

I.S.P.: 4

A form of levitation performed on a length of rope, causing it to rise into the air (12 feet/3.6 m per level of experience) and be held firmly in place as if it were anchored to something solid. Somehow the idea that the rope is bearing the weight enables the psychic to support more weight at minimal I.S.P. than he could using conventional Levitation. Another example of mind over matter and perception and degree.

Limitations: The psychic cannot perform any skills (except climb) or take combat action while maintaining the rope levitation, requiring eye contact and concentration. Once the rope goes up (straight up), it stays up and cannot move up or down, nor side to side. Nor can the rope be angled diagonally or horizontally, it goes straight up. In addition, the trick is that in the psychic's mind, he is only levitating this, comparatively light, rope which is then climbed, not the rope and the climbers. Thus, the rope must be levitated in place before anyone starts to climb it (takes 1D4 seconds). The Rope Trick *cannot* be used like an elevator, i.e., grab hold of the top length and be carried up with it as it is levitated.

Stop Bleeding (Self)

Range: Self only.

Duration: Six minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Same as the Psychic Healing ability, but costs double the I.S.P. that it costs the Healer.

Summon Inner Strength

Range: Self.

Duration: Five minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

This psi-power enables the character to draw on his inner reserves of strength for greater physical endurance and power. Ideal in combat and crisis situations. Every time the psychic calls upon his Inner Strength the following bonuses apply:

- +4 to P.S. attribute.
- +10 S.D.C.
- +2 to save vs poison, toxins and disease.
- +5% to save vs coma/death.
- Fatigue is temporarily negated and the character functions without tiring for the full duration of the Summon Inner Strength power.

Telekinesis

Range: Up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, across or up or down. Double that range when facing a genuine supernatural adversary (x4 Threat Level or higher) and triple when on a ley line, nexus or place of power.

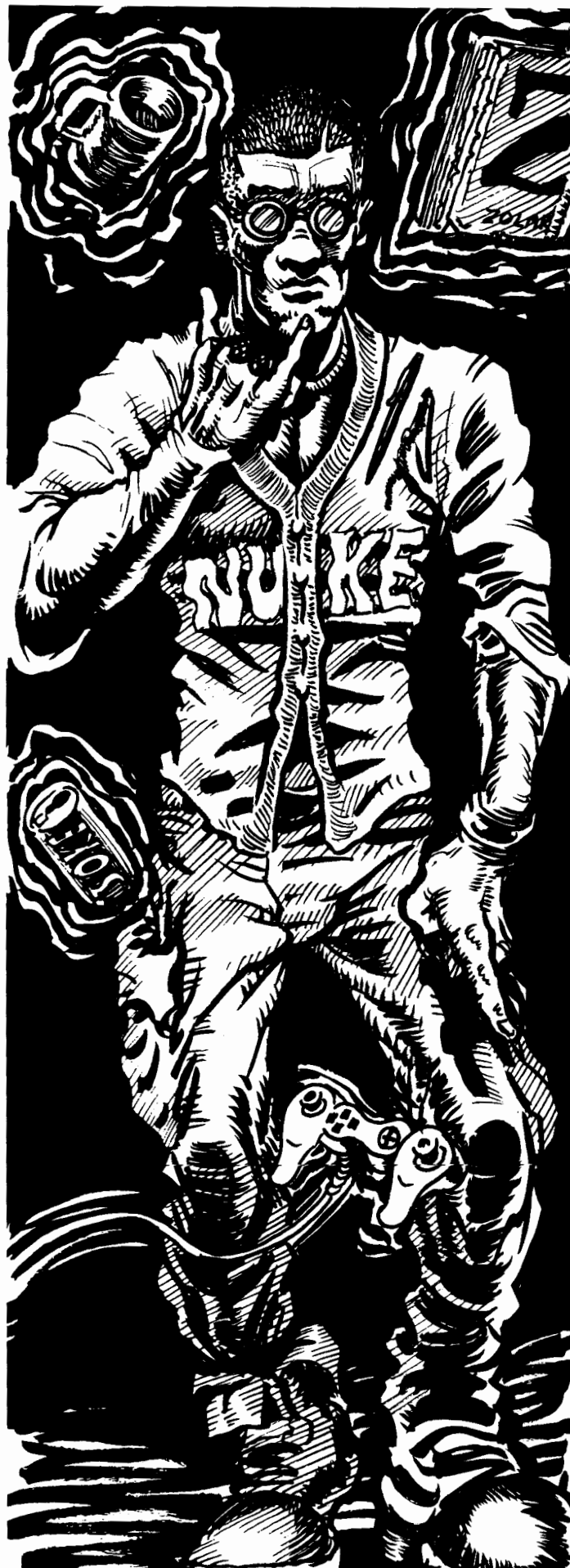
Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: Small Object: 4. Medium Object: 8. Large Object (over 20 lbs/9 kg): 12 I.S.P. +1 per every 10 lbs (4.5 kg) of additional weight.

Telekinesis is the ability to move objects with one's mind via directed psychic energy. The character can make an object hop, fall, roll, rise into the air, suspend it there (hover), or make it fly across the room.

In order to move an object by Telekinesis, the item must be clearly visible, within the psychic's range (60 feet/1.3 m) and the point of his focus. As usual, the psychic must concentrate on what he is doing. Thus, each Telekinetic feat/movement/action counts as one of the character's physical attacks. The total number of Telekinetic attacks is equal to the character's own number of physical attacks per melee round; usually 4-6.

One can attack via Telekinesis by hurling an object as if it were thrown and swinging and striking with a physical club or object as if it were controlled by an invisible hand. Several objects can be Telekinetically thrown within the same melee round, but not more than six small objects (the size of a baseball or knife; 1D4 or 1D6 damage each) can be thrown simultaneously. Firing off 2-6 items at once works as a *volley*: roll to strike only once; either they all hit (each doing damage) or they all miss. When it comes to larger items, like a baseball bat, or a TK thrown toaster, microwave or chair, the psychic can only concentrate on one item at a time. For Example: A Physical Psychic with four, normal, hand to hand attacks per melee can per-



form four attacks with Telekinesis. First, he makes a flower vase fly from the table, aiming it at his opponent's head (roll to strike as usual but with half the character's bonuses to strike). Second, he makes a heavy lamp hurl at the guard at the door. Third, the table is suddenly flipped up on end and, fourth, the doorknob is turned and the door flung wide open. This counts as *four attacks* or *actions* using Telekinesis instead of his hands. **Note:** Only half of the character's usual bonuses to strike in hand to hand combat apply when attacking with Telekinesis.

As noted in the example, above, Telekinesis can be used to do more than making objects fly around. The telekinetic power can be used to open doors, flick switches, press buttons, turn handles, knobs and dials, open windows, make a rocking chair rock, move objects, bring things to him, and so on. The range of possibilities is extensive when you stop and think about it. Remember, though, that each Telekinetic action or attack counts as one of the character's own physical actions/attacks. Furthermore, using Telekinesis to perform a skill such as a physical repair, computer operation, driving a car, or even picking a pocket is possible, but is performed at *half* the character's normal skill percentage.

It is easiest to move or throw *small objects* weighing *two pounds* (0.9 kg or less), hence the increased I.S.P. cost for larger and heavier items. Large or heavy objects weighing over 20 lbs (9 kg) are the most difficult to maneuver with TK, and cost an additional one I.S.P. for each additional 10 lbs (4.5 kg) of weight one is trying to manipulate. This means it would cost 19 I.S.P. to move a 125 lb (56.2 kg) weight – 8 I.S.P. for the first 20 lbs (9 kg) +11 I.S.P. for the remaining 105 lbs (47.25 kg).

Telekinesis Combat Bonuses:

- **Strike Bonus:** The character's normal strike bonus at *half* the usual amount applies to objects thrown or manipulated by Telekinesis to attack. Round up.
- **Parry Bonus:** Telekinesis, by manipulating a physical object or sheer TK force, can also be used to parry an incoming attack. The character's normal parry bonus (if any) applies but at *half* the usual bonus number; round up.
- **Stop or Parry Thrown Weapon:** Telekinesis can also be used to parry or stop, in midair, a thrown object or weapon, but is done so without benefit of any bonus, and can *NOT* stop projectiles (bullets or arrows) fired by a gun or a bow.
- **Making Objects Dodge:** Since Telekinesis is the power to move objects with one's mind, the psychic can try to move items away from someone trying to grab them. In this case, the character trying to get the item must roll 1D20 to *strike* (in this a case in an attempt to grab it), and the psychic gets to try to move it away via a TK *dodge*; high roll wins. The attacker/grabber gets his full strike bonus, the psychic gets only half his usual *dodge* bonus for the item being manipulated; round *down*.
- **Holding Something Closed with TK:** Telekinesis is best at moving and hurling objects, not exerting force, but it can be done. Telekinetic force has the equivalent of a P.S. 8 when holding something like a door or window closed, or an object down. However, anyone with a P.S. of 9 or higher can force the door or window open with their superior strength.
- **Damage Inflicted by TK Hurlled Objects:**
Very Small or Light: 6 ounces to 1 pound (0.17 to 0.45 kg) does 1D4 damage.

Small or Light: 1.5 to 2 lbs (0.6 to 0.9 kg) does 1D6 damage.

Medium Small: 3-5 lbs (1.35 to 2.25 kg) does 1D8 damage.

Medium: 6 to 10 lbs (2.7 to 4.5 kg) does 2D6+1 damage.

Medium Large: 11 to 25 lbs (4.95 to 11.2 kg) does 3D6+2 damage.

Large: 26 to 40 lbs (11.7 to 18 kg) inflicts 5D6. Add 1D6 damage for each additional 20 lbs (9 kg).

Note: Telekinesis, at least at this level, is *not* a force field and while it can be used to parry/block a punch, kick, club, knife or even sword, it can *NOT* stop bullets, arrows, gas, flying tackles, or people. Nor can the psychic make TK bullets or bolts to strike an opponent (only the Ghost Hunter and Psi-Mechanic can make TK bullets, and they require a physical gun to fire them).

Telekinetic Leap

Range: Self.

Duration: One melee attack/action; in this case, a leap.

I.S.P.: 8

This telekinetic application boosts the person's leaping ability, propelling the psychic an additional two feet (0.6 m) when leaping upwards, and three feet (0.9 m) when leaping across/lengthwise, per level of experience. This psi-power can be used in conjunction with a *leap kick* attack (doing 5D8 damage plus P.S. bonus; counts as two melee attacks), but the character also suffers 1D8 points of damage himself from the hard impact.

Telekinetic Lift

Range: Self or Touch.

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

I.S.P.: 6

Rather than moving objects solely with the power of the mind, this use of Telekinesis augments the character's own P.S. and ability to lift and carry heavy weights as if another person was helping with the labor. The psychic creates a telekinetic field around the object and lifts both physically and mentally (via Telekinesis). This enables the psychic to lift and carry weights 20% heavier than his P.S. normally allows. This use of Telekinesis is limited exclusively to lifting and carrying heavy weights and cannot be used to hurl boulders and heavy objects as weapons, nor can it be used to augment the damage inflicted by a punch, kick or other physical attacks.

Telekinetic Punch

Range: By touch or one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience; double on a ley line, nexus or place of power.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: 6. Each TK Punch costs 6 I.S.P. and counts as one melee attack.

Saving Throw: An opponent may try to dodge or parry as usual.

This telekinetic power enables the psychic to deliver a powerful punch or blunt force strike via channeled telekinetic en-

ergy. The character must actually make a physical punch or kick action, but a successful strike delivers a telekinetically enhanced blow. A Telekinetic Punch or kick inflicts 3D6 damage plus P.S. bonus (if any). The I.S.P. is spent whether or not the TK punch or kick actually hits the target (roll to strike as normal). The power is used in conjunction with a normal, physical attack that can also be parried or dodged by the enemy.

Telekinetic Push

Range: By touch or one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: 4. Each TK Push costs 4 I.S.P. and counts as one melee attack.

Saving Throw: None.

The psychic can effectively create a telekinetic force that pushes away an attacker or anything within range (a door, chair, cart, statue, etc.). The pushing force has the rough equivalent of a P.S. 8 +1 per level of the psychic and works like a body block (does 1D4 damage, knocks most ordinary humans back two yards/meters and has a 01-60% chance of knocking the person off his feet, and if so, that character loses initiative and one melee action). Characters weighing more than 200 pounds (90 kg) or who possess Robotic or Supernatural P.S. are only shoved a foot or two and there is only a 01-12% chance of being knocked off their feet. Inanimate objects weighing under 50 pounds (22.5 kg) are "pushed" or slid across the ground twice as far, roughly four yards/meters (12 feet/3.6 m).



Sensitive Psionics

Astral Projection

Range: Self.

Duration: 5 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 10

Through intense concentration/meditation (4D4 minutes of preparation) the psychic can free his mind, or inner self, from his physical body. This psychic inner self is the Astral Body, a whitish, transparent, ghost-like image of the character's physical form. A long silver thread or cord connects the Astral Body with its physical self.

If the cord is *severed* the character is likely to die of sudden shock as body and soul are torn asunder. There is only a 01-30% chance the Astral Self can locate its physical body without the silver umbilical cord (roll best 2 out of 3; two failures means the Astral Traveler is lost and cannot return to his body and dies with 48 hours).

The physical body lapses into a coma-like trance when the Astral Self has left it. In this state the body is completely helpless. It can not walk, move or think. It is completely catatonic.

The hazards are threefold. First, if the physical body is killed, the Astral Body is forever lost and will die, fade away, within six hours. Second, if the Astral Body gets lost or captured while in the Astral Plane, the body will begin to waste away and die. (**Note:** One minute of our time is equal to one week in the Astral Plane.) Third, the Astral Body is vulnerable to psychic attacks and attacks from ghosts, Entities and creatures of the Astral Plane.

There are two types of Astral Projection: Sending the Astral Body into the Physical World and Sending the Astral Body into the Astral Plane (a different dimension). In both cases the human coexists in two different forms (the inert physical body and the alert spirit or Astral form), only the environment changes. Visits to the Astral Plane are the most dangerous.

Astral Projection from the physical body into the *material world* creates a ghostly specter of the Astral Self which can be seen only by other psychics, young children under 13 years old, animals and most supernatural creatures. While in Astral form the character automatically gains the ability to float, fly (mach one/670 mph/1072 km maximum), see the invisible, pass through solid objects, impervious to physical harm (including cold, heat and energy), see other Astral Beings and the invisible, as well as see and hear as usual. The Astral Body cannot, however, communicate with people in the physical world except through Telepathy or Empathy, nor speak to, smell or touch anything on the material plane. The Astral Self is little more than a mute, ghostly observer. Of course, this is a great way to locate invisible supernatural Entities, as well as spy on other humans on the material plane (although limited by short sprints. See duration).

Traveling in Astral form has its own very special dangers. While the character can see the invisible and other Astral Travelers, they can also see him. This makes him susceptible to their psychic and Astral form attacks, for two Astral Travelers can lock into hand to hand combat as if they were physical beings. The most vulnerable target is the *silver cord* which is the Astral Traveler's *lifeline* to the physical world. Fortunately, the cord has an Astral S.D.C. which is two times that of the person's physical Hit Points and S.D.C. combined! The thread-like silver cord is a difficult target to hit; attackers are -6 to strike. The Astral Body also has twice the Hit Points and S.D.C. of the physical body combined. This means if the character has 18 Hit Points and 28 S.D.C. both the Astral Body and its silver cord have 92 Astral S.D.C. each. Remember, magic and psychic influence have full effect on the Astral Body. This includes Exorcism, which will force the Astral Traveler to leave the immediate area (400 foot/122 m radius) and not return for 24 hours. The Astral Traveler has the same number of attacks per melee, bonuses, hand to hand, skills, knowledge and psychic powers that he or she has in the material plane.

Entering the Astral Plane is like entering the Twilight Zone. After a minute of concentration the Astral Gateway appears as a bright patch of shimmering, white light. Once the Astral Traveler passes through it, he will find himself in an endless expanse of white light, and rolling, white clouds. There is no up or down, no bottom or top; no north or south, no land or air or sea, just endless, slowly swirling white. Time, too, is a different or altered state, for what would seem to be a week in the Astral Plane is barely one minute in the physical world. Time and

space twisted and distorted, the Astral Traveler can fly from one end of the Earth to the other in the blink of an eye, by hopping through the Astral Plane. While this may sound wonderful, the Astral Plane has its share of monsters, madmen and dangers. First, the distortion of place and time makes it extremely difficult to find the material world and return to your dormant, physical body. Even trying to follow the silver cord can lead to nowhere when in the Astral Plane.

Being attacked by strange creatures is a constant threat in the Astral Plane. Entities, Astral energy beings and elemental creatures of magic live in the Astral Plane or travel through it. These beings are usually hostile, evil forces. While the Astral Body cannot touch or communicate with the material world, it is quite solid to other inhabitants of the Astral Plane. The Astral Body is also vulnerable to magic and psychic powers, as well as physical assault by Astral beings and other Astral Travelers.

The energy which composes the Astral Plane is responsive to thoughts and desires, so the strongest Astral Beings can mentally or magically control what a small area might look like. This means that the Astral Plane is made up of thousands or even millions of tiny "Astral Kingdoms" adrift within the vast whiteness. Exactly what these kingdoms look like is up to the creatures who created them. Some may look like a modern city, others castles or forests, while still others, a frightening landscape. Perhaps this is where legends of visitations to Heaven and Hell originate? It is always wise to avoid an Astral Kingdom, because only the most powerful Entities and Astral Beings can create and maintain them.

To return from the Astral Plane to the physical body, roll on the following table: Each roll will determine the Astral Traveler's state of mind and sense of direction. The percentile dice can be rolled up to three times per melee round (15 seconds). The player must roll "definitely certain" to successfully return. The player may keep trying until he succeeds or time elapses.

Location of the Physical Body

Roll Percentile Dice to Return from the Astral Plane:

01-30%: Hopelessly Lost (roll again).

31-50%: Uncertain, Confused (roll again).

51-76%: Fairly certain of location; on the right track (roll again).

77-00%: Definitely certain of location. (Whew! Made it back).

Astral travel with a partner is a much safer way to travel, because if one can find his body, he can lead the other character back to the physical plane with him.

Note: Traveling on the material plane in Astral form is infinitely easier than the Astral Plane. To find the physical body the character need only return to where he left it. If it has been moved or hidden, the Astral Self can sense its location with a 01-60% efficiency (roll once per melee round, one success means he knows where it is).

Clairvoyance

Range: Self; although the vision could pertain to people or places thousands of miles away.

Duration: Two melee rounds (30 seconds) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

Base Skill: 60% +2% per level of experience. A failed roll means the psychic received no insight whatsoever.

Clairvoyance is the ability to glean information about people, places and events beyond what the normal five senses can provide. It can also be used on places of power and objects that are magical, cursed or possessed or inhabited by supernatural forces. The difference between Clairvoyance and Precognition, is that *Clairvoyance* almost always deals with the here and now, what has happened in the past to bring us to our present situation, what's happening now, and what's about to happen within the next few minutes. *Precognition* always deals with the future.

Any one of the following Clairvoyant abilities/foci can be used when Clairvoyance is activated. When that ability/focus is done, the power ends and the psychic has to spend more I.S.P. to work a different Clairvoyant focus. **Note:** Sometimes the power doesn't work (must roll under Base Skill) and other times there's nothing bad or troublesome to be revealed or anything going on to know.

Clairvoyant Awareness. Knowing the telephone is about to ring, that someone is at the door, guessing a number someone else is thinking, knowing where to look to find something (misplaced car keys, notebook, pen, a clue perhaps), or that the police are waiting down the street, turn left here to avoid a traffic jam, slow down because the car in front of you is about to suddenly swerve or brake, don't let the Fire Walker use the power of "X" because it will have devastating results, put that item away before someone breaks it (and someone will within 2D6 melee rounds), or finding yourself worried about a particular danger or monster or problem are ALL Clairvoyant flashes of insight. There is no reason the character should have known or considered them as likely to happen except that his E.S.P. radar is working on full power. This is what happens when the psychic activates the Clairvoyance ability to focus on himself and what he is doing at the moment. Bonuses: It also provides the following bonuses: +2 to Perception Rolls, +2 on initiative, and +1 to parry, dodge, roll with impact and pull punch.

A Clairvoyant Reading on a Person: Looking at a specific person with the intent of getting a "read on him" gives the psychic vague yet impressive knowledge about the individual's *past* and current state of mind. The Reading, for example, reveals if the character is currently or has been recently ill and whether the illness was insignificant (a cold, minor injury) or serious (sick in bed for days with the flu, or worse). In addition, the Reading will reveal if the subject has had a hard or easy life, been successful or not, wealthy or poor, and whether that is about to soon change. The psychic can also tell if the subject of the reading is basically a good, selfish or evil person, if he misses a loved one who has died anytime in his life, if a loved one has died in the last year, if the person is in love or recently broke up, if he is worried or troubled about something (though not exactly what), and if he is considering something contrary to his alignment or nature (commit a crime out of desperation or blackmail, commit suicide, etc.) or if he is possessed (though the psychic may not let on that he or she knows the subject is possessed).

A Clairvoyant Reading of a Location: The Psychic just knows things about the place. That it is, or is not, the place where so and so was killed or something bad happened. That the victim was killed someplace else and the body left at this loca-

tion, or that the place has been used (or not) for magical rituals or blood sacrifice, or a place where a dimensional portal has been opened. The psychic can also sense if there has been a history of violence or tragedy at the location or whether it is a happy place full of "good vibes." Physically going from room to room, or place to place within a given location, the psychic can tell if the "vibe" changes from happy to sad, or good to evil in a specific room/place. He can also tell if there has been recent (within the last six months) physical changes and sense if there is a secret door or hiding place in the room. He may also feel if something is wrong and that he (and his teammates) should be careful, prepared for trouble or leave. This "bad feeling" could indicate impending trouble from a foe or monster or something more mundane (but potentially problematic) like the owner coming home or the authorities showing up to question their activity, or ticket or arrest them.

"Bad feelings" might also inspire the character to use another psychic ability, like Presence Sense or See the Invisible, or Sense Magic, etc. It should also ready him for combat and to draw a weapon or slow down and look around with much, much, more care and attention. **Bonuses:** Taking a "bad feeling" seriously gives the psychic the following bonuses: +3 to Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative, and +1 to parry, dodge, roll with impact and pull punch. **Note:** It is the G.M. who should alert the character that he has a "bad feeling" about this or that.

A Clairvoyant Flash of Insight about Others: The psychic can use Clairvoyance to get a flash of insight about someone he knows or some event that is happening right now or which he is about to participate in soon (later that same day), or a place he plans on visiting soon (later that same day). The psychic enjoys a +10% bonus if he has in his hand a personal belonging of the individual (a ring or other jewelry, a favorite book, handkerchief, necktie, or even a gift the psychic received from the person) or something which came from the place. *A flash of insight* can be a sudden feeling that somebody is in need ("...something's wrong. It's...it's...Janet! I've got to go see her!"). It can also be a sudden realization about the meaning of a clue, or a sudden idea, or an inexplicable feeling about something, such as fire, or a break-in, or vandalism or an accident. The feeling is so strong that the psychic's heart may start to race and adrenaline pump to drive home the sense of urgency or importance. Again it may inspire the character to take immediate action rather than wait till later as he had originally intended, or to be prepared for trouble (+1 on initiative, +1 to dodge) or be more cautious and alert (+2 on Perception Rolls). Not every situation is trouble, and the insight may also show that everything is fine, the person or people are safe, or happy, or that everything is coming along just fine, he and his comrades are on the right track – the psychic just knows it. Similarly, the character may get a bad or good feeling about something he or one of his teammates is doing, or about to do (within 20 minutes).

A Clairvoyant Vision is like seeing a brief snippet of film from a movie or a dream. Often all the details are not clear, or they are so very, very focused and limited that it's hard to see the larger event or picture. For example, that vision might be the screaming face of a stranger, or a tattoo or emblem without any context, or a hand smashing through the window of a door and undoing the lock and the door opening – end of vision. The psychic may recognize the door as his home or office or buddy's

place, etc., or not. Likewise, he may get a vision of someone following a friend or lurking in the shadows waiting to do . . . what?! The psychic doesn't know, but the image is accompanied by a bad feeling or sensation of dread or fear or opportunity (a chance to get the lurker), if only he can figure out where the location is or find the friend/victim before trouble strikes.

The Problem with Visions. Clairvoyant visions the psychic gets while he is awake or remembers from his dreams, are usually inconclusive. Meaning they either offer something out of context or he can't tell if the feeling or vision shows the present/now, the immediate future (under an hour), or the near future (two to 48 hours from now), but the potential danger or opportunity is there if he can take advantage of it (warn that person, set a trap, etc.). For example, "the psychic is asleep or in a Clairvoyant Trance, thinking about his friend Janet. Suddenly, the mind is flooded with an image of Janet rushing down a crowded street. It's dusky, like morning, twilight or evening. She seems very upset. The traffic light changes to amber. Janet races into the street, ignoring the light. It turns red. There's a car, squeal of tires, Janet screams. The image ends. Is Janet hurt? Did she get out of the way? Has she been killed? Unknown. But the danger is clear. There are also other *hints* of information: The time of day, Janet seeming upset, rushing, the weather conditions, etc. The clairvoyant glimpse relays information, but it's not clear. The psychic has no way of knowing without trying to contact or find Janet. Of course, he has the advantage of recognizing the potential danger as it begins to unfold and may be able to avoid it, stop it, or change the outcome, assuming it's not already too late.

A clairvoyant vision may also be a peculiar noise/sound, a face, or a specific image, like a particular door, object or monster. Thinking about Janet and seeing the face of a demon could indicate that she may be attacked by such a creature. Rushing to her side and staying with her might delay the attack, cause the creature to give up, or when it attacks, Janet, the Clairvoyant and allies are prepared for it and they fight it off or destroy it.

Game Masters: Be careful of revealing too much. Use the examples provided as a guide. Remember, these are brief glimpses about the present, past or possible future, not a motion picture or an event written in stone. Current events and intervention *can* change the future, or at least the outcome of the events.

The Clairvoyant State of Mind. To perform this psi-ability, the character must put himself into a Clairvoyant state of mind. A sort of pseudo-trance in which he opens himself to psychic vibrations, emotion and paranormal energy. While in this state of awareness, the psychic can NOT engage in any other activities, combat or use any other psychic ability. To do so breaks the Clairvoyance and feelings and images instantly stop. It takes 2D4 melee rounds (30-120 seconds) of concentration before the character can use Clairvoyance. Remember, a failed base skill roll means nothing happens, but still burns up the 6 I.S.P. and time. **Note:** While in a Clairvoyant state, the psychic is completely open to Telepathic and Empathic communication from outside sources (other psychics, ghosts, etc.).

Also see *Object Read*.

Commune with Spirits

Range: Self.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: Standard.

Using this power, a psychic can “feel” (not see) the presence of spirits. The term “spirit” includes Entities (including Haunting, Syphons, Tectonic and Possessing ones), invisible Astral Travelers/Astral Beings, the splintered life essence of a god or Alien Intelligence, the mysterious Indian Spirits, a spirit or demon (or god) possessing a familiar or Witch, and imprisoned souls and life essences in magic weapons, medallions and similar magical prisons.

The psychic can ask the spirit questions by speaking aloud, though the creature often understands the question only on an empathic or intuitive level. Only the psychic hears the answer (unless he’s using a Group Trance) and the answer can be in words or powerful emotions (he suddenly feels its hate, fear, anger, sorrow, etc., instead of a verbal response). It is important to note that the spirit is under no obligation to answer truthfully or to answer at all. Angry and uncooperative spirits may lie, pretend to be somebody else, lash out at the psychic with its own psi-abilities or cause mischief. Likewise, the psychic can *NOT* “feel” or sense the creature’s alignment, or magic energy, nor can he use any of his other psionic powers while he is in communion with the spirit. Furthermore, the spirit may break off communication at any time, although the psychic can still “feel” if it is within the immediate area (30 foot/9 m radius). The psychic can also break contact at any time, but when he does so, he can no longer tell if the spirit is still hanging about.

Dispel Spirits

Range: 50 foot (15.2 m) radius per level of experience.

Duration: 30 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 10

Saving Throw: The spirit receives no saving throw but if a psionic summoned the spirit, then he can roll a standard save to maintain contact and prevent it from leaving.

Any lesser spirits, ghosts or minor Entities within a 50 foot (15.2 m) radius of the psychic are forced to immediately flee the area. This does no damage to the spirits, but sends them fleeing and breaks any communication that one or more may have had with another psychic. Note that Tectonic and Possessing Entities, Supernatural Predators, Pranksters, Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences, even when in energy form, are not affected by this psionic power.

Empathy

Range: 100 foot (30.5 m) area.

Duration: Two minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: Standard; a save vs Empathy means the psychic cannot get a clear sense of the emotions of that particular person. To save vs Empathy the person must roll to save once each melee that the psychic is using Empathy. Mind Block will pre-

vent any empathic emanations from the blocked person as well as any transmitted emotion that may be sent out from a supernatural being.

Empathy is a psi-ability that makes the psychic aware of, or feel, the emotions of other people, animals and supernatural creatures. The strongest emotions are easiest to sense and impossible to mistake: hate, anger, terror, lust, envy, love.

Feeling out emotions is a way to tell that somebody or something is nearby, but can *NOT* be used to pinpoint an invisible or hiding person/creature. Empathy is typically used to get an understanding of where someone else stands and to establish a rapport. (“Don’t be sad.” Or, “Maybe we can help you.” Or, “I know you’re lying. You don’t have any intention of helping us, in fact, you loathe us.”) Empathy is especially helpful in understanding and communicating with Supernatural Predators, ghosts and creatures that lack the ability to speak or who are extremely alien. Haunting Ghosts and Entities in general, rarely mask their emotions, thus, the psychic can easily tell if one or more is nearby, within 100 feet (30.5 m), and what it is feeling. (“I sense great sorrow.” or “Do as it says! It is angry, almost crazed. I think it will carry out its threat if you try to stop it.”)

Emotions also telegraph a person’s or monster’s intentions as the empathic character feels the rage or anger or resentment building, or conversely, calming down, etc. Questioning a character while using Empathy is very handy at establishing how they are reacting. In a limited sense, Empathy can be used like a lie detector to see if the emotions match the verbal response. For Example: “Did you know the deceased?” The verbal answer is no, but there is a sudden flare of nervousness and fear or hate. This doesn’t mean the guy is the killer, but it probably means he is lying about knowing the dead man. Further questions might pull out strong emotions such as anger or hate, or happiness, which may confirm the psychic’s suspicions that this man might be involved in the murder. However, remember that this is, at best, *circumstantial evidence* and definitely inadmissible in court. Taking this claim to the police will get the psychic laughed out of the station house. Physical proof must be found to prove what the Empathy has already suggested. At least the empathic reading has put the character(s) on the right track. Also, remember that while the psychic is feeling the person’s real emotions, it is the psychic who is *interpreting* their significance. Emotions of hate, for example, may mean the person did know the murder victim, or knew of him, and hated him for any number of reasons. Hate does not mean he killed the man. A very nervous person might always radiate fear or anxiety, while a cold-blooded, pathological killer or sociopath may feel nothing at all and stay calm and cool as he lies through his teeth. As you can see, interpreting emotions can be a tricky thing.

Note: Empathy gives the psychic a bonus of +1 to Perception Rolls and +1 on initiative or dodge when dealing with the character whom he is reading.

Group Mind Block

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m).

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 22

The psychic can instantly erect a mental barrier or Mind Block to protect himself and those around him within a 120 foot

(36.6 m) area. The group Mind Block works just like the individual Mind Block power and is a way of protecting those around the psychic from psionic probes and mind attacks, but it can also be used to prevent outside forces (good or evil) from communicating via Telepathy or Empathy. Thus, a villainous psychic can use the Group Mind Block for his own evil purposes. Everyone within the 120 foot (36.6 m) area of effect is automatically blocked from psychic communication, but the effect is not detectable, so they are not likely to know that they are being Mind Blocked. **Note:** Only Detect Psionics will indicate a Group Mind Block is in place.

Group Trance

Range: All willing subjects within 20 feet (6 m) of the psychic, +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: Two minutes per level of experience or until the trance is broken, whichever comes first.

I.S.P.: 15

Saving Throw: None for willing participants. Those unwilling to participate cannot be entranced.

There are a couple of different applications for this power. The non-combat use is a sort of shared communication. Everybody entranced can share in the psionic experiences of the group leader, the character who is using the Group Trance power. First, the entire group of willing participants enters into a trance state. While entranced, the group is subtly linked to the character using the power. That psychic can then perform one or two other psychic communication abilities per melee round. These abilities are limited to a few forms of psionic communication (not Healing, Physical or Super-Psionic powers), including Clairvoyance, Empathy, Precognition, Telepathy, Object Read, Presence Sense, Commune with Spirits, Remote Viewing, and Sixth Sense. The thoughts, visions/images, or communications received by the lead psychic are simultaneously transmitted via the trance-link to all participants. They all see, know or feel everything he does. His thoughts, ideas, and remembrances can also be shared this way.

The other use of this ability is to willingly pool the I.S.P. of the trance group to make it available to the lead psychic (the one who is using the Group Trance ability). Once every melee round, the psychic to whom they are linked can draw upon three I.S.P. points from *each* psychic in the trance group. I.S.P. cannot be drawn from characters who don't have any psychic ability. These I.S.P. can be used by the lead psychic any way he desires. The others linked to him see, feel and experience whatever he does, including his rationale, motives and emotions.

In both instances, only the psychic group leader has any melee actions, and he is limited to two psionic actions/attacks while entranced. All those in the group are simply passive observers and secondary participants. All participants react calmly toward the events, emotions, and visions they experience while entranced. The moment the trance ends, they are back to normal and can respond as is appropriate. Only the lead psychic or the genuine fear of death can break the trance. All snap out of it even if only one person breaks.

Hypnotic Suggestion

Range: 12 feet (3.6 m), with eye contact.

Duration: Varies with each circumstance and subject; rarely more than a few hours maximum.

I.S.P.: 6 per idea or attempt to implant an idea.

Saving Throw: Standard.

The power of Hypnotic Suggestion is a boosted form of simple hypnosis. The power is limited to relaxing/calming somebody down, putting a person or animal in a light sleep, helping a person to relax and focus on a particular thought (good for helping someone to remember things) and implanting subtle ideas. The implanting or "suggestion" of an idea must be subtly worked into a verbal comment. The suggestion must be kept simple and clear, such as "Forget you even heard that," or "You know you can trust me," or "Oh dear, your skin is so warm, you have a fever," or "Put your gun down," perhaps followed by a second suggestion of, "You don't want to hurt anyone." The suggestion can even be more direct. "Take a deep breath and calm down. Relax. Push everything out of your mind. That's it, breathe, relax, there's nothing to fear. You're calming down now, feeling better . . . now tell me, what do you remember?"

The power of suggestion can also be used to make the victim imagine sounds and images. "Did you hear that? Listen. Footsteps upstairs (or behind us or downstairs or outside, etc.). You hear the footsteps . . . yes, of course you do!" Or, "Everybody who has ever seen the specter has seen it at midnight, and it's almost midnight now." The poor individual who fails his saving throw will indeed imagine he hears footsteps or sees something at midnight.

Mask I.S.P. & Psionics

Range: Self.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 5

This is a psionic power that enables the character to completely mask all spiritual aspects of his psionic energy and powers. Even the aura is temporarily altered. As a result, other psychics, and creatures who can Detect Psionics or See Aura will not sense psionics in a character who is so masked. However, the masked psychic must "block" himself from the world, which means he cannot use any of his psionic senses or abilities, nor receive Empathic or Telepathic impressions until he lets the mask go.

Mask P.P.E.

Range: Self.

Duration: Ten minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

A psionic power that enables the character to completely mask all but 1D4 P.P.E. of his personal P.P.E. base. Characters who can sense magic energy or see auras will regard this character as having an insignificant amount of P.P.E. This power is especially good as protection against Psi-Stalkers and other P.P.E. vampires. Mystics can easily hide their magical powers through this psionic concealment.

Meditation

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed, one hour minimum.

I.S.P.: None, zero.

Meditation is a trance state of consciousness in which the individual can calm his emotions and focus on relaxation of mind and body. In a meditative state, the psychic finds peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and it is in this state of being that he can regenerate his Inner Strength (I.S.P.). Other forms of meditation can increase healing and evoke other mind over matter phenomena. See the *Physical Psychic P.C.C.* for details.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per hour of meditation. Some P.C.C.s, like the Autistic Savant and Physical Psychic for example, have the ability to recover a greater amount even faster. Also see *Advanced Meditation*.

Meditation, Advanced

Range: Self.

Duration: As needed, one hour minimum.

I.S.P.: 2

Just as the name suggests, this is an advanced form of Meditation in which the psychic enters a deep trance state for the purpose of finding peace and harmony between mind, body and spirit, and regenerating his Inner Strength (I.S.P.) at an accelerated rate.

Recovers Base I.S.P. at a rate of four points per 30 minutes or eight points per hour of meditation, but requires two I.S.P. to delve deep inside oneself so quickly and effectively.

Mind Block

Range: Self.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4 (per each duration period).

This is the ability to completely close or block oneself from all psychic/mental emanations. When intentionally closed to supernatural or psychic forces the character can not sense anything, cannot use psychic abilities, nor be influenced by others. A Mind Block will prevent penetration of Telepathy, Thought-Reading, Empathy, Hypnotic Suggestion, and Empathic Transmission. It can be an invaluable protective shield when dealing with malevolent psychic forces. Adds a bonus of +1 to save vs all psychic and mental attacks.

Mind Block Auto-Defense

Range: Self.

Duration: Special.

I.S.P.: Special.

The moment the psychic is mind probed, a personal Mind Block automatically snaps into place. It also alerts the character to the fact that he or she is being probed or attacked by Empathy or Telepathy and the usual invasive psionics listed under the more common Mind Block ability. The character must consciously and willingly lower the mind shield and open himself

to the psi-probes in order to receive them. Otherwise, the Automatic Defense Mind Block will stay in effect until the probe/attack is over. Engages automatically.

The I.S.P. cost is different in that the character must permanently give up 4 I.S.P. (or 2 P.P.E.) when this power is selected. However, the Mind Block will automatically take place whenever under Telepathic and Empathic probes and mind control attacks at no additional I.S.P. cost.

Mind Bolt

Range: 20 feet (6.1 m) per level of experience; double at ley lines, nexus points and places of power.

Duration: Instant.

I.S.P.: Varies with the amount of damage inflicted.

The psionic can focus his psionic energy into a powerful bolt of mental force and hurl it at a visible target with amazing accuracy. The amount of damage the bolt inflicts depends on the amount of energy expended.

6 I.S.P.: 1D6 damage to supernatural beings (including Astral Beings, Entities and energy beings), 1 point of damage to humans.

12 I.S.P.: 3D6 damage to supernatural beings, 1D4 to mortals.

20 I.S.P.: 6D6 damage to supernatural beings, 1D8 to mortals.

40 I.S.P.: 1D6x10 damage to supernatural beings, 2D8 to mortals.

Note: All Mind Bolts are +4 to strike, but adding an additional 10 I.S.P. increases the strike bonus to +6 to strike.

Mind Bond

Range: Touch.

Duration: Special.

I.S.P.: 10

Saving Throw: Standard.

An instant mind link between the psychic and his willing associate or victim. When a Mind Bond is established, *each* participant learns EVERYTHING there is to know about the other as if they were his own memories. This includes all skills, secret identities, emotions, insanities, traumatic experience, etc. In both cases, the memory is complete for only 3D4 hours. After that, the characters must roll 01-15% to recall any particular memory, skill or secret. A month later, all memories completely disappear. Players should bear in mind that only the psychic knows the memories are not permanent, thus the other person would have no reason to make notes or act quickly before the memories fade.

Note: Skills and skill bonuses are also temporarily absorbed, meaning that the psychic possesses all of his victim's skills and skill bonuses (and vice versa). Likewise, any insanities are also absorbed and the character new to them will respond accordingly. Physical attributes, such as S.D.C. and attribute bonuses gained through physical training, are NOT acquired.

Alien or extremely mentally and/or emotionally disturbed minds can permanently impair the psychic's own mind as a result of the bond. If bonded with an alien or seriously mentally

disturbed person, roll on the following table for a permanent insanity:

- 01-40%: No Insanity; lucked out.
- 41-80%: One Phobia.
- 81-90%: One Affective Disorder.
- 91-00%: One Neurosis.

Mind Wipe

Range: Touch.

Duration: Special.

I.S.P.: 50

Saving Throw: Standard; a successful save means the person is unaffected and still retains that memory.

To Mind Wipe an intelligent creature, the psychic must make physical contact, touching his victim's temples to erase whatever he desires. This is done by verbal suggestion and can erase any past event, knowledge, skill, spell, ritual, memory, and so on. The process takes about three minutes to complete.

The loss of memory is temporary, lasting 1D4 days for every 10 I.S.P. expended. The memory can be permanently erased if the psychic exerts 50 I.S.P. at once. A psychic can also permanently wipe a mind completely blank by expending 50 I.S.P. and 4 M.E. (Mental Endurance) attribute points. This is an extremely grueling process for the psychic and the loss of the four M.E. points is *permanent*, even if the opponent successfully saves against the Mind Wipe and is not affected.



Object Read

Range: Touch.

Duration: Varies; usually about 2D6 minutes.

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: None.

Base Skill: Impressions: 56% +2% per level of experience. Images: 48% +2% per level. Present: 38% +2% per level of experience.

Also known as *Psychometry*, this uncanny ability enables the Psychic Sensitive to receive impressions and images from an object regarding its use, history and last owner. This is done by holding the object and concentrating on a specific line of thought or opening up to general impressions (the latter is al-

ways more vague and random). Just as a psychic must open himself to sense evil or magic, he must open himself to the object. If successful, he will receive impressions and/or images revealing bits of information.

A few or all of the following types of things may be learned from an Object Read.

Impressions include: General alignment of its last owner (good, selfish, evil); whether or not the last owner is living or dead; if deceased, whether his passing was tragic or violent, unexpected or from a long illness, an accident or deliberate, or peaceful, among loved ones, and whether "Dark forces" were involved in the death or involved with the character in some way while he was alive.

It can also reveal if the person is *missing* and whether he is alive or dead, hiding and doesn't want to be found, or captive or being forced to do something against his will; if he is on the run (being hunted or sought) and an idea of why (committed a crime, made someone angry, running from debt or responsibility, dabbled with magical or supernatural forces he should not have, etc.).

If the owner of the object is alive, the Object Read will reveal if he is currently healthy or ill, near (within 50 miles/80 km) or far (100 miles/160 km or more), if the item belongs to the character who brought it to the psychic, if it once belonged to a loved one/friend or an enemy or stranger, and whether the item has been used with/by magic or supernatural forces and the general emotional state of the owner (angry, happy, in love, sad, hate-filled, confused, worried, troubled, etc.).

Other less personal information will include the object's general purpose (what it is used for), the quality of the item, perhaps who made/manufactured it, if it is old (50 years or more), very old (100 years plus) or ancient (a thousand years or more). Object Read will also conclusively indicate whether the item is currently enchanted, cursed or contains a supernatural force, as well as the alignment of the object or the magic or supernatural force inside (good, selfish, evil, incredibly evil) and the emotions contained or radiating from the force inside (hate, lust, murder, etc.). **Note:** If the item is possessed, an Object Read makes the reader totally vulnerable to any psychic message, emotions or attack or magical attack that the object might level at the psychic – no saving throw.

Object Reading something like a blood stained floor reveals the sensation or image of what happened at the location that caused spilled blood (an accident, it's really animal blood or spilled wood stain, human sacrifice, murder, etc.) and may include the face of the one(s) responsible or an image of what happened but no details like an actual face. It may (at the G.M.'s discretion) offer some other clue, however, like the image of a ring or signet, or emblem, or a name ("Ted, no." or "Debbie, why?") or just the name or initials or glimpse of the murder weapon. The character is also likely to get an impression, or see the image, of the monster if the blood/murder was caused by a supernatural being. Touching a door or a lock might reveal that it was picked, forced or unlocked with a key, or that it was locked, but someone unlocked it – each a potential clue that tells a little more. For example, if it was picked or forced, then the intruder was someone who didn't have a key, someone who didn't belong, but if a key was used or the door deliberately left unlocked, it suggests an inside job or a stolen key.

Images: The psychic can also see images of isolated events which have happened in the past. This will provide brief snippets of images and events that will offer glimpses of the previous owner and others close to him. Traumatic and emotion filled events/images are the easiest to see. Impressions will accompany the images, adding to the story as it unfolds. Information includes: approximate age, height, weight, build, race, sex, sometimes occupation, hair color and special facial or body features such as a scar or tattoo or beard (very often the exact facial features are out of focus, blurred or obscured); the object's use/purpose, and some special event or two, usually very traumatic, important or happy events (got the item as a birthday present, the image of the owner's murder or an argument, etc.). Often the event images are fragmented as if they are pieces of a movie edited by a crazy man to show brief flashes and fleeting glimpses. The events must always be ones in which the object was present or involved, and the scene may actually be from the items's perspective.

The success or failure of an Object Read: Roll percentile dice once for impressions and once for images. The roll must fall *under* the character's base skill ability to succeed. A roll higher than the base skill means a failure and the psychic feels and/or sees *nothing*. Impressions and images are two different things, so roll for each. The psychic may get no impressions, but see images, or vice versa. Once an object has been read, it cannot be read again by the same psychic, even if he did not see or feel a thing. Of course, the psychic can attempt to Object Read other items, but each attempt will cost 6 I.S.P.

The present, as in that exact moment, can also be glimpsed, but costs an additional 4 I.S.P., with no guarantee of success. Sometimes the psychic can focus in to see and feel the last owner as he or she is with him at the very moment. This provides an idea of the person's current state of mind/emotion, appearance, dress, general location (that is to say, a bedroom, office, street, outdoors, etc.; no address or sense of close or far is provided), general features (shaved his beard, dyed hair, etc.), what he is doing (walking, running, working, sleeping, reading, etc.), emotional state (happy, playful, worried, scared, angry, desperate, etc.) and so on. The psychic may be able to identify a place or person from what he sees, but only if it falls within his own range of personal experience. ("Oh my God, that's Clement Park. My dad used to take me there to play on the swings. It's only two miles away!") The psychic might also recognize a place from an image should he see it in the future. ("This is it! This is the place I saw when I Object Read that medallion.")

P.P.E. Shield

Range: Others by touch.

Duration: 10 minutes per level of experience; double on a ley line or place of power.

I.S.P.: 10

The psychic can place a psionic defense around another character to prevent P.P.E. vampires, mages and monsters from siphoning off their mystic energy (P.P.E.). The shield works similarly to a Mind Block, only it prevents someone other than the psychic from having their P.P.E. drained against their will, even in a blood sacrifice.

Precognition – Premonitions of the Future

Range: Though the vision could pertain to people, places and events almost anywhere on the planet, they typically involve people, places and events familiar or important to the psychic.

I.S.P.: 8

Limitation: A Precognitive vision can only be attempted as often as twice a day.

Base Skill: 50% +2% per level of experience. Add +10% to the base skill if the person involved is a friend or loved one.

This psychic ability enables the psychic to see glimpses of the possible future or to feel something about the future. This is achieved through meditation and intense concentration in which the psychic is trying to see the future. It usually requires thinking about a particular person, event, place or intention, and, if successful, gives the psychic a positive or negative feeling about it and may include a vision or actual recreation of what is going to transpire. For example, thousands of people claim to have had visions of the Titanic sinking and the World Trade Center disaster, accompanied by a feeling not to go on the ship or that building. The vision may focus on one fraction of the event in the future (i.e., only seeing the Titanic hitting the iceberg, or seeing people screaming and falling overboard or people in lifeboats with the ship in the background or no where to be seen, but the name on the life boats says it all) or it may reveal a collage of snippets like a movie trailer, or one single image and a powerful feeling or sensation to go along with it. **Note:** A trance to get a Precognitive vision takes 20 minutes, during which a dreamlike vision, image or bit of knowledge may come to mind.

Precognition is unpredictable and cannot be turned on and off like a light bulb. Sometimes it works (if the roll is under the base skill) and sometimes it does not (when the roll is above the base skill). A failed roll means the psychic received no insight to the future whatsoever.

Dream Visions: Sometimes a Precognitive vision occurs *unintentionally* and *uncalled*, without the psychic trying to get one. These typically manifest themselves as dreams or nightmares during sleep. The Precognitive flash of the future may also occur unbeckoned while awake, like a vivid daydream, but this is extremely rare. The Precognitive dream is exactly like the deliberate meditative image described previously, only it is always of the future and comes as a subconscious clue, warning or message to help the character prevent or change the future event, or help himself and others survive it or keep collateral damage to a minimum. These brief glimpses of the possible future event, disaster, or trouble, happen because the psychic is acutely attuned to his world. Anything that might hurt or affect him or dramatically impact the world (including people and places he doesn't know) *may* appear as a Precognitive dream/warning.

When will it happen? Good question, the psychic can never be sure, even if he senses or sees the specific date it may change. Ninety-percent of the time, the premonition or prediction will occur anytime between the minutes after the psychic finishes the dream (get out, an earthquake is going to level this apartment in a few minutes) and 72 hours later. However, some events may not happen for 1D8+4 days and prophecies (a super-rare gift) are often months, years, decades and even centuries away. Remember too, that an intervention on the character's

part (or an outside force) could delay, reschedule or stop the event from happening.

Deja Vu: The psychic will always recognize something he's seen in one of his visions, even though he may have forgotten about it until he sees it again, in person. That realization should instantly put the psychic on his guard. This result is *deja vu* – the sense that you have experienced this event before – and because the character *has* experienced it before (though he's only remembering it NOW), he has the advantage of knowing what will happen next, though in a scrolling sequence, remembering each facet of the *deja vu* event only as it begins to unfold. For example, he suddenly remembers being ambushed at this location the moment it starts to happen. He remembers being so startled by the attack that he crashes the mini-van, and only because he remembers this and has an idea of what's happening, he does not panic this time and comes to a screeching halt before the collision (or hits the wall, but begins to break so the damage to the vehicle is minimal) and nobody inside is hurt. This is all a plus and better than the original prophetic dream. However, events are unfolding so quickly, and the details of the dream so foggy, that the psychic doesn't remember the crowd of bystanders rushing toward them until they start to do so. It is at that moment that he remembers they are not rushing to their aid but charging to attack them. The psychic screams for his companions to "run, run . . . they'll try to kill us." And the fact that he is running, and taking a closer look (and maybe a Perception Roll) makes them realize the crowd is carrying wooden clubs, pipes and knives, and run after their comrade. As he's about to turn around a corner, he suddenly remembers there are assailants waiting in hiding and shouts, "no, not there, this way." "What's going on?" screams one of his companions. "Why are they attacking us?" It is only from the stimulation of the question and the circumstance that the psychic experiencing *deja vu* remembers. "Something's controlling them. We're getting too close and it wants to stop us." "What?! What is it?" At that point the *deja vu* might end, and our hero doesn't know the answer. Or he may know it is a Mindolar and had they turned that corner, they would have run right into it and been enslaved too. Only they didn't. They're still running for their lives and he doesn't know if they'll survive, but they have a chance. Things are different this time . . . this is the real confrontation, and they have a chance to escape.

Bonuses: In addition to the spurts of knowledge and insight that come with *deja vu*, the person "reliving" the event is +3 on Perception Rolls, +2 on all other combat rolls (initiative, strike, parry, dodge, roll with impact, etc.), and +5% on skill performance.

Game Masters: Don't be afraid of players using Precognition or Clairvoyance. Remember, neither is an exact art. Sometimes (when you want it to) the power provides a great deal of information, clues and help, other times hardly anything. One time the info and vision is crystal clear, the next time it is cryptic, confusing and not very helpful. The player of the psychic character may not be happy about a short or cryptic vision, but that's the way the power works, too bad. Just be careful of revealing too much detail. Use Clairvoyance and Precognition to create even greater suspense, fear and drama. I have found that even providing a lot of information, if done right, can make for a terrifying and pulse-pounding experience. ("Good Lord! We have to go up against that?!") But these visions and flashes of

insight can be a great G.M. tool. A way to encourage players to go to a particular place, prepare for a particular nemesis or battle, to provide clues that build the tension as their worst fears are confirmed time and time again. Good stuff, so use it to *your* advantage in developing the story, advancing plot and helping the characters along. Remember, these are brief glimpses about the *possible* future, if the vision doesn't come true or is similar but different, it's because they did something to change it. Current events and intervention *can* always change the future, or at least the outcome of the event. Take the previous example of *deja vu*, the ambush still happened. The crash still happened, though not as badly, and the characters still found themselves up against a Mindolar controlled mob out to get them, *but* the information about the future kept them out of the monster's clutches (at least for the moment), gave them a fighting chance, made for a great adventure moment, and, assuming they escape, advances the story. They now know they are up against a Mindolar. Is it operating alone or serving a greater power? Where's its lair so they can take the fight to it on their terms, and so on.



Presence Sense

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m) area.

Duration: 2 minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None.

Presence Sense is a psionic probe and awareness that alerts the psychic to the presence of supernatural and other monsters. The ability cannot pinpoint the location of the presence, but will give the psychic the impression of whether it is near (within 50 feet/15.2 m) or far (beyond 90 feet/27.4 m). It will also give the character a vague idea of how many presences there are; one or two, a few (3 to 6), several (7 to 15), many (20-70) or an army or a swarm (100 or more). The Psychic Sensitive can also tell if one or more of the supernatural presences is small (something not too powerful), medium (Lesser Demon and most Supernatural Predators), big (Greater Demon and nasty monsters) or huge (Demon Lords, Dark Gods, Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence).

The psychic can also sense human presences, but with much less accuracy. It is more of a feeling of "We are not alone." The person's distance is undeterminable and the number of people is limited to a sense of one or two or many, and that is only right half of the time. The only exception is if a place has been deserted, cleared out of human and animal life, then, the psychic can sense that one or more humans are above, below, north, south, etc.

Psychic Invisibility

Range: Line of sight or 100 foot (30.5 m) radius.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 12

Saving Throw: Potential victims are -2 to save; area effect.

Psychic Invisibility is the ability to remain undetected when in plain sight. This is accomplished via a Telepathic impulse that convinces bystanders that the psychic is not a threat and insignificant – beneath their notice. Those affected by the hypnotic impulse are unable to see the character, and subconsciously avoid colliding with him; they don't see him on a conscious level. **Note:** This invisibility works only if the character is "passing through" or hiding, and honestly has no intention of attacking or hurting anybody in the area. The slightest ill intent or act toward perpetrating violence instantly cancels the psionic influence.

Individuals watching through video monitors and other sensory equipment can be similarly tricked into ignoring the psychic, but only if within his radius of influence. Those out of range will react appropriately, and once the psychic has been seen, the person is immune to his ability to seem invisible. Likewise, while a watch guard may not see or react to the psychic, he will be captured and recorded on film and by sensors. Video cameras, computers and similar devices are never fooled by this power; they are able to notice and record the character as normal (some may sound an alarm, too).

Psychic Literacy

Range: Self; object by touch.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience. Can psionically scan 15 pages per melee round.

I.S.P.: 7

By focusing and running his hand slowly down the written page, the psychic can get the gist – the concept – of what has been written even if the book is written in a foreign or alien language. However, it must be an actual *language*, not a cryptographic code or pictographs. The psychic's level of comprehension and recollection is reasonably good, but is nowhere near Total Recall and does not include detailed information or every name, just the basic idea and information of what has been written. The psychic will also get a sense of when the book was written, who published it, whether it is out of print, and can even quote *a few* select, short passages from it (items that had significance to the character or the group's current situation).

If a book of spell incantations, rituals, formulas or equations, the psychic will have an idea of what rituals and invocations are in it, but cannot see, remember or repeat an entire spell, ritual, formula, or set of instructions, nor can he see any portion of numerical formulas or mathematical equations.

Read Dimensional Portal

Range: Touch or one foot (0.3 m) per level of experience.

Duration: One melee round per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 6

Limitations: Applicable only to active (open) dimensional portals and devices that can create a dimensional portal.

This power allows the psychic to get impressions from the open portal or dimension spanning device, which instills the character with the following information:

- Destination is relatively dangerous/hostile or safe to the psychic. This includes whether or not the environment can support human life.
- Whether there is a strong (or numerous) presence of the supernatural (i.e. Alien Intelligence, gods, demons, etc.) and whether that presence is evil.
- A psychic flash – a brief vision of who was the last person or persons to use the portal, if any (may be none if it is a random Rift that hasn't been used by any living force).
- Intuitively senses whether the portal or machine leads to any dimension known to the occult, myth or legend.
- If a mechanical gateway or device capable of dimensional travel/opening a dimensional portal, whether it is a creation of magic or science, and the psychic will get a basic idea of how to operate it in order to open or close a dimensional portal (similar to Object Read).

Remote Viewing

Range: Self.

Duration: 2D6+6 second flash of insight or vision of current events.

I.S.P.: 20

Saving Throw: Special. Other psychics can feel or sense when somebody is trying to observe them and can try to resist it by concentrating (uses up one I.S.P.); standard save vs psionic attack (in this case, psionic intrusion). Failure means the psychic is seen via Remote Viewing. Success means the psychic trying to view is blocked, and he knows that the target has deliberately done so. The target of this power gets no impression from being viewed remotely and has no idea why he is being watched or by whom.

To use this power, the psychic needs a photo or video image to focus on, even if he knows the person or place intimately. When focused on a particular person, the psychic can see in his mind what the person is doing at that moment for 2D6+6 seconds. The image appears as if the character were looking down through a skylight. He sees only a glimpse of things and may not remember all the details. Likewise, he may not see other people outside his line of vision, because the focus is a particular person, not the entire room. If the target is moving, walking, or driving, the remote viewer will know this and follow along for a few seconds, although he may not have a clear idea of his surroundings, but enough of an impression to recognize it if he sees it personally.

The character may also Remote View a specific place such as a small to medium-size room, a corner in a playground or field, a specific entrance to a building, a particular section of an alley, etc., but not an entire house, office building, stadium, street, etc. As before, he must have a photograph, video or frame of film to focus upon. For 2D6+6 seconds, the psychic will see whatever occurs in that small area of that particular place,

In the alternative, the psychic can use Remote Viewing to catch glimpses/images that tell something about the subject of the viewing. In this instance, he must have 2-4 specific questions, such as, "is so and so alive..." Then the image of the char-

acter smiling as he walks through the area appears, or flashes of a brutal attack, blood, and a falling body (indicating death), and so on, appear for an instant in answer to his query. In either case, the psychic cannot look at the same person or place via Remote Viewing again for another 24 hours.

See Aura

Range: 60 feet (18.3 m) and must be visible.

Duration: 2 melees (30 seconds).

I.S.P.: 6

Saving Throw: None, but a Mind Block will hide the presence of psychic abilities, the level of P.P.E., and possession by a supernatural force.

All things, organic and inorganic, have an aura. The aura has many distinctions and indicates things to the psychic normally invisible to the ordinary eye.

Seeing an aura will indicate the following:

- Estimate the general level of experience. Low (1-3), medium (4-7), high (8th and up).
- The presence of magic (no indication of what type or the power level).
- The presence of psychic abilities (again though, not the type or power level).
- High or low base P.P.E.
- The presence of a Possessing Entity.
- The presence of an unusual human aberration and/or indicates a serious illness, insanity, or that the individual is not human, could be mutant or supernatural, but does not specify which.

Note: A psychic can not tell one's alignment by using this power.

See The Invisible

Range: 120 feet (36.6 m).

Duration: 1 minute per each level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None.

The character can see Entities, invisible creatures, energy beings, the splintered life essence of dark gods and Alien Intelligences, as well as objects and creatures that can turn invisible or are naturally invisible. Even if the creature has no form per se, the psychic will be able to discern the vaporous image or energy sphere which is the being. This includes ghosts, Entities, Elementals and Astral Beings.

Sense Dimensional Anomaly

Range: 100 feet (30.5 m) radius per level of experience.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: None.

The ability to detect the presence of a dimensional anomaly like an open/active dimensional portal, the random opening and closing of a Rift, shifting energy along a ley line, and the presence/energy of dimensional triangles (The Devil's Sea/Bermuda Triangle, etc.), as well as any disturbances caused by teleporta-

tion, and magic or powers that disrupt the fabric of reality or tear holes in the fabric of space and time. The psychic knows when it happens, when it ends/closes, the general direction, and whether it is far or near, but no exact knowledge of its location or what is happening because of it.

Sense Evil

Range: 140 foot (42.7 m) area.

Duration: 2 minutes (8 melees) per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

Saving Throw: None.

This psi-power is a much more refined ability to feel the presence of evil. All supernatural creatures radiate their alignment, good or evil. A Psychic Sensitive will automatically feel supernatural evil without spending a single I.S.P. However, to get a clearer picture of the evil force(s) the character must open himself and use the Sense Evil ability.

Sense Evil will indicate the general number of supernatural evil: one, a few (2-6), several (7-15), or many (16 or more). It can also register the intensity of the evil and pinpoint the general location of the source(s) to a particular room(s), possessed object, character, and distance; i.e. very near (within 15 feet/4.5 m), near (within 50 feet/15.2 m), or far (60 to 140 feet/18.2 to 42.7 m). The character can track the source of supernatural evil, like a bloodhound, by sensing how close it is to him.

Evil emanations from human beings are much less distinct and can not be felt unless the source/person is within six feet (1.8 m) and has an immediate evil intention, is psychotic, or has psychic powers, though an evil psychic may be able mask his evil intentions and alignment with a Mind Block. Otherwise, to sense evil in a person, he must touch that person.

Sense Magic

Range: 120 foot (36.6 m) area.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 3

Saving Throw: None.

The ability to Sense Magic enables the psychic to feel magic energy, tell whether it is near (within 20 feet/6.1 m) or far (up to 120 feet/36.6 m away) and follow the emanations to pinpoint their source as a particular place, room, person or object. **Note:** Invisible, magical or supernatural creatures or objects can only be traced to a general area, like a specific room or area. The psychic will also be able to sense whether or not an object has magic powers, if a person or item is enchanted/under a magic spell (this does not include psionic influences), when magic is being used within the area (120 feet/36.6 m) and when a person is casting a spell (human users of magic do not radiate magic energies until they call upon them).

Sense Time

Range: Self.

Duration: 15 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

The psychic is able to accurately measure the passage of time, down to within 1D4 seconds. This can be useful when in an environment where the passage of time can be lost, and especially when the character must meet with or do something at a precise moment in time, like gauging exactly when a bomb will detonate, when a switch must be turned on or off, and so on.

Sixth Sense

Range: 90 feet (27.4 m).

Duration: Until the danger passes or happens. Bonuses apply only to the first melee round of the attack from the source of the sensed danger.

I.S.P.: 2

Saving Throw: None.

The Sixth Sense is a power that gives the psychic a clairvoyant flash of imminent danger to himself or somebody near him (within 90 feet/27.4 m). The character will not know what the danger is or where it will come from, nor who it will be directed at when in a group. All he knows is that something life threatening will happen within the next 60 seconds (4 melee rounds)! The Sixth Sense is triggered *automatically*, without the consent of the psychic, whenever his life is in great peril or the life of somebody he greatly cares about (friend, partner, loved one, etc.). The Sixth Sense is only triggered by an unexpected, life threatening event (a trap or ambush is within 90 feet/27.4 m; a flash flood is rushing his way, etc.) that is already set into motion and will happen in a matter of seconds. The power can not be called upon at will to sense for traps or ambush. Instead, it works like an automatic reflex. If the character has used all his I.S.P. the Sixth Sense is temporarily rendered inoperative.

Bonuses: The sudden flash of insight provides the following bonuses. All bonuses apply only to the first, *initial* melee (15 seconds) when the attack/danger actually happens/occurs. Bonuses are lost in subsequent melee rounds after the danger is revealed. +6 on initiative roll, +4 on Perception Rolls, +2 to parry, +3 to dodge and the character cannot be surprised by a sneak attack from behind.

Speed Reading

Range: Self.

Duration: 3 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 2

This is the ability to read and comprehend the written word extremely quickly. Speed of reading is 30 pages per minute (seven and a half pages per melee round/15 seconds). The psychic retains the information as he would from a normal reading. Highly technical texts reduce the speed reading by half (15 pages per minute or about four pages per melee round), and may require two readings to remember in specific detail.

Telepathy (Communication)

Range: Read surface thoughts up to 60 feet (18.3 m) away, or two-way telepathic communication - 40 feet (2.7 m) per level of experience.

Duration: 2 minutes per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 4

Saving Throw: Conditional. When a character suspects he is being telepathically probed he can resist, getting the standard saving throw. Mind Blocks will completely prevent telepathic probes, Thought-Reading or communications as long as the block is up.

The power of Telepathy allows the psychic to eavesdrop on what another person is thinking at a particular moment. This is done by focusing on that one individual and picking up on his or her surface thoughts. Surface thoughts are those thoughts and musings uppermost in a target's mind. A deep probe into memory is not possible. Although the psychic can read the thoughts of several people, he can only do so by focusing on one person at a time. Simultaneous, multiple mind reading is impossible for the character.

Limited Telepathic communication is also possible. The Telepath can send a directed thought message to one person at a time. The message must be as brief and clear as possible. Like, "John, I need you immediately. Hurry!" or "Stop! Don't do that." "Come here," "Look out" or "Press the green button." However, two-way telepathic communication is not possible except between two characters both with Telepathic abilities.

Telepathic Projection

Range: Self up to 100 miles (160 km) per level of experience.

Duration: 1D4 minutes for a subconscious projection, one minute per level of experience for a conscious effort; double if the sender or receiver is at a ley line or place of power.

I.S.P.: 4 by accident (unconscious/subconscious effort), 12 when a conscious and deliberate effort.

Telepathic Projection is the rare ability to appear in two places at the same time, and may account for some stories about doppelgangers. It is also an ability the psychic has little control over. Telepathic Projection usually occurs by accident while the psychic is asleep or meditating, and the "projection" appears to somebody the psychic has been thinking of or worried about. Though called projection, the image appears completely 3D and solid, and responds to people and outside stimuli as if it were the psychic. The visit is usually brief, 1D4 minutes, and usually involves delivering a personal message or glad tidings, such as, "I was thinking about you and wanted to say I love you," or "I miss you," or "I'm glad to see you're okay and doing well," or "don't let the job stress you out, find time for your family," "don't forget Dad's birthday," "take care of yourself," and so on. The projection may also deliver a warning, ask information that the person might know, or deliver an apology or other sort of message.

Unconscious Telepathic Projections usually occur while sleeping and result from worrying about or missing someone. There are numerous anecdotal accounts of a loved one having been in a serious accident or just died, yet a friend or loved one insists that the person was visiting them, miles away, at about

the same time, having just stopped by to say hello or to tell them not to worry or that they'll be okay, or some other message of love and fond remembrance. Of course, it's usually a few hours or even days later that the friend learns about the person's accident or death, and realizes he couldn't have been talking to that person at that moment, and yet . . . This is often chalked up to a visit by a ghost, but often the person is alive and well. Sure enough, the friend is doing fine just like . . . um, her doppelganger said.

Guilt is another source of unconscious or subconscious Telepathic Projection in which the subconscious sends a projection to make amends, apologize, or, in at least one case in England, confess to the police!

In all cases of unconscious Telepathic Projection, the psychic has only a vague recollection of the visit as if it were a *dream*, and might not remember it until someone brings it up.

A *conscious Telepathic Projection* requires 15-20 minutes of meditation, focus and knowledge of where the contact person will be at the time of projection. When the projection appears, he can talk and interact as if he were physically at the location and both parties will remember the event as if the psychic was actually present in the flesh. The duration of the conversation is



one minute per level of the psychic, and though Telepathy of some kind is presumed to be involved, the Psychic Projection is seen and the conversation heard by everyone who happens by that location. Strange, but true.

Note: Note that the Telepathic Projection can only be sent to someone with whom the psychic sender has a strong emotional connection. Consequently, this power cannot be used to visit an acquaintance, a suspicious character on the street, a store, crime scene, an enemy and so forth. See *Astral Projection* for that.

Thought-Reading

Range: 12 feet (3.6 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience; line of sight.

Duration: One minute per level of experience.

I.S.P.: 10

Saving Throw: -1 to save for humans; -3 to save for Supernatural Predators and Lesser Demons, -2 to save for Demonic Servants and Greater Demons, standard save for Ancient Evil and Alien Intelligences. **Note:** The latter two categories of supernatural beings are so powerful and cunning, they can sense when this psychic probe is being used on them, and if the creature makes a successful saving throw, it may *allow* the answer to be read even though it saved against the Thought-Reading, *or* send a *false answer* – a lie – typically something the being thinks the character wants to hear.

This is a type of Telepathic probe focused on searching the mind of one specific target for answers to specific questions. One question can be sought for every minute of contact. If the victim knows the answer and fails his saving throw, the answer is provided via thought. Note that only specific questions with specific answers will produce results. If the victim makes his saving throw, he manages to mask his thoughts, producing no answer. **Note:** A Mind Block will prevent this power from working.

Total Recall

Range: Self.

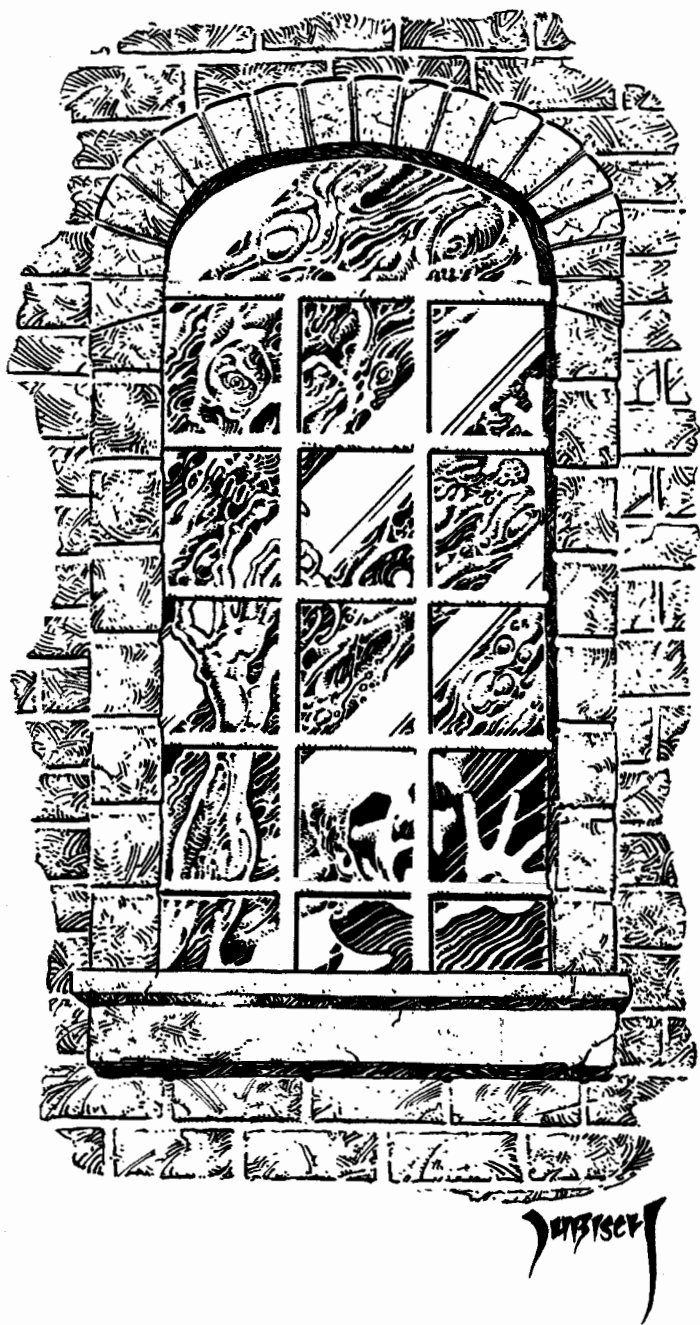
Duration: Permanent memory; 30 minutes per use of Total Recall to memorize material and the same when trying to recall it in exact detail.

I.S.P.: 3

The character remembers every word he reads or image he studies, including diagrams, artwork, designs, insignias, maps, and similar images. Specific blocks of information can be recalled in perfect detail at will. Each block of information costs 3 I.S.P. to recall in absolute detail. If all I.S.P. has been spent, Total Recall cannot be called up and the character may not be able to remember certain blocks of information at that time, or the general idea is there, but the details are not and the memory is fuzzy, so exact quotes, numbers and details are impossible to recall.

Note: Only materials read or studied while Total Recall was activated can be recalled in *exact* detail later, word for word, line for line without mistake.

Beyond the Supernatural™ Game Rules



Beyond the Supernatural™ 2 is a game of subtly and intelligence, suspense and secrets. Though most characters possess unique abilities or special gifts, their real *strength or power* comes from knowledge, and their willingness to look beyond the veil of normalcy and accept what may seem impossible.

The player characters are heroes, but they aren't superheroes. They can't perform outrageous feats of magic or psionics at the drop of a hat, nor do they possess super abilities. Most start out with ordinary lives

until their "gifts" manifest themselves or they have a brush with the supernatural that opens their eyes. They must learn all the nuances and subtleties of their abilities – all the tricks and methods to get the most out of them – and work in secret. The world is not ready to accept what these characters know as truth, and the characters must accept that.

What follows are the basic rules for playing **Beyond the Supernatural™ 2 (BTS-2)**. All of Palladium's games use the same *basic rules*, so once you've learned to play one, you can play any of our games. However, **BTS-2** is a little different. The characters are not superhuman and the psychic abilities and magic work a little different than our other games. That's because the rules for each book are tailored to the setting, and the setting of **BTS-2** pits man against monsters in our modern world.

If you have never role-played before, you're in for a treat, because there's nothing like role-playing games. New players should follow one golden rule: *Sit back and have fun.*

At first glance, a role-playing game can look intimidating. Page after page of rules and information. How can you ever learn it all? Well, relax. First of all, *you* don't have to learn *everything* there is to know about this game. That's why you have this handy book as a companion and reference. Second, a lot of the material is fun to read, but it's not stuff you must know. As a player, you don't need to understand every little nuance of the game (that's the Game Master's job). All you need to know are the basics of how to create a character, how skills and special abilities apply to that character, how combat works and which dice to roll. That's pretty much it.

When you try a role-playing game for the first time, it's natural if the experience feels a little odd or confusing. The text is filled with terms like I.S.P. and P.P.E., and "2D6" this and "2D4" that, and lots of other strange terms that may seem like an incomprehensible secret language you can scarcely wrap your head around. You might need help in rolling up your character, picking out skills and equipment, as well as figuring out which dice to roll. Don't worry! This will pass quickly. By the third or fourth time you've role-played (if not sooner), you should stop feeling like a fish out of water. The more you play, the clearer things will get and the better you'll play.

How to Role-Play

Role-playing games are really just an advanced form of regular board games. In fact, they are so advanced that they no longer use a board and the playing pieces are the characters in each player's imagination. Pretty cool already, if ask me, and you haven't even started playing.

Some of the elements remain the same as a board game: you still need paper and pencil, dice and players, but that's where the similarities end. Role-playing games are all about *unleashing your imagination*.

Let's Take it a Step at a Time

Imagine the Scene

Picture a basement. There is an open step staircase leading down. The walls are covered in white paint that age has turned yellow, large cracks, chips and blotches revealing the red brick underneath. If you turn to look directly opposite from the stairs, the whole basement lies before you. An automatic washing machine and dryer are along the left wall, with water hoses connecting the washer to the large laundry tub and sink next to it. Directly across from the appliances looms the huge iron belly of an antiquated gas furnace, its large, old-style heating pipes weaving across the ceiling like the arms of a metallic octopus. Dust covered storage boxes, old newspapers, rags and jars lean against the walls in scattered stacks. In the far wall is the door to a small pantry, a workroom and a large, old coalbin that hasn't been used since the 1960s. A glance at the glass block windows that rim the right and left walls shows that it's getting dark outside.

Can you picture this scene? Try to keep the mental image in your mind. Don't worry if you forget the details; one of the great things about role-playing is the way your memory is improved with practice. Now you are ready for the next step . . .

Imagine the Setting

A foul odor is mingled with the musty air. The coalbin door, which is always kept locked, yawns a foot and a half open. Beyond the door is only blackness. Utter blackness. Suddenly, a hoarse, inhuman chuckling begins to rise from below the steps.

Like a watching a film, the scene is established, and now our attention is focused to a specific location in the overall scene – the stairs. We have also established an atmosphere and the beginning of action.

Got all that? Good. Now let's figure out where *you*, the player, fit into this.

Imagine Your Character

Now here comes the tricky part. *You* are not in the basement, but there is somebody whose eyes you see through. That person is *your character*. An imaginary persona that exists only as stats on a sheet of paper and in your imagination. This is your *playing piece* in the game. Just like an actor assuming a role for a movie, *you* play a fictitious character in the game. It is your imaginary character who is standing on those basement stairs. It is your imaginary character who has psychic powers and who reacts and interacts with the other playing pieces – the other player characters.

As a rule, you will spend an hour or more developing a player character. Once the character has been created, you'll probably continue playing that character for many weeks, months, even years.

In our example, your character is standing on the lower steps to the basement. The sun is setting and a chilling laughter is bubbling up softly from below the very steps he (or she – the character) is standing on. Remember the scene, the setting? See how it all comes together?

Imagine the Action

Actually, you need one more important ingredient to make a role-playing game work, the *Game Master*. The Game Master, or G.M., is another player (a real person) who controls and acts out all the characters in the game which are *not* the characters of other players. It is also the Game Master who, like the director of a film, establishes the setting, introduces antagonists and keeps the action moving. This means the Game Master will play/act out the friendly police officer, the grumpy old man next door, and the hideous thing under the stairs. In this written example, you are the only player and I am acting as the Game master (G.M.) establishing the scene, setting and conflict.

The Game Master says to you: "You hear a hoarse, rasping laugh coming from below the very steps you are standing on. You realize that the steps are open, they don't have a back to them. They're like the steps of a ladder and whatever is below you can grab your ankles. What are *you* (your character) going to do?"

At this point, *you* must decide what your playing piece, your character, is going to do. Does he slowly bend down to see what's under the stairs? Does he try to run back up the stairs? Or maybe he leaps down the last few steps and tries to run to the toolshed to bar the door and look for a weapon. Or, maybe, he screams like a girl and calls for help. And these are just a few possible actions. The decision is *yours*. The Game Master will have the thing under the stairs (and all future opponents) *respond* to your characters actions.

Like improvisational theater, you, your fellow players and the Game Master, are all building an adventure, a story. The G.M. may have been the one to concoct the basic story, villains and plot twists, but even he doesn't know exactly how it will all turn out, because the players are the key components to the story. Their characters' choices and actions will change everything and carry the story along.

When the game is over you'll have a complete chapter of a larger story forever locked in your memory. A story that *you* helped to create and where your character was one of the heroes.

In a role-playing game there are no simple answers. There are also almost no limits to what you can do. The only restrictions are that you cannot go beyond the physical, mental and emotional limits of your character or the parameters of the setting.

What You Need to Play

Other than imagination, 2 or more players, and a Game Master, you will also need the following:

Dice: 2 four-sided (2D4), 4 six-sided (4D6), 2 eight-sided (2D8), 2 ten-sided (2D10), and 2 twenty-sided (2D20). The numbers in parentheses are examples of how dice terms are condensed and written throughout this text. The first number "2" indicates the number of dice, the letter "D" stands for dice, and the second number indicates the type of dice, four-sided, six-sided, etc. The unusual types of dice, four, eight, ten and twenty sided dice (there are also 12-sided dice), can be purchased at most game and hobby shops, and gaming conventions, as well as on-line, but they can also be purchased at most "chain" bookstores like Barnes & Noble, Waldenbooks, Borders, Books, Music & More, and many comic book shops. Just ask a clerk where you'd find "dice for role-playing games." Ah, but to find an unimaginable array of dice, you'll have to check out a gaming convention. Going to Palladium Books' web site (www.palladiumbooks.com) will keep you abreast of conventions we are attending and how to find out more about them, and from there you will discover a larger world of gamers and gaming.

Plenty of paper and a couple pencils. For keeping track of character stats like Hit Points and I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points), taking note of clues and non-player characters, sketching maps, and so on.

Character log sheets which can be photocopied from this book, or simply use a sheet of paper to jot down your character's stats (attributes, skills, powers, etc.).

Oh, and of course you'll need a place for you and your friends to play – bedroom, basement, family room, living room, kitchen, heck, just about any place.

Notable Role-Playing Game Terms

Adventure: An adventure is the heroic and thrilling story that the player characters engage in. It is the responsibility of the Game Master to create and orchestrate each adventure.

Alignment: The moral fiber of a character. Alignment descriptions begin on page 139.

Attributes: These are numbers used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your character. For example: P.P. means Physical Prowess; how smooth, agile and quick a character is in combat. A P.P. of 4 would indicate that the character is pretty clumsy. A P.P. of 9 or 10 would be an average, well coordinated character. While a P.P. of 16 or higher would belong only to characters with exceptional agility and reflexes. Attributes are also part of a character's overall *Statistics* or *Stats*.

Bonuses: Many skills and some occupations and character classes (P.C.C.s and O.C.C.s), magic spells, weapons and other things may provide the fictional character with one or more *bonuses*. Combat bonuses to strike, parry, dodge, etc., are one type, bonuses to *save* vs a particular type of attack (psionics, magic, poison, possession, etc.) are another. Then there are bonuses to Perception Rolls, skill, and even S.D.C. Bonuses which are *added* to that particular character stat or combat or melee action. Always be sure to include your character's bonuses, they may make the difference between life and death.

Campaign: A word used to describe an ongoing game with the same characters. If you play the same characters with the same Game Master, in the same basic game world/setting, on a regular basis, then you are in a campaign. A campaign can be one long adventure or numerous adventures of varying length.

Character: Every player (except the G.M.) has a character that serves as an imaginary playing piece; also called the *Player Character*.

Combat: This is an "adventure" game, so there will be combat, from fisticuffs to gunplay, psychic zaps and magical energy blasts. Combat is determined by the roll of a D20 plus "modifiers" (bonuses or penalties). See the Combat Section for details.

Death: Just as in real life, these fictional characters can die. The death of a hero in role-playing games, much like comic books and ongoing television shows, is usually a fairly uncommon event, and when it happens, it is usually pretty dramatic. (Hopefully a noble or heroic sacrifice). The amount of death in a campaign usually depends on the individual Game Master, his players, and the world setting. In *Beyond the Supernatural™ 2*, the world of the paranormal and supernatural can be incredibly dangerous and violent, so death *may* be commonplace, unless the player characters use their heads, work as a team, watch each other's backs and don't take silly risks.

Players should take a character's death calmly. Remember, it's *ONLY* a game. When one character dies, roll up a new one and try to get back into the game with the orientation and personality of the *new* character. It may be handy to have a back-up character already rolled up and waiting in the wings, in case the current character should die.

Game Masters, you don't have to "pause" the game while the player rolls up a "NEW" character, but try to work him back into the plot as soon as he is ready to rejoin the game. It's no fun sitting out a game for long periods of time. However, characters should not be a dime a dozen, or killed on a whim or as a result of personal conflict between other player(s) or the Game Master. A good G.M. should try to give the player characters *options*, i.e. a chance to surrender, a desperate chance at escape, etc. Then again, sometimes there's no way around it. I've killed plenty of characters as a G.M. Some of the deaths were spectacular and worthy of a heroic poem, and other times the character just played dumb or took a dangerous risk and paid the ultimate price. It happens, and often adds to the drama of the story.

Dice: As noted previously, dice are an essential. Track 'em down.

Game Master (G.M.): This is the person who controls the game "world," sets up and develops the adventures and pacing, and serves as the general referee and rules interpreter. All the *non-player characters* (NPCs), innocent bystanders, police, politicians, monsters, and even the weather are controlled by the Game Master. G.M.s should try to be fair and run a *fun* game.

Game Session & Adventures: Each time you play is considered a game or gaming session. A game session can last a couple hours or half the day. A typical game *runs* about 3-4 hours. A game session can be a

complete story/adventure in itself, or one story in an ongoing series like a television show or comic book. A game session can also end without a final resolve, with part two (or three, or four . . .) picking up *next game* where the group left off.

I.S.P. or Inner Strength Points: I.S.P. are spent or expended every time a character uses a psionic power. When all I.S.P. are used up, the character cannot use any more psychic powers until he gets some points back. I.S.P. are restored at a rate of one per hour of sleep. They can also be restored through *meditation* at a rate of two I.S.P. per 30 minutes (or 4 points per hour) of meditation. *Advanced Meditation* restores I.S.P. at double the usual rate (4 I.S.P. per 30 minutes or 8 per hour). Only psionic/psychic characters and some supernatural creatures have I.S.P. points and psychic powers. See the P.C.C. Section (Psychic Character Classes) and Psionic Descriptions for complete details on psychics and their abilities.

Magic: *Beyond the Supernatural™ 2* and most Palladium role-playing games include magic spells, powers, weapons and monsters. Although some of these things may be inspired by myths and legends, *NONE* of them are real! Magic will be explored in the pages of the *Arcanum* companion book to BTS-2.

Megaverse®: The trademark we use to identify the multi-genre, anything goes, infinite worlds and possibilities that Palladium's one game system has to offer. A complete, 32 page *catalog* of Palladium role-playing games and sourcebooks is available, free, upon request, for only 50 cents to cover postage and handling. Send catalog requests (and letters or comments) to Palladium Books Inc., Department P, 12455 Universal Drive, Taylor, MI 48180.

Natural Twenty: In all of Palladium's role-playing games (RPGs), the outcome of combat is determined by the roll of a twenty-sided die (1D20). The higher the roll, the better. Many combat "rolls" get bonuses to strike, parry, dodge, etc. These bonuses are added to the roll of the die. For example, if a 12 is rolled on a D20, but a character has cumulative bonuses of +4 to strike, then the roll is *modified* to 16.

A *Natural Twenty* is rolling the highest possible number (20) without adding any bonuses to the number rolled. A Natural 20 never misses unless one's opponent *also* rolls a natural 20 (very uncommon, but I have seen it happen). Yes, a Natural 20 will hit even if an opponent's roll is higher than 20 after bonuses are added to it. A Natural 20 is also considered a critical strike and does *double damage*. Or if the player was trying to shoot or knock a weapon out of an opponent's hand, or grab an item before an opponent gets it, the action is an automatic success.

Non-Player Character (NPC): A character that is not played by any of the players, such as villains and other characters played by the Game Master (G.M.).

Occupational Character Class (O.C.C.): O.C.C. is the term most Palladium games use to describe the character's stats, education, and occupation. It indicates specific skills, skill selections, goals, orientation, equipment, and salary.

An R.C.C. (Racial Character Class) is basically the same thing but refers to monsters and aliens with abilities that come to all creatures of that specific *race*.

P.C.C. stands for Psychic Character Class and is a term reserved for "psychic" characters in *Beyond the Supernatural™ 2*, *Nightbane®* and *Mystic China™*.

P.C.C.: The term used to denote a *Psychic Character Class* and the type of psychic character you will be playing.

Percentile Dice: Percentile dice are typically a pair of ten-sided dice (2D10), each a different color. One ten-sided die represents "tens" and the other ten-sided die represents "ones." So if the red D10 is tens and the white D10 is ones, then a roll of 3 on red and a roll of 5 on the white would indicate the number 35. Get it?

Percentile dice are commonly rolled to determine the "random outcome" on a table or chart as well as for "skill checks."

Perception Rolls: A roll made to notice, see, hear or recognize a clue or concealment. It is described and explained in detail in the Combat Section.

Player or Role-Player: Probably *you*. A player is a person who assumes the role of a fictional character in a role-playing game.

Player Character: A fictional character that is played or “run” by one of the people playing in the game. An NPC (Non-Player Character) is a character, villain or monster played by the G.M.

P.P.E.: Potential Psychic Energy used to develop human potential.

Psionics or Psychic Abilities: Like magic, the psionic powers and abilities described in this book are fictional, although they may be inspired by myths, legends and reports of psychic phenomena.

Random Roll/Determination: This will always refer to a chart or table in which a character can roll percentile dice for a random result as dictated by the roll of the dice. In many cases, the player or Game Master *may* choose to pick the desired result. However, at Palladium, we’ve found random rolls to be more fun and challenging than picking something that sounds comfortable, easy or desirable.

Role-Playing Game (RPG): Sometimes called *fantasy role-playing (FRP)*, they are games, like this one, that build a story with imaginary characters in a fictional setting. Role-playing games cover every genre imaginable, including horror, fantasy, sword and sorcery, science fiction, cyberpunk, mecha/giant robots, super-heroes, war, and just about everything else. The great thing about role-playing games is that the Game Master and players are limited only by their imaginations. Anything is possible.

Roll a Twenty-Sided: Simply roll a twenty-sided die (1D20) for a number. Typically, the higher the roll the better.

Roll Percentile: The roll of two different colored ten-sided dice (2D10), with one color representing tens and the other representing ones. There are also 10-sided dice (D10) available that are already marked in tens (10, 20, 30, etc.), but they are typically only available at game and hobby stores or gaming conventions.

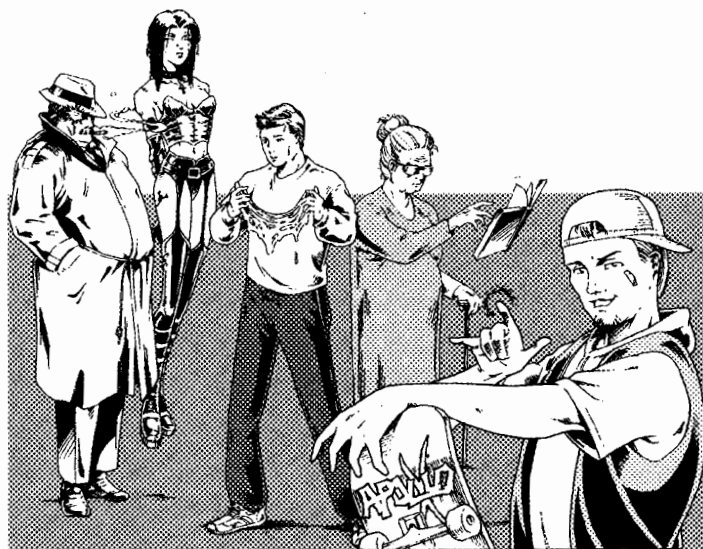
Roll to Strike: The roll of a twenty-sided die (1D20) to determine whether or not the attacking character hits his opponent. See the Combat Section, starting on page 158, for details.

Run: Slang for playing a role-playing game. Example: “He runs an excellent campaign,” or “I ran in Kevin’s game last week,” or “You should run a BTS-2 game.”

Saving Throw: This is a roll (usually on a twenty-sided die) to avoid some unpleasant event. For example: A character might have to roll a saving throw to avoid being overcome by tear gas. The complete list appears under *Combat Terms* in the Combat section. See page 161.

Scenario: This is a specific adventure in which the player characters engage in adventure and building a story while role-playing. A scenario is usually a story with a beginning (hearing about the criminal), a middle (tracking down the criminal’s hide-out), and an end (defeating the criminal). Most campaigns are developed around a number of scenarios.

Skill Check/Roll Under Your Skill: A *skill check* is rolled to determine if the character successfully performed a specific skill. The character must roll *under* his current skill ability (Base Skill, any applicable bonus, plus level advancement). For example: A character with the Surveillance skill gets the base skill of 30% but also a +20% bonus for his occupation and because he is third level, an additional +10% (+5% per level of experience starting at level two), for a total of 60%. Rolling a 01-60 on percentile dice means he has successfully performed that skill. **Note:** You don’t have to do the math every time you use a skill. Make a photocopy of the character sheet or write the stats on a piece of paper and add everything up when you first create the character. Write the numbers in pencil so you can change them/increase them as the character grows and his skills improve with experience.



Character Creation

Creating a character is simple and fun, though there will be a number of choices the player will have to consider, select, and make note of, which takes a bit of time.

As noted earlier in this book, the Palladium game system is built to maximize *characters* and *story* to create vivid, memorable characters with strong personalities and a range of skills, strengths and weaknesses, not a two-dimensional cartoon character. Thus, it may take a player a while to build his character, but the end result will be a character that is uniquely *yours*. Designed to *your* specifications and unique to every other character in the group. A character that, with a little development and personality, will seem to take on a life of its own. It’s a magical and fun experience you’ll never forget.

Let’s take it one step at a time.

Step 1: The Eight Attributes

All characters have eight prime attributes, three mental and five physical. *Attribute numbers* are used to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of your character. For example: “P.P.” means Physical Prowess – how smooth and agile a character may be, especially in combat. A P.P. of 4 indicates that the character is pretty clumsy. A P.P. of 8-11 indicates a character is fairly average. A P.P. of 16 or higher indicates a character with exceptional agility and reflexes. **Note:** Attributes are also called “Statistics” or “Stats.”

The first step in creating a character is to roll up the eight attributes: **I.Q., M.E., M.A., P.S., P.P., P.E., P.B., and Spd.** These represent your character’s natural mental and physical abilities. Some of the *Physical skills* and special abilities from a P.C.C. and/or occupation may provide bonuses to increase some of the character’s attributes, so it is important to write the numbers down in *pencil* until all modifiers and bonuses are accounted for.

Three six-sided dice (3D6) are rolled to determine each attribute. The higher the number, the greater the ability. Start with I.Q. and work your way through the rest.

Exceptional right off the bat: If an initial attribute roll using three six-side dice (3D6) adds up to a 16, 17, or 18, that attribute is considered *exceptional* and the player rolls *one additional six-sided die* (1D6), and that resulting number is added to the total for that attribute. If an-

other six is rolled (a rarity), roll yet another 1D6 for that attribute! Stop there. No additional dice are rolled even if the second 1D6 bonus miraculously comes up a six. **Note:** This bonus 1D6 is only rolled during the *initial* attribute generation and does not apply to attributes raised to 16 or higher from skills, P.C.C.s, occupations, genetic augmentation, mutation or special abilities.

Attribute Bonuses from Skills (Step 5): Many of the *Physical skills* provide the character with *attribute bonuses* that help them in the performance of skills, combat and work. For example, Wrestling offers a +2 bonus to the P.S. and P.E. attributes, so if the player has already rolled a total of 15 for P.S., he adds another two points for a total of 17. If his P.E. was 8, the +2 would raise it to 10. All Physical skill point bonuses are cumulative.

The Eight Attributes

Intelligence Quotient (I.Q.): Indicates the character's intelligence. The exact I.Q. is equal to the I.Q. attribute multiplied times ten. Characters with an I.Q. of 1-5 are, um, morons and should be played like the classic dumb lug. However, having a low I.Q. does not necessarily make the character a complete idiot. An I.Q. of 6-8 is slightly below average but far from an imbecile. An I.Q. of 9-12 is average, 13-15 slightly above average. An I.Q. of 16 or better is exceptional, the higher the number the more brilliant the character. An I.Q. of 16 or higher receives a one-time bonus (see Attribute Bonus Chart) to *all* skill percentages, including Occupational and Elective Skills, Elective Skills that did not get a bonus and even Secondary Skills.

Mental Endurance (M.E.): Measures the amount of mental and emotional stress the character can withstand. M.E. 16 or better provides a bonus to save vs psionic attacks and insanity.

Mental Affinity (M.A.): Represents the character's likability, personal charm and charisma. Natural leaders, with an M.A. of 16 or higher, have a bonus to invoke trust or intimidation in others. A person with a high M.A. may appear trustworthy to some, but intimidating to others. This may depend on the character himself or the circumstances of the situation. At the player's option, a character with a high M.A. may choose to be only especially trustworthy or only intimidating. This explains how your friendly neighborhood ice cream man and some knife-wielding thug might both have the same high M.A., but use it differently.

Physical Strength (P.S.): This is the raw physical power of a character. Any character with a P.S. of 16 or better receives a bonus to damage an opponent in hand to hand combat. This bonus is applied to punch and kick attacks, as well as handheld weapons such as a club, knife or sword. It does not apply to the bow and arrow or guns.

Physical Prowess (P.P.): Shows the degree of dexterity and agility of the character. A P.P. of 16 or higher is rewarded with bonuses to strike, parry and dodge.

Physical Endurance (P.E.): Demonstrates the character's stamina and durability. The amount of physical punishment and resistance to fa-

tigue, disease, and poison (and magic too) are determined by P.E. Characters with a P.E. of 16 or higher receive a bonus to save vs coma/death, disease, poisons/toxins, and magic. But not Demonic Curses or possession, they are different and separate.

Physical Beauty (P.B.): An indication of the physical attractiveness of the character. A P.B. of 16 or better is rewarded with a bonus to charm or impress.

Speed (Spd): This is how fast the character can run. The character's Speed x20 is the number of yards or meters he can run in one minute. Speed x5 is the number of yards/meters covered in a melee round (15 seconds). Dividing the distance covered in a melee round by the character's number of attacks indicates how far he can move on each attack.

Speed Factor	Approx. MPH	Kilometers Per Hour
5	3½	5.6
11	7½	12
22	15	24
27	18½	29.7
33	22½	36
44	30	48
50	35	56
55	37½	60
58	40	64
66	45	72
77	53	85
88	60	96
110	75	120
132	90	148
220	150	241
293	200	321

Note: I.S.P. (Inner Strength Points for psionic powers) and **P.P.E.** (Potential Psychic Energy for magic) are important aspects of the character, but they are not *attributes* per se, and are covered elsewhere. Also see **Perception Rolls** in the combat section.

A note about bonuses: Many skills and abilities provide characters with bonuses to strike, parry, dodge, save, etc. These bonuses are typically added to a particular combat or melee *action*. Always be sure to include your character's bonuses, since they may make the difference between success and failure, life and death. Note that bonuses from psionics or magic are *temporary* bonuses, and only apply while that power or spell is in place.

Attributes Beyond 30

It's rare among human characters, but common among supernatural beings and other unnatural creatures, to have an attribute that goes off the standard chart. Here's how to figure out bonuses for Attributes Beyond Thirty.

Intelligence (I.Q.): Bonuses stop on the chart at 30, but the bonuses continue.

ATTRIBUTE BONUS CHART

	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
I.Q. add to all skills. This is a one time bonus	+2%	+3%	+4%	+5%	+6%	+7%	+8%	+9%	+10%	+11%	+12%	+13%	+14%	+15%	+16%
M.E. save vs. psionic attack	+1	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	+5	+6	+6	+7	+7	+8
save vs. insanity	+1	+1	+2	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9	+10	+11	+12	+13
M.A. trust/intimidate	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	84%	88%	92%	94%	96%	97%
P.S. Hand to Hand combat: damage	+1	+2	+3	+4	+5	+6	+7	+8	+9	+10	+11	+12	+13	+14	+15
P.P. parry and dodge bonus	+1	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	+5	+6	+6	+7	+7	+8
bonus to strike	+1	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	+5	+6	+6	+7	+7	+8
P.E. save vs. coma/death	+4%	+5%	+6%	+8%	+10%	+12%	+14%	+16%	+18%	+20%	+22%	+24%	+26%	+28%	+30%
save vs. magic/poison	+1	+1	+2	+2	+3	+3	+4	+4	+5	+5	+6	+6	+7	+7	+8
P.B. charm/impress	30%	35%	40%	45%	50%	55%	60%	65%	70%	75%	80%	83%	86%	90%	92%
Spd. No special bonuses other than the raw, natural ability to run.															

I.Q. skill bonus beyond 30: +2% for every five additional I.Q. points, so an I.Q. 35 equals a skill bonus of +18%. I.Q. 40: +20%, I.Q. 45: +22%, I.Q. 50: +24%, I.Q. 55: +26% and I.Q. 60: +28% and so on.

Moreover, characters with an I.Q. greater than 30 points have sharp memories, tend to notice details and are more likely to see through illusions. This translates into the following: +1 to *Perception Roll* for every 10 points above 30; *Save vs Illusion*: I.Q. 30-33: +1, I.Q. 34-36: +2, I.Q. 37-39: +3, I.Q. 40-42: +4, I.Q. 43-45: +5, I.Q. 46-48: +6 and 49 or higher +7.

Mental Affinity: Any number *beyond 30* means a dynamic, charismatic person with a commanding and/or delightful presence. When the character enters the room, most people take notice. The individual can be very persuasive in a charming or intimidating way.

Perception Roll penalty for others: The character is so impressive and charming that for every 5 M.A. points he/she has above 30 count as a -1 penalty for everyone who is listening, looking at or dealing with the character. ("What? Oh, no I didn't notice anything unusual while I was with so and so.")

M.E. of more than 30 provides select skill bonuses: +5% to Find Contraband, Gambling, Intelligence (gathering), Seduction and Undercover Ops skills; +10% to Interrogation, Performance, Public Speaking and Sing.

Mental Endurance (M.E.) tops out at 30. Bonuses do not increase should the character have a number higher than thirty. The only exception might be an Ancient Evil. But for those rare individuals, demigods, godlings, gods, Demon Lords and Alien Intelligences who might hit M.E. 30 or beyond, they get a bonus to save vs possession of all kinds.

Save vs Possession: M.E. 30: +1, M.E. 40: +2, M.E. 50: +3, M.E. 60: +4.

Ordinary "Human" Physical Strength (P.S.): The higher the number, the stronger the character, and the more damage done with his punches and physical attacks (as indicated in the standard table). This strength applies to "ordinary" mortal men and women, so the damage is always Hit Point/S.D.C. damage even if it is beyond P.S. 30 or 40. **Note:** P.S. damage bonuses are always added to the physical damage done by *melee weapons* such as clubs, knives, swords, and spears, but do not apply to arrows and guns.

Damage Bonus Continues: +1 point of Hit Point/S.D.C. damage per digit beyond 30. Thus a character with a P.S. of 31 does +16, P.S. 32 does +17, a P.S. of 40 does +25, and so on.

Throwing Bonus: For every five points above 30 (round down), the character can hurl a rock, ball or throwing weapon (dagger, spear, sling, etc.) or shoot an arrow an extra 30 feet (9.1 m) without losing accuracy (no penalties for the greater distance).

Lifting and Carrying Bonus: For every five points above 30 (round down), the strong character can lift or carry 30% more than usual.

Physical Prowess (P.P.): The bonus to strike, parry and dodge stops at 30.

Initiative Bonus: However, for every three P.P. points beyond 30, the character gets a bonus on his *initiative roll*. P.P. 31-33: +1 on initiative, P.P. 34-36: +2, P.P. 37-39: +3, P.P. 40-42: +4, P.P. 43-45: +5, P.P. 46 and higher: +6.

Physical Endurance (P.E.): The bonus to save vs poison, disease, and magic stops at 30. However, the percentage to *save vs coma & death* continues.

Save vs Coma & Death: +1 point per each additional point beyond 30%. Thus, a P.E. of 31 provides a 31% chance to save vs coma, 32 is 32%, and so on. Additionally, a character with a P.E. of 30 or higher fatigues at half the normal rate.

Impervious to disease: Any character with a P.E. of 30 or higher is effectively impervious to disease. Only the most virulent virus (or designer bug) has a chance of affecting this character.

Physical Beauty (P.B.): Any number beyond 30 is divine perfection. A beauty beyond compare, angelic.

P.B. of more than 30 provides select skill bonuses: +5% to Cardsharp, Concealment, Palming, Pick Pockets, Performance and Public Speaking skill (observers are so distracted by the beauty they don't notice any trickery or flaws in performance); +13% to Seduction. Penalty: -10% to Prowl (all eyes are on the beauty).

Speed (Spd.): Indicates the rate of speed at which a character can run and/or fly. Most ordinary humans never exceed 30, but supernatural beings and weird bio-genetic creations might. Running fast is its own reward and ability.

Supernatural Strength & Damage

Demons and other supernatural creatures inflict a great deal more damage than normal humans, even humans with extraordinary strength. While the strongest human in the world may be able to bend metal bars and lift great weights, he would not be able to punch through a metal door or tear through a brick wall. Each description of a supernatural being, monster or creature of magic will indicate the amount of damage it inflicts (plus P.S. bonus) from mere punches, kicks and bites. Furthermore, supernatural beings do not show signs of fatigue even after hours of combat and great physical exertion.

Most supernatural beings use the damage listings below to determine base hand to hand damage, and then add P.S. damage bonuses, but some might do more damage if they have claws or some other feature that serves as a weapon. Any deviations from this list will be noted in the specific creature's description (e.g., "claw attack: 6D6 damage").

Simply put, *supernatural beings* (and creatures of magic) are *not* human. They are something else, creatures that defy the laws of physics, making them *more* than human. Their supernatural aspect gives them incredible strength (M.D. in Mega-Damage settings) and endurance, plus many have bodies and skin like the armor of a tank (high A.R.), and are impervious or resistant to ordinary cold, heat and fire, impervious to disease, and heal much more quickly (some practically regenerate damage and heal before one's eyes), because they are not human.

Supernatural Strength & Damage Table

Add the P.S. damage bonuses to all these attacks. Unless stated otherwise, a bite will inflict half the normal punch damage.

P.S. 15 or less: Inflicts 1D4 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6 on a full strength punch, or 2D6 S.D.C. on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 16 to 20: Inflicts 1D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 2D6 on a full strength punch, or 4D6 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 21 to 25: Inflicts 2D4 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 3D6 on a full strength punch, and 6D6 with a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 26 to 30: Inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 4D6 on a full strength punch, or 1D4x10 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 31 to 35: Inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 5D6 on a full strength punch, or 1D6x10 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 36 to 40: Inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 6D6 on a full strength punch, or 2D4x10 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 41 to 50: Inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 1D6x10 on a full strength punch, or 2D6x10 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

P.S. 51 to 60: Inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. on a restrained punch, 2D4x10 on a full strength punch, or 3D6x10 on a power punch (counts as two melee attacks). P.S. bonuses are added to the damage inflicted.

Power Punch Notes:

1. A power punch is a roundhouse punch in which the character winds up and punches with all of his might. In all cases, the power punch attack counts as two melee attacks/actions whether the punch strikes or not. The player must announce that he is trying a *power punch or kick* before he rolls to strike.

2. A *power bite* is not usually possible! The only exceptions may be select supernatural beings, and such exceptions are always noted in the character's stats. Likewise, a power head butt, elbow, knee, body throw/flip or body block/ram is *not* possible except as noted in a specific character's stats.

3. In all cases, a power punch/kick/attack counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Supernatural Damage & Hand Weapons

When wielding a hand weapon, such as swords, clubs and knives, a supernatural being inflicts either the weapon damage plus P.S. damage bonus or its basic hand to hand damage (see previous table) plus P.S. damage bonus, whichever is greater.

Optional Rule: Normal weapons are in danger of breaking when wielded by something with Supernatural Strength. A good rule of thumb is to assume a weapon is in danger of breaking whenever total damage inflicted exceeds more than *three times* the weapon's maximum base damage – in the case of a 2D4 sword, more than 24 points of damage might break it. Every time that much damage is inflicted, there is a 01-30% chance that the weapon will break. Heavy, sturdy weapons, and very well-crafted blades (a master smith's katana, for example) can withstand more damage, do not roll unless damage exceeds *five times* the weapon's maximum damage. Magical weapons and artifacts are basically indestructible and are at no risk of breaking.



Weight & Movement

Normal characters, with a P.S. of 3 to 16, can carry 10 times their P.S. in pounds (P.S.x10 = total in pounds). For Example: A character with a P.S. of 9 can carry 90 pounds (40.5 kg). A character with a P.S. of 15 can carry 150 pounds (67.5 kg).

Strong characters, with a P.S. of 17 or higher, can carry 20 times their P.S. in pounds. This means a character with a P.S. of 18 can carry 360 pounds (162 kg).

Supernatural creatures with a Supernatural P.S. of 18 or higher can carry 50 times their P.S. Thus, a creature with a P.S. of 24 can actually carry over half a ton, 1200 pounds (540 kg)! Creatures with a strength of 17 or less are equal to humans; P.S.x10 in pounds.

Lifting weight is a little different than carrying weight. You may have noticed, yourself, that you can usually lift up a heavier amount than you can carry. I'm not talking about weight-lifting in a body building sense, nor lifting a heavy weight above the chest. Simply the ability to bend over and lift something that weighs more than you can carry. The simple rule is that a character can lift **TWICE** as much as he/she could carry. This means that the character with a P.S. of 9 can carry 90 pounds (40.5), but can lift 180 pounds (81 kg). Meanwhile, the supernaturally strong creature, with a P.S. of 24, can lift over one ton (2400 pounds).

Throwing Heavy or Awkward Objects: A character can not throw more than he can carry.

Add one foot (0.3 m) to the effective range for every P.S. point listed; e.g., P.S. 24 add 24 feet (7.3 m).

Objects such as bricks, bottles, and swords are not designed for throwing. Consequently, the effective range is limited regardless of the strength behind it.

Darts, knives and throwing axes are designed for throwing, but don't have the weight or balance for great distances. The same is true of most objects weighing less than half a pound. Javelins, more so than spears, are designed for distance throwing.

Miscellaneous items weighing over a pound (0.45 kg) and less than 10 pounds (4.5 kg), such as chairs, stools, or lanterns, can be thrown about *half* as far as the one pound (0.45 kg) object.

Normal and extraordinarily strong characters can hurl a weight equal to the weight they can carry, four inches per each P.S. point. This means the person with a P.S. 9 can toss 90 lbs (40.5 kg) up to 3 feet (0.9 m) away. The hero with a P.S. of 17 can toss 340 lbs (153 kg) up to 5 feet, 8 inches away (1.7 m).

Supernatural characters can hurl their maximum carrying weight one foot (0.3 m) per P.S. point. So a supernatural character with a P.S. of 24 can hurl an incredibly heavy object (up to 1200 pounds/540 kg) a whopping 24 feet (7.3 m). Damage from these heavy thrown objects is 1D6 +1D6 S.D.C. points per every 20 pounds (9 kg), so a 100 pound (45 kg) item will inflict 6D6 points of damage! A thousand pound (450 kg) object 6D6x10 S.D.C.

Step 2: Hit Points and S.D.C.

Characters have two damage values, *Hit Points* and *S.D.C.* Here's how they work.

Physical S.D.C.

S.D.C. is designed to indicate damage to the physical body that hurts, but is not life threatening. This is the classic movie device of the "flesh wound" and "barroom brawl" where the hero gets shot, stabbed or takes a beating, but, except for a trickle of blood and some bruises, is basically *okay*. This is actually realistic when you think about professional athletes, especially boxers, hockey and football players. Football players, for example, are "grid iron warriors" who get hit, knocked down, tackled, crunched and battered without (for the most part) life threatening injury. They hurt and ache, but they are far from seriously injured and can, with some pain, continue to "play" with negligible impairment or apparent discomfort. That's S.D.C. in a nutshell.

Initial damage inflicted on a character is S.D.C. damage. S.D.C. damage has little or no bleeding and no internal injury or serious physical damage. Any bleeding there may be is minimal, does not count toward blood loss and stops within 1D4 melee rounds (15-60 seconds). "Don't worry, it's only a scratch."

Game Masters, please use common sense with S.D.C. and Hit Points. Some situations – like diving on top of a grenade, getting shot in the head at point-blank range, falling from a great height such as 1,000 feet/305 m – will do damage "directly to Hit Points," skipping S.D.C. entirely.

Determining Physical S.D.C.: All P.C.C.s (Psychic Character Classes) get 1D10+12 S.D.C. to start. Some P.C.C.s and Occupations may offer an S.D.C. bonus, plus many Physical skills provide an S.D.C. bonus. All S.D.C. bonuses are accumulative, add them up to get the total S.D.C. of a given character.

Hit Points

Hit Point damage is serious and potentially life threatening damage. In most cases, however, even Hit Point damage requires multiple injuries or sustained damage to become truly life threatening. The lower a character's Hit Points drop, the closer to death he is getting!

Hit Points might best be thought of as *life points* because they indicate how much physical damage (cuts, bruises, etc.) a character can withstand before he or she dies. Damage is subtracted from *Hit Points* when all *Physical S.D.C.* points are gone or when an attack states "damage is direct to Hit Points."

Each time a character is struck by a punch, kick, weapon, bullet or energy blast, he takes physical damage. Each individual player keeps score of how many Hit Points his character has by subtracting the damage from his character's Hit Points each time that character is hit and injured/takes damage (and remember that's typically after all S.D.C. are gone). The G.M. does the same thing, keeping score of how much damage the player characters have inflicted upon monsters, opponents and NPCs.

When a character has *zero* Hit Points, he collapses and falls into a coma and will soon die without extensive medical help or Psychic Healing. When a character's Hit Points have been knocked far below zero, he is dead and beyond saving. Most characters can survive a number equal to the P.E. attribute number (i.e., P.E. 8, the character is comatose and may be saved as long as he is not more than -8 below zero).

Blood Loss Damage (Optional)

To keep the game fast and simple, we assume even Hit Point damage (unless severe) is not necessarily an immediate life and death situation. Most characters can take one to ten Hit Points of damage like falling off a log. They'll need some painkillers and to get bandaged up, but they'll be just fine with a little rest and medicine.

HOWEVER, when a character loses half or more of his Hit Point number, he is badly hurt. This is when Blood Loss rules kick in. Not only has the character taken a physical pounding, but he is also bleeding from one or more wounds or suffering from internal bleeding. This bleeding causes an additional *one point* of H.P. damage per minute (every four melee rounds), and can result in death! Thankfully, immediate and dramatic medical attention (blood transfusion, surgery, suturing of wounds, etc.) can rescue and revive a character who has fallen into a coma resulting from blood loss (and other injuries). Remember, a character lapses into a coma when his Hit Points are reduced to zero or fall below zero. **Warning!** Unless given at least First Aid treatment and bandaged to stop the worst of the bleeding, the comatose character will continue to lose one Hit Point per minute and could "bleed out" – fall below the P.E. margin for resuscitation and coma recovery. **Designer's Note:** Using the Blood Loss rule can add a tremendous amount of tension and urgency in getting a fallen comrade to a hospital, as well as make players handle their characters more carefully so they don't die.

Try it, it may add a new dimension and level of fear to the game. ("Stop arguing and give the damn thing what it wants! We have to get Fred to a doctor or he's gonna die!") It also makes the Psychic Healer a more significant character.

Determining Hit Points

Base Hit Points: Having rolled up your eight attributes, you will recall that one of them is *Physical Endurance (P.E.)*. The Physical Endurance score indicates your character's base/starting amount of Hit Points. A P.E. of 8 means eight Hit Points, a P.E. of 14 means fourteen Hit Points. Then roll 1D6 and *add it* to the Hit Point total. This is a first level character's *starting Hit Points*.

Some of you may have a character with a large number of Hit Points, but don't get cocky. Gunfire, multiple knife wounds and a sound beating can whittle the character down to size in a melee round or two. To those who find themselves with a character who has only a handful of Hit Points, don't despair or feel cheated. You'll just have to use cleverness and cunning to avoid serious confrontations until you've built up your Hit Points.

Building Hit Points: Add another 1D6 Hit Points for each new experience level of advancement starting at level two. The more experienced and hardened the character becomes, the more damage he can endure. And don't forget about Physical S.D.C., and take a look at body armor and Armor Ratings (A.R.); more on them in a minute.

S.D.C. or Structural Damage Capacity

There are two types of S.D.C. The first is Physical S.D.C. and applies to all living creatures, and is a sort of supplement to Hit Points.

Determining Physical S.D.C. has already been discussed. All P.C.C.s start out with 1D10+12 S.D.C., some P.C.C.s and Occupations provide S.D.C. bonuses, and most Physical skills provide additional S.D.C.

Remember, when a character is hurt, the damage is first subtracted from his or her S.D.C. points. When all S.D.C. is gone, then start subtracting additional/future damage from Hit Points.

The second type of S.D.C. applies to inanimate, non-living structures.

S.D.C. Type Two: Objects

Inanimate objects, such as the walls of buildings, vehicles, furniture, body armor, and so on, also have S.D.C. In this case, the S.D.C. indicates the total amount of damage that the object can withstand. These S.D.C. points function exactly like Hit Points, except that they apply to non-living things. Any damage sustained by, say, a door someone is trying to kick in, is subtracted from the S.D.C. of that item, in this case a door. When the S.D.C. is reduced to zero, it is broken, shattered or smashed beyond repair.

G.M. Note: The S.D.C. system just described is a standard rule in most Palladium Books games. From time to time we hear a complaint that goes something like, "How can somebody be bashing or shooting into a door and the door is in perfect condition until all of its S.D.C. is depleted?"

The answer is, it's not in perfect condition. Using the example of the door, the G.M. should explain exactly what's happening. "You bash into the door with your shoulder. It's a very solid door and you inflict minimal damage (give S.D.C. damage). You realize that it will take quite a while to gain entry this way and you may hurt yourself in the process." Or, "You can feel the door give a little under your great strength (give S.D.C. damage). Another bash and the door's frame cracks and moans, but it still holds (give S.D.C. damage). It will take another couple of attempts as the door's S.D.C. dwindles, but it's definitely giving." Or, "Your submachine-gun riddles the wood door with a

dozen holes." Something the player can look through, but the door is still locked and holding strong.

The point is, attacks on normal objects will scrape, dent, crack, snap, break, splinter, crumble, punch holes through, and so on, even if the object is not completely destroyed. To smash or destroy something may require multiple attacks, and in some cases, like being locked behind an iron door or bulkhead, it may be *impossible* to damage the item at all.

Artificial armor, such as bulletproof vests, suits of armor like the knights of old, reinforced doors and anything that has been armored, also has an Armor Rating (A.R.) as well as S.D.C. The Armor Rating indicates exactly how much protection is afforded by the *armor* (or object) and how easy it is to penetrate the armored protection. The higher the A.R., the better.

If an attack roll to strike with all bonuses is *less than* the A.R. of the armor or object (door, shield, etc.), the armor absorbs the attack – subtract the damage from the armor's S.D.C. When the armor's S.D.C. is depleted, it no longer affords protection and is useless. Any future attacks will hit the character's body and inflict Physical S.D.C. and then Hit Point damage.

If an attacker's roll to strike, including all bonuses, is *higher than* the A.R., the attack penetrates the armor and inflicts damage directly to the character's S.D.C. and/or Hit Points.

The defender always wins ties, so if the roll to strike is 16 against somebody with body armor that has an A.R. 16, the attack hits the character, but only damages the body armor because it didn't *surpass* the A.R. protection. However, if that strike roll had been 17 or higher, the attack would have struck an area not covered by the armor or punched right through it, doing damage to the character underneath it.

Natural Armor: Most supernatural beings are more than human and have protective skin or an exoskeleton with an Armor Rating.

In these cases, a roll to strike that falls *under* the A.R. does indeed hit, but inflicts *no damage*. Punches and bullets bounce off harmlessly, fire or magic blasts are deflected, and combat continues.

A roll *above* the Natural A.R. strikes and inflicts *full damage*, first to the physical S.D.C. of the beast and, once the S.D.C. is depleted, then to the creature's Hit Points. Deplete the monster of all Hit Points and it dies, disincorporates, and vanishes as if it never existed at all.

Recovery of Hit Points and S.D.C.

After a battle, characters who have sustained physical damage must tend to their wounds. The attending of wounds can be administered by fellow characters with First Aid, Paramedic and other medical skills, trained medical personnel, psychics with healing powers, practitioners of magic wielding healing spells, or by oneself provided the character has the appropriate medical skill and is not so injured as to be physically impaired.

First Aid and other medical skills include basic and immediate treatment such as cleaning and bandaging wounds, stopping bleeding and so on, which will prevent further blood loss until the character can receive better medical care. This is fine for minor wounds, but serious injuries,

like internal bleeding and broken bones, will require professional treatment (or magical or psionic healing). **Note:** Unless a character stops the bleeding of cuts and stab wounds, he will continue to lose blood and suffer damage at the rate of one Hit Point per minute. See more on blood loss under *Hit Point damage*, described previously. When all Hit Points are reduced to zero, the character falls into a coma and hovers near death.

Recovery: Non-Professional Treatment. This is basic, first aid-type treatment by oneself, or non-medically trained people. This type of treatment may be used if the character is not able to seek professional treatment immediately. It is not necessarily inferior treatment, especially for not too serious of an ailment, but just lacks the full facilities and experience of a major medical institution. **Rate of Recovery:** Two Hit Points per day (24 hours) and/or four S.D.C. per day.

Recovery: Professional Treatment. This is medical treatment from a doctor, clinic or hospital. **Rate of Recovery:** Two Hit Points per day for the first two days and four per each following day, until the character has regained all of his/her original Hit Points. S.D.C. points are restored at a rate of six per day.

Surviving Coma and Death

When a character's Hit Points are reduced to zero (or less), he collapses and falls into a coma. How much damage below zero a character can withstand is determined by the Physical Endurance (P.E.) attribute. A character can take one point of damage below zero (to negative one, -2, -3, etc.) for each P.E. point. **Example:** A character with a P.E. of 9 will lapse into a coma at zero Hit Points, but still lives up to a negative 9. However, if the character receives more damage (which is very possible) than the P.E., he is dead with no hope of recovery. Thus, if a character with a P.E. of 9 takes 10 points or more below zero, exceeding his P.E., he is beyond medical help and dies. Note that some special abilities may extend the amount of damage below zero a character can endure, and in some cases, continue to function.

The length of time a character in a coma will survive without treatment is again indicated by the P.E. Add one hour for each P.E. point. **Example:** P.E. 9 = 9 hours, P.E. 10 = 10 hours, and so on.

Whether a character survives the coma and is stabilized (brought back to at least one Hit Point above zero), is determined by the roll of percentile dice. If the player rolls two successful recovery rolls out of three, the character breaks out of the coma and is no longer in danger of dying. This also means that he is brought up to one Hit Point above zero. Recovery of Hit Points from that time on is standard; see *Recovery of Hit Points*, above. **Note:** This can be attempted every hour until the character dies.

Recovery Ratio (roll 2 out of 3)

Treatment from unprofessional individuals with medical skills: 01-18%

Treatment from an intern or nurse (R.N.): 01-32%

Treatment from a doctor without proper facilities: 01-46%

Treatment from a doctor at a clinic (fair facilities): 01-56%

Treatment from a hospital: 01-66%

Treatment from a major, large hospital: 01-70%

Step Three: Selecting a P.C.C.

Selecting a Psychic P.C.C. is easy. Players should skim over the P.C.C. descriptions, take note of the character's background and purpose, take a peek at the descriptions of the psychic abilities they get, and pick the one they find most interesting, challenging and fun. Never underestimate the *fun factor*. If the character isn't fun after a few game



sessions, retire him and try something else. Of course, it is the player's responsibility, like a good actor, to find or invent things that make the character fun to play, and a compelling member of the ensemble cast of characters.

A character's *Psychic Character Class (P.C.C.)* determines what he is right now. Most characters in **BTS-2** are active in the investigation of the paranormal and challenging supernatural forces, but many don't have much in the way of combat skills and others are very combat oriented, that might make a difference to some players. As for the group as a whole, they may be an independent group of concerned citizens, psychics or members of a formal or informal agency like government agents, a university sponsored research group or the Lazlo Agency. Whatever their story, all the characters have a reason to be interested in the supernatural and a desire to battle supernatural evil.

Being Psychic. Some characters, though they are in the minority, see having psychic abilities as a curse rather than a blessing. The majority learn to appreciate and welcome their unique powers and the notoriety (good and bad) it brings them. The most courageous accept the implied responsibility to confront the supernatural and protect those who are not so gifted. This, however, is a personal battle. Psychics have other problems.

Psychics and practitioners of magic are themselves beacons to supernatural forces. Just as these mortals are aware of magic and the supernatural, so are creatures of magic and supernatural beings aware of mortals with "special gifts." This often includes youngsters and people with *Potential Psychic Energy* or magic abilities (i.e., they have a high amount of P.P.E. or I.S.P. but haven't realized their potential/are not a P.C.C. or practitioner of magic – at least not yet). While some entities, spirits and other beings are drawn to them to make contact and seek their help, others are simply drawn to them as a target for their evil machinations or see them as prey and victims to be harassed, tormented, or manipulated as pawns or eaten. That is their inhuman nature and characters with psychic or magic abilities are seen as the natural enemies of the evil supernatural beings.

The 14 BTS P.C.C.s:

Autistic Psychic Savant	Nega-Psychic
Diviner	Ordinary People
Fire Walker	Parapsychologist
Genius	Physical Psychic
Ghost Hunter	Psi-Mechanic
Latent Psychic	Psychic Healer
Medium	Psychic Sensitive

Common P.C.C. Description Terms

Requirements. Some P.C.C.s and future character classes may have required minimum attributes or a specific background, but most do not. To take that P.C.C., the character must meet the necessary requirements. If the player is dead set on a particular character and is off only one point or two, the Game Master should allow the player to bump that attribute up to the *minimum* requirement to select it.

Alignments: All characters must select an alignment. This is the character's moral template and conscience.

Attribute Bonuses: Most P.C.C.s and other characters get an attribute bonus of one kind or another.

P.C.C. Bonuses: These are other bonuses reflecting the strengths (or weaknesses) of that P.C.C. They include what the character needs to roll to save vs psionic attack as well as bonuses to combat moves (strike, parry, dodge, etc.), Perception Rolls and saving throws.

P.C.C. Limitations & Penalties: Indicate if the psychic is open or closed to the supernatural and other weaknesses/penalties.

P.P.E.: All living beings possess P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy). This energy can be used to cast magic spells and use magic items. Psychics have spent most of their *potential* on developing psychic abilities.

Though P.P.E. increases for practitioners of magic the same as I.S.P. does for psychics when they confront or consort with the supernatural, the P.P.E. of psychics and ordinary people only doubles at the moment of their death. This makes characters with high P.P.E. attractive to villains looking for victims in ritual human sacrifice!

Base I.S.P.: This is the character's core Inner Strength Points and the root of his psychic abilities. Base I.S.P. increases with the supernatural threat before him, typically x2, x4, x6, x10, but sometimes more and sometimes less. Each specific P.C.C. will indicate what numbers apply to that P.C.C.

x0 When being studied/scrutinized.

x2 Investigating the paranormal.

x4 Supernatural Predators and Pranksters/Lesser Demons.

x6 Demonic Servants/Greater Demons.

x10 Ancient Demons/Demon Lords, Dark Gods and Alien Intelligences.

Recovering I.S.P.: This is the same for many P.C.C.s, but some characters have enhanced recovery abilities. Remember, one should never reduce his Base I.S.P. unless absolutely necessary, and when he does, it is wise to recover it as quickly as possible, otherwise the character may be powerless for a time.

Selecting Psychic Abilities: Each P.C.C. will indicate which one or more *categories* of psychic abilities are available (Fire Walker, Healing, Mechanical, Physical or Sensitive), how many to pick to start and how many new abilities appear per level of experience starting with level two.

Occupation & Skill Selections: Each P.C.C. makes note of occupations that may interest the psychic more than others. Each occupation provides a different range of skills and the number of Elective and Secondary Skills that can be selected.

P.C.C. Skill Bonuses: Once in a while a P.C.C. will provide additional skills and/or skill bonuses.

Standard Equipment: Typical gear for a character of his or her background investigating the paranormal.

Housing: A chance to pick the type of living arrangement and the monthly cost to maintain it.

Pay: Varies with one's chosen occupation.

Money in Savings: The cash reserve the character starts with.

Level Advancement/Experience: As a character grows in level of experience, so do the levels of his skills and abilities. See the *Experience System* section for details and *P.C.C. Experience Tables*.

Multiple Character Classes or dual O.C.C.s are not an option.

Some Things to Remember

A Psychic Character Class (P.C.C.) represents the character's psychic energy, how that energy is directed or "focused," and what special abilities, skills and bonuses he or she may possess. Each P.C.C. has its own special focus, strengths and weaknesses. Before selecting a P.C.C. for your character, it is wise to read over each one. Not all have psychic abilities or mystic knowledge, but each is designed to be unique and different. I suggest players start with a character with which they feel most comfortable.

Ordinary People, characters with no psychic or magical powers, may also be played. They rely entirely on their skills, wits and integrity. They too are listed as a P.C.C. because of their dedication to investigating the paranormal and confronting the supernatural.

Practitioners of Magic. The Arcanist, Witch, Demon Worshiper, Necromancer and others who wield magic also play a role in **Beyond the Supernatural™ 2**. However, they have been reserved for the **Arcanum** sourcebook.

(Designer's Notes: It is inevitable that some twinkie will jump up on his soap box and speculate that Palladium has left magic out of the

core rules to force players to buy a second book. Nothing could be further from the truth. First, Palladium doesn't operate that way. Second, please note that you can play BTS-2 fine without practitioners of magic. Third, please understand that when you are trying to create a setting as broad and expansive as the BTS-2 world, it is impossible to put it all in one book. I thought about making BTS-2 a 350 pager, but I had two problems with that. One, I find books larger than 256 pages to be ungainly, difficult to use and intimidating to new players, especially players new to role-playing, and I want BTS-2 to be friendly and appealing. Second, I didn't think I could do magic justice in just another 96 pages. Magic will work very differently than what players of our other games are used to (in fact it works very similar to BTS psionics), so I decided to make it a separate sourcebook, *Arcanum*, where I can give magic its due. Besides, maybe some players won't want magic for characters or in their BTS games. Anyway, that's the logic. Likewise, supernatural evil, and I mean really creepy, dripping evil, will be much more deeply explored in the *Tome Grotesque* sourcebook. And I'm promising here and now that BTS players will not have to wait a year before these two books come out. I plan on releasing them as soon as possible. — Kevin Siembieda)

Step 4: Selecting Psychic Abilities

Each P.C.C. indicates how many psychic (a.k.a. psionic) powers the character gets, from which categories (Fire Walker, Healing, Mechanical, Physical and Sensitive) powers can be selected, and when and how many powers may be acquired with each new level of experience.

Psionic Descriptions — the descriptions of psychic abilities start on page 92.

Step 5: Choosing an Occupation & Skills

Each P.C.C. makes note of occupations that *may* interest the psychic more than others. Each occupation provides a different range of skills and the number of Elective and Secondary Skills that can be selected.

When picking an occupation, the player should consider the flexibility that the occupation will provide the character for his explorations into the realm of the supernatural and beyond. In some ways, the skills themselves and the paycheck are almost secondary.

Note: There is no such thing as a poor choice for an occupation, seriously. Pick what you, the player, think will be fun, interesting and/or reflects the character's upbringing and background. In play tests players had as much fun playing an 82 year old scholar (retired university professor), antiques book dealer, and a religious gardener/grounds keeper as they did playing gun-toting detective types, reporters and psychics.

Descriptions for *Occupations* are so extensive that it has its own section starting on page 175, followed by *Skill Descriptions* on page 196.

Step 6: Picking an Alignment

All players *must* choose an alignment for their character. This defines a character's attitudes and provides a moral center. There are three basic alignment categories: *Good*, *Selfish* and *Evil*.

Alignments play a vital role in developing a character's personality and are a key element of "role" playing. Whether we are consciously

aware of it or not, every person has his or her own moral compass to guide him. Whether one calls it a code of ethics and morals, or justice and honor, or religious values, alignments define what the character sees as right and wrong, good and evil, acceptable behavior and what is not acceptable. It is this sense of right and wrong that helps build moral fiber, mold one's behavior, and dictate how a character treats others and how he should react when faced with a moral choice.

Alignments should be seen as a *guideline* for each character that indicates how he or she is likely to react to any given situation. Try to have your character stay true to his alignment and act accordingly, even if it goes against the grain. In fact, battling to stay true to one's alignment replicates the conscience and realistic moral dilemmas, i.e., being emotionally torn to do the right thing, or what feels good at the moment. An act of cruelty out of revenge or hate, for example, might sound good in the heat of the moment, but is not the good or right thing to do. A player struggling with such a decision for his character emulates that emotional gut process.

When a player finds himself slipping (or slipped) out of character, the Game Master (G.M.) should stop the game for a moment and, as the referee/director of the story, point out that the player's intended actions *go against his alignment*. The G.M. should then warn that moving forward with that choice may cause the character to *change alignment*. For example: A Principled good character that acts out of hatred and deliberately tortures another being is likely to drop to the *Anarchist* or even *Miscreant evil* alignment depending on how cruel and vicious the act was, or how much the character enjoyed it. Similarly, a Principled character who decides to steal or "bend" the law is likely to drop to a *Scrupulous* or *Unprincipled* alignment, and to *Anarchist* if he keeps stealing or breaking the law. Everyone makes a mistake from time to time, but repeated drops from alignment and/or no remorse for a wrongdoing will definitely cause a quick change. Likewise, a *Miscreant evil* character who has learned the value of friendship and begins to act kind, noble and compassionate, or forsakes his villainous ways, may go up to *Anarchist* or *Unprincipled*, and eventually, even higher if he keeps it up. However, achieving a better, higher moral alignment should be much, much more difficult to achieve than the quick plummet into a bad or self-serving alignment.

Playing in character (e.g., in alignment) can be a challenge, but it is always fun and worth doing.

No Neutral Alignments

There is no such thing as an absolute neutral alignment. A character with an absolute, true neutral position could not make a decision, fight tyranny, hurt others, go adventuring, or take any action of any kind without leaning toward good, evil, or self-gratification. It is humanly impossible, and therefore is eliminated in the context of this game.

There are some philosophers out there who might disagree with this, but that's a topic for another forum and not a factor of this game. Sorry, this is one of the very few definitive, unbending rules.

Good Alignments

Good aligned characters (*Principled* and *Scrupulous*) are the straight-up heroes of this world. They generally place a high value on life and liberty, as well as law and order. Just because a character is of a good alignment, however, does not mean he's a saint or without bad habits. Good characters can be irritating, obnoxious and arrogant, even prejudiced and full of annoying quirks. Likewise, they may find themselves stepping outside the boundaries of the law in their quest to combat evil and injustice, but when push comes to shove, these characters can *always* be trusted to do the right thing, especially in a life and death situation.

Principled (Good)

Principled characters are upright “boy scout” or “do-gooder” types who put others before themselves. This is the knight in shining armor, with the highest regard for the lives and well-being of others, freedom, truth, honor and justice. Principled characters will always *attempt* to work with and within the law, and have a high regard for (and trust of) authority, as well as for life and freedom. They are usually compassionate, merciful, cooperative and sincere.

A Principled character will . . .

1. Always keep his word.
2. Avoid lies.
3. Never kill or attack an unarmed foe.
4. Never harm an innocent.
5. Never torture for any reason.
6. Never kill for pleasure.
7. Always help others.
8. Always work within the law whenever possible.
9. Never break the law unless conditions are desperate. This means no breaking and entering, theft, torture, unprovoked assaults, etc.
10. Respect authority, law, self-discipline and honor.
11. Work well in a group.
12. Never take “dirty” money, or ill-gotten valuables or goods. This means any property that belongs to criminals or villains. It matters not how the bad guys got that property themselves; the hero will not touch it even if destitute.
13. Never betray a friend.

Scrupulous (Good)

Scrupulous characters value life and freedom above all else and despise those who would deprive others of them. This type of hero is typically portrayed in many movies as the cop who plays by his own rules, forced to work beyond the law for justice (or retribution) and the greater good of the people. They are not vicious or vindictive characters, but are individuals driven by their sense of justice to right a wrong or take a (bloody) stand. These characters will always attempt to work with or within the law whenever possible.

A Scrupulous character will . . .

1. Keep his word to any other good person.
2. Lie only to people of selfish or evil alignments.
3. Never attack or kill an unarmed foe.
4. Never harm an innocent.
5. Never torture for pleasure, but may use muscle to extract information from criminals or evil characters.
6. Never kill for pleasure, will always attempt to bring the villain to justice alive, no matter how vile he may find him.
7. Always try to help others.
8. Attempt to work within the law whenever possible.
9. Bend and, occasionally, break the law when deemed necessary. This means he may use strong-arm techniques, harass, break and enter, steal, and so on (but only against the bad guys).
10. Distrust authority; fears the law and government may not be an effective weapon against injustice and crime. However, he will try not to flagrantly disregard the law.
11. Work with groups, but dislike confining laws and bureaucracy (red tape).
12. Never take “dirty” money or items.
13. Never betray a friend.

Selfish Alignments

Selfish characters (*Unprincipled* and *Anarchist*) are not necessarily evil, but they always have their own best interests at heart and their opinions in mind above all others. These are the mercenaries, rogues, vigilantes and anti-heroes of the world.

Unprincipled (Selfish)

This basically good person tends to be selfish, greedy, and holds his personal freedom and welfare above almost everything else. He dislikes confining laws and self-discipline and distrusts authority. He views the law and government as well intentioned, but clumsy and ineffective. Keeping his best interests in mind, the character will always look out for himself.

This character is also likely to take “dirty” money and items, with the concept that it will help him in his crusade against evil. He may also destroy the property of known criminals. He will not deal in illegal wares, drugs, or take money from innocent or good people. The Unprincipled character may associate with both good and evil characters, and often has paid informants, spies and stoolies.

This is the noble scoundrel, the guy who is always looking for the best deal, associates with good and evil characters, is continually tempted to lie and cheat, and hates himself for being loyal, helping others and ultimately doing the “right thing.”

An Unprincipled character will . . .

1. Keep his word of honor.
2. Lie and cheat if necessary (especially to those of Anarchist and evil alignments).
3. Not kill an unarmed foe (but will take advantage of one).
4. Never harm an innocent.
5. Not use torture unless absolutely necessary.
6. Never kill for pleasure; will *attempt* to bring the villain to justice alive and ruin him rather than simply kill him.
7. Usually help those in need.
8. Rarely attempt to work within the law.
9. Blatantly break the law to achieve his (usually good-intentioned) goals.
10. Dislike and distrust authority, the law and bureaucracy. Feels they have been corrupted and abused.
11. Work with groups, especially if it serves his needs, is profitable, and/or he is in the limelight.
12. Take “dirty” money.
13. Never betray a friend.
14. Have a high regard for life and freedom.

Anarchist (Selfish)

This type of character likes to indulge himself in everything. He is the insurgent, con-artist, gambler and uncommitted freebooter who adventures because he enjoys the thrill, fame and fortune it brings, rather than for any cause (like defending humanity). This character will at least *consider* doing anything if the price is right or the challenge is alluring enough.

Laws and rules infringe on personal freedom and were meant to be broken. He will not hesitate at using strong-arm techniques, breaking and entering, theft, harassment, destruction of private property, and so on. This can also include acting as judge, jury, and executioner. These characters are usually the daring anti-heroes who feel the end justifies the means. The Anarchist-aligned person is always looking for the best deal and self-gratification. He will work with good, selfish and evil characters to attain his goals. The Anarchist is continually teetering between good and evil, rebelling against and bending the law to fit *his* needs. Mercenaries and thieves often fall into this category.

An Anarchist character will . . .

1. Keep his word, but only if it suits or pleases him.
2. Lie and cheat if he feels it necessary.
3. Not be likely to kill an unarmed foe, but certainly will knock out, attack or beat up one.
4. Never kill an innocent, although his rash or self-serving actions may injure or kill bystanders by accident.
5. Use torture to extract information, but is not likely to do so for pleasure.
6. Seldom kill for pleasure.
7. Not be likely to help someone without some ulterior motive (even if it's only to show off).
8. Rarely work within the law unless it serves his purpose.
9. Constantly break the law to achieve his goals.
10. Have little respect for authority, the law, or self-discipline.
11. Not work well within groups; tends to do as he pleases, despite orders to the contrary.
12. Take "dirty" money without hesitation.
13. Possibly betray a friend. Sorry, pal.

Evil Alignments

All evil characters (*Aberrant*, *Miscreant* and *Diabolic*) are not necessarily bent on universal genocide or dominating all other living creatures. Nor are all evil characters sadistic, cruel, ugly or untrustworthy. Many evil characters may actually seem kind or likeable.

Evil alignments are a step beyond the self-gratification of the selfish alignments. Evil characters are ruthless individuals who are willing to say or do anything to achieve their goals. Most commonly, evil characters have goals that either entail making people suffer or cause suffer-

ing as a side effect (a side effect the evil character knowingly and callously disregards). Human life has little meaning to them, and friends tend to be (but not always) people to use and discard when they are no longer of value. Evil aligned characters do not automatically slay any good-aligned person because of different ethics and philosophy. All the better to use good to achieve their own goals, for the end always justifies the means.

Note: There is nothing wrong with *playing* a fictional, evil character, although he may not survive too long if he betrays or harms too many people, nor is the character likely to be trusted or liked by his "good" teammates. However, this is role-playing, not reality, so you can play any type of character you might desire, just continue to play "in character". That having been said, player characters in **BTS-2** tend to be – or strive to be – brave, noble and heroic.

Aberrant (Evil)

The cliché that there is "no honor among thieves" is false when dealing with the Aberrant character. This is an individual who is driven to attain his goals through force, power, and intimidation. Yet the Aberrant character stands apart from the norm with his own personal (and twisted) code of ethics. He expects loyalty from his minions, punishing disloyalty and treachery with a swift, merciful death or banishment. An Aberrant character will always keep his word of honor and uphold any bargains. He will define his terms and live by them, whether anyone else likes them or not.

If an anti-hero, he will completely disregard the law and deal out justice as he deems fit. He will never be cruel or vindictive, and will always be absolutely positive that the person is guilty before he deals out his brand of justice. However, once he condemns a character, he will see to it that he is destroyed.



Whether a villain or a corrupt or extreme anti-hero, the Aberrant character looks upon people without honor or a sense of loyalty as worthless and disgusting lowlives.

Do not think of the Aberrant character as a misguided good guy. He or she will break all laws with impunity, harass victims, destroy property, assault, blackmail, torture and murder. Only their methods and degree of violence may vary.

An Aberrant character will . . .

1. Always keep his word of honor (at least to those he deems worthy of it).
2. Lie and cheat to those not worthy of his respect; good, selfish or evil.
3. May or may not kill an unarmed foe.
4. Never kill an innocent, particularly a child, but may harm, harass or kidnap.
5. Never torture for pleasure, but will use it to extract information and intimidate others.
6. Never kill for pleasure, will always have a reason.
7. May or may not help someone in need.
8. Rarely attempt to work within the law.
9. Break the law without hesitation.
10. Have no use for the law or bureaucracy, but respects honor, self-discipline and the "concept" of laws and order.
11. Work with others to attain his goals.
12. Usually take "dirty" money, although his twisted code of ethics may prevent him from doing so in some instances.
13. Never betray a friend. Never.

Miscreant (Evil)

This self-serving, unscrupulous character is out only for himself. Power, glory, wealth, position, and anything that will make his life more comfortable or pleasurable is his goal. It doesn't matter who gets caught in the middle, as long as he comes out smelling like a rose. The character will lie, cheat, hurt, and kill anyone to attain his personal goals.

If a Miscreant character becomes a vigilante, mercenary, or bounty hunter, it will be for some personal reason, a vendetta, money, glory or a love for danger and challenge. This character is a savage misanthrope out for himself.

A Miscreant character will . . .

1. Not necessarily keep his word to anyone.
2. Lie and cheat indiscriminately (good, evil, selfish).
3. Kill an unarmed foe as readily as he would a potential threat or competition.
4. Use or harm an innocent.
5. Use torture for extracting information and pleasure.
6. May kill for sheer pleasure.
7. Feel no compulsion to help without some sort of tangible reward for him.
8. Have no deference to the law, but will work within the law if he must.
9. Blatantly break the law for his own goals and pleasure.
10. Dislike and distrust authority and the law.
11. Work with others if it will help him attain his personal goals.
12. Take "dirty" money, stolen goods, and illegal items (as well as steal valuables for himself whenever the opportunity arises).
13. Betray a friend if it serves his needs.
14. Have no respect or concern for the lives or welfare of others.

Diabolic (Evil)

This is the category that most megalomaniacs, psychopaths, and violent and despicable characters fall into. This is the cruel, brutal killer who trusts no one and has no value for any life other than his own. A Diabolic character will crush anyone who gets in his way. The lowlife will lie, cheat, con, abuse and kill anyone less powerful than he is. Aberrant characters find these dishonorable people more revolting than a good aligned character.

A Diabolic character will . . .

1. Rarely keep his word, and has no honor.
2. Lie to and cheat anyone.
3. Most certainly attack and kill an unarmed foe.
4. Hurt and kill an innocent without a second thought and for pleasure.
5. Use torture for pleasure and information, regularly.
6. Kill for sheer pleasure.
7. Be likely to help someone only on a whim (or to set them up for some evil deed later).
8. Rarely attempt to work within the law.
9. Blatantly break the law and mock authority.
10. Despise honor, authority and self-discipline. Views them as weaknesses.
11. Not work well within a group; constantly disregarding orders and vying for power/command.
12. Always take "dirty" money, drugs, stolen goods, etc., as well as steal from others.
13. Betray a friend without hesitation; after all, you can always find new friends.
14. Associate mostly with other evil alignments.

Step 7:

Character Advancement

The Experience Level System

Game Designer Notes: As mentioned earlier in this book, every component of the Palladium game system has been carefully thought out, play tested and fine tuned for years and years. The choice of a level based method for character advancement is no exception. Behind the scenes, we've discussed, experimented with, and considered other approaches. Longtime friend and game designer, Erick Wujcik, tends to like point based systems and *diceless* rules. As of late, Wayne Breaux Jr. has been fiddling with a point based character creation system, and we may even try one in the future for a new game. I've also been playing with new and different approaches for my experimental game in development, **Void Runners™**. The point is, as a game designer I look at, consider and fool around with, every possibility.

The Palladium Megaversal Game System uses *Experience Levels* as a means of character growth and advancement because I feel it is best suited for games that focus on *characters* and *story*. It feels right, plays out nicely, simulates real life, and develops the characters in such a way that they become more vivid and three dimensional.

The Experience Level approach is intended for a long-term campaign (an anticipation of playing on a regular basis for months or even years), and on the premise that ALL characters *start* at level one. This is not an absolute (very little about role-playing is written in stone), but starting at level one means the characters all start out on par with one another and *grow* in experience, knowledge and ability as they experience life and survive adventures.

I'd like to use a comic book analogy if I may. Using a level system and starting at First Level is the difference between playing the comic book and film character, **Batman**, as he is today with years of experience, the Batcave, Batmobile, and other gadgets at his disposal, Robin, Nightwing and a host of agents, contacts and friends, seasoned ability and years of experience and confidence under his utility belt; and playing **Batman: Year One**. Staying with this analogy, **Batman: Year One** is the Dark Knight at First Level. He is done with all his training and preparations, and is just launching his career as a crime fighting vigilante. There is no Batcave or Robin, and the great Batman isn't so grand. His skills and abilities are not yet fully developed and he lacks the experience of a polished veteran. He's flying by the seat of his pants, figuring things out and making things up as he goes along. He has goals, dreams and desires, but doesn't know exactly what he's doing, how to handle every situation, or even if he's going about everything the right way. It's a strange, new world for the character in year one. He's the *new kid* on the block.

Not only is this *learning curve* fun to play, but starting at level one and growing a character through experience (i.e., watching your character grow by trial and tribulation through real experience) makes the character that much richer with a background, skills, abilities and experience that have been *earned*. There is real continuity ("Hey, guys wait a minute. Remember when we battled X?") and a sense of accomplishment. The character (and the player) is more mature, knowledgeable and has a greater sense of purpose and confidence rooted in experience. That, my dear readers, is a superior, vivid character, and that's what the Experience Level approach establishes and promotes, in my opinion, better than any other.

I also like it because I believe an *Experience Level System* of character advancement simulates real life. I don't care how much schooling and education a person gets, or how much time a person logs on a computer or playing through controlled simulations, *none of it* is a substitute for real life experience. (Or in this case, real fictional adventuring and game play.) Furthermore, a person just gets better in many things with age and experience. Look at sports and almost any skilled profession. Those dedicated to learning and improving do get better. I know art and writing best, so I'll use my personal experiences as an example. As of the year 2004, I'm 48 years old and I've been writing and designing games professionally for 24 years. I started Palladium at the age of 24 armed with a dream, determination, a gazillion ideas, unbridled enthusiasm and raw talent. If you had asked me then, I would have told you I was a good writer and concept man, and a Jack of Many Trades who was writing at his best. All true. However, looking back at much of my early work makes me cringe. It *was* the best I could do – at the time. I was proud of it then, and I created one good selling role-playing game world after another, even a few mega-hits. However, looking back at my work with a critical eye, I can tell you that a lot of it was weak, rough, unpolished, and sometimes limited by my experience. My writing ability and business acumen are superior today than they were 20 years ago, or even five years ago.

In a game context, you might ask, how can that be? After all, I was dedicated, driven and gave my work everything I had to give. I strove to be the best and hungered to create the best. So why wasn't that work the best I would ever create? The simple answer is *experience*. I was a *first level* writer and game designer back then. Today, because I never stopped dreaming up new ideas, new approaches and ways to improve, I'm a much *higher level* character. My years of experience and practice at my craft have made me a superior writer, designer and businessman to what I was 24 years ago, or even five years ago. All the desire and raw talent in the world means squat without determined persistence and growth through experience. More than anything, just doing it – the practice and experience – helps a creator grow and improve at his craft. Today, I believe my writing and design work is better than ever, heck, the best it has ever been, but with a little more work I'll continue to grow and improve.

I can also report that there have been quantum leaps in my development. Sudden and noticeable breakthroughs and improvements as if I had reached a new plateau or *Level of Experience*. That may sound corny, but it's true. Every artist, writer, and creative person out there is shaking their head in agreement as they read this, because they have experienced it themselves. For whatever reason, one day something just clicks. Yesterday, you struggled drawing hands and feet, or couldn't get shadowing and shading the way you wanted it. Heck, you've been working on them for freakin' years, and then, one day, you wake up, sit down at the drawing table, and it flows out of you like magic. It's a wonderful (and mildly strange) experience. Likewise, as much as we loathe to admit it when we are young, age plays a factor. I've seen it a hundred times in artists, where something happens around age 30-34 and the artist goes from good to great as if he has achieved a new level of expertise and his stats just went up. I don't know why, I've just seen it enough times to know it's true.

This type of *level advancement* where the individual reaches a new plateau is very dramatic and apparent in the world of sports too. A young NFL quarterback shows flashes of talent and ability, but like most before him, is wild, unfocused, and gets hammered his first few years in the big league. Over and over, the coaches and management talk about how the quarterback's skills and abilities *will* improve "with experience, maturity, and time." And that's not practice time either, but "real" experience on the field in real games on a professional level. Sure enough, a few years later the promising young quarterback is a top professional. Holy cow, look at Peyton Manning's first year or two in the NFL compared to today! The same is true in professional boxing. The typical heavyweight boxer does not usually reach his "prime" until around age 27 or 28, and nobody expects him to reach it sooner. Once the heavyweight boxer hits his prime, he's usually in top form till about age 32-35. Iron Mike Tyson was an anomaly, reaching his prime in his early and mid-twenties, but he also burned out early. Sure some of this has to do with physical development, but come on, most boxers, and athletes in general, have been working at their craft for years, usually starting in their early teens, sometimes younger. **Note:** That's also why the *Palladium Experience Level System* has the characters advance in experience quickly at first – fueled by the enthusiasm and raw talent of youth combined with the thrill of learning something new – and then slows down, requiring the character to accumulate much more experience to reach the next, higher plateau.

Brains and learning equal knowledge, experience and advancement. You will also notice that the characters get the most experience from using their heads and role-playing interaction rather than killing things. Killing monsters is a good thing and fun to play, but ultimately it breaks down to little more than *target practice*, not growth as a human being or a deep *character*. Consequently, *experience* is gained from using the right skill at a critical moment, or using skill knowledge to win or survive a situation, or taking an action that rescues others.

Since the characters are, presumably good guys, self-sacrifice, acts of kindness, mercy, compassion, and heroics all earn experience. Not little things or common actions ("Hey, my character drives to the party store, do I get experience points for using my Transportation Automobile skill?") Um, the answer, by the way, is *no!*, but using the skill to make a difference, helping somebody, saving a life (or lives), figuring out an important clue, thwarting the villains, restoring peace, and so on. Likewise, I always award experience points (25-100) for players using their heads to figure out clues, puzzles, and making realizations or formulating plans that are clever, imaginative, brilliant or critical to the story or plan of action. Heck, sometime I award experience points if the character's idea or plan is dead wrong or fruitless, but at the same time is very clever or imaginative.

I may also award points for pure guts and courage, but *not* false bravado, foolish refusal to back down out of pride, spite or stupidity, or showing off.

Negative and foolish actions get no experience points.

Positive, helpful, noble and heroic measures as well as character interaction, playing in character, figuring things out, planning intelligent strategies and tactics, helping other characters, being heroes, and good ideas, all earn experience. So does playing a rogue or villain, if it is done in character and with style and intelligence.

Playing in character and building the story is what *role-playing* is all about, and the Palladium Game System is designed to encourage it.

Tweaking the rules. Having said all that, the role-playing experience is deeply personal and a little different for every group of gamers. That's why there really is *not* any right or wrong way to play, or any one game system or approach that is truly superior to another. A good game is a good game, and a bad game can be fixed by a good Game Master. Ultimately, it comes down to what *you* and your fellow players enjoy and want out of a game. Me, I want role-playing, memorable characters, adventure and epic stories, so that's how I designed the Palladium rules. That doesn't mean *you* can't take and tweak or modify the rules to satisfy *your* tastes. I have found that at least a third of the Game Masters tweak and modify some aspect of the rules of any game they play. These changes and tweaks are called "house rules" and as long as the majority of the players agree with and accept the changes, and the game is fun, then there's nothing wrong with it. Rules lawyers need to grow up.

Style of play. Likewise, everyone's style of play, from Game Master to player, is going to be different. Alex focuses on technology and science. Erick likes to play up aspects of puzzles, finding clues, and uncovering mysteries and new technology. Julius likes to focus on the adventure and heroics. Carmen likes guts and glory combat, carnage and cataclysmic finales (he may have been a Klingon in a previous life). Roger likes cunning, trickery, subtly and deception; nothing is ever quite what it seems. Me, I like sprawling, epic yarns with lots of subplots, twists, and turns driven by strong characters and conflicts with dynamic villains (and I mean villainous scum you'll love to hate). Another popular gaming approach is what many gaming elitists call "power gamers" or "hack 'n slash" gamers – guys and gals who thrive on shoot 'em up action and play maxed-out, powerhouse characters. Hey, while that's not my style of play there is nothing wrong with it.

Never forget this is a game! Entertainment. The whole idea is having *fun* with friends. If you and your pals are having fun, you're playing just fine.

– Kevin Siembieda

Experience Points are their own reward

In a game context, one of the tangible accomplishments and rewards the *player* receives is Experience Points for his or her fictional alter ego. Yes, the character or the player group as a whole may make money, get booty, find a powerful magic item or artifact, and/or win the adoration of those they've rescued. That's all cool, but the growth of the character via Experience Points for heroism, playing in character, and using your smarts are the real achievement for the individual player.

I have run many a game where the player characters got the snot kicked out them, lost valuable equipment and got no or little financial reward, but the players were tickled pink because they saved the day (even if that was saving one orphan child), because they worked as a team, had fun doing it, defeated the bad guys, won, and had the Experience Points (and self-satisfaction) to prove it. Somehow those things, with Experience Points (E.P.) punctuating it all, made all their effort worth doing. That is the other beautiful aspect of the Experience Point system, you are rewarded for your character's accomplishments.



Experience Points & Their Application

The ultimate purpose of Experience Points and Experience Levels is to provide a means by which the player's character can grow and develop. The Palladium game system promotes a subjective method of using observation and logic to determine Experience Point rewards. In the past, some other games with experience systems have focused on the "kill factor," but what about the thought process? What about the decisions, plans and motives behind a particular action? Doesn't cleverness and a cool head count? Shouldn't the brilliant medical student playing a character with an I.Q. of 4 (and staying firmly in character, saying and doing things as the dull-witted character would, even though he realizes the stupidity as a player) get experience for playing in character? Absolutely! Considering how flexible and subjective most of the other role-playing conditions and rules are, there isn't much logic in having a strict, limited Experience Point system.

Each player's character involved in a given situation or confrontation should receive the appropriate Experience Points for that event. As G.M., I have found jotting down experience points in the moment when the character earned it is the best way to keep track. Not unlike scoring a boxing match round by round. Of course, in role-playing the character doesn't do something worth experience every single *round*, but when that pivotal deed or idea happens I make note of it. I simply make a list of my players and each character's name on a sheet of paper at the beginning of the game and jot down Experience Points throughout the game (totaling them up as I go along so I don't have a big math project or need a calculator at the end of the game). At the end of the gaming session, I, as the G.M., give *each* player the total E.P. amount along with a couple comments on what I thought were key moments for their character or just great role-playing. ("Man, I couldn't believe it when your character jumped up and . . . it was great."). Once the G.M. hands out Experience Points it's the player's responsibility to keep track of when the character hits next level. (By the way, I have never stopped in the middle of a game and said, "Hey, your character has just gone up in level, adjust your stats right here and now." Nope. The player will have to wait till the next time we play to boost his character's stats. I don't care if the character made next level with a thousand points to spare in the first ten minutes of the game, it's not appropriate to "level up" during an adventure.)

The difficulty with this method of determining experience is its subjectivity. The G.M. must utilize the experience outline with some thought. **For Example:** A gang of eight, third level psychics armed to the teeth attack and subdue a lone fourth level villain. The eight players should receive Experience Points for subduing a minor menace. After all, the poor bad guy was outnumbered eight to one, had no genuine chance of defeating the player group, and presented no real threat to the characters. However, if one or two first, second or third level characters subdued or killed the same villain, they should receive experience for subduing a major, or possibly a great menace, because the odds were stacked against them, the danger was considerable, and the character(s) had to use ingenuity and teamwork to defeat a villain much more powerful than they. The greater the risk and challenge, the greater the reward.

This approach promotes imaginative and creative playing and role-playing instead of mere hacking and slashing. Game Masters, don't feel that you have to shower your players with tons of Experience Points either. Be fair and tolerant. Let your players truly *earn* their Experience Points. If you have a group of players with characters rising rapidly in Experience Levels, you will know it's because they are bold, clever and imaginative.

Experience & Hit Points

Each time a character reaches a new level of experience, the player gets to roll one six-sided die (1D6) and adds the number rolled to the character's Hit Points. This indicates the physical development and maturity of the character.

Per Level of Experience

"Per level of experience" or similar phrases indicate that the character can perform a skill, power or ability at his personal, highest level of experience. This often indicates the amount of damage that can be inflicted or a duration of an effect from a psychic ability or magic spell.

Experience Points Award Table

A guide to awarding Experience Points.

Combat

Zero points for fighting that's just to show off, too proud to stand down, gets the rest of the group in trouble, or any stupid or selfish reasoning.

25-50 points for killing or subduing a *minor menace*.

75-100 points for killing or subduing a *major menace*.

150-400 points for killing or subduing a *great menace*. Additional Experience Points are likely.

Other Actions, Reasoning & Role-Playing

10-25 points for performing the right skill (successful or not), at the right time, for the right reason. For mid to high level characters (4th level and up), this might apply only to skills performed when they are absolutely critical or done under stressful conditions.

25-50 points for a clever, but futile idea.

25-50 points for using good judgment or one's power or skill well.

25-50 points for playing in character when it would have been easier not to.

25-100 points for a clever, useful/helpful idea or action.

50-100 points for avoiding unnecessary violence; self-restraint or talking, bluffing or intimidating oneself (and associates) out of trouble or danger.

50-100 points for a small act of self-sacrifice, or an act of kindness, mercy, or compassion.

50-100 points for insightful and helpful deductive reasoning or keen observation.

50-100 points for a successful daring or heroic action (whether it was clever or not).

75-150 points for playing in character/playing one's alignment when circumstance or powerful temptation begged otherwise.

100 points for a quick thinking idea or action that was helpful.

100-200 points for insight or deductive reasoning that plays a huge role in a critical plan or saving lives.

200 points for a critical plan or action that saves the character's own life and/or a few comrades.

400-1000 points for a critical plan or action that saves the entire group and/or many innocent people.

100-300 points for endangering the character's own life (self-sacrifice) to help or save others.

500-700 points for a genuine life and death self-sacrifice in a situation where the character's heroism seemed likely (or almost certain) to cost him his life. Leaping in front of an energy blast meant for someone else to save that person, even though the blast is *likely* to kill the hero, or offering his/her own life to save the group or an innocent person (and the exchange truly seems to be a death sentence with no apparent chance for escape). Odds are that the character *will* really die!

Character Experience Levels

An experience table is provided for each P.C.C./Psychic Character Class (that's O.C.C./Occupational Character Class in most of Palladium's other games). A character involved in an adventure gains Expe-

rience Points for his thoughts, actions and deeds. As these Experience Points accumulate, the character will reach new plateaus indicating his continuing growth, development, and mastery over his abilities and skills. Each time a player's character gets enough Experience Points to reach the next "level," his skills, Hit Points and I.S.P. (and P.P.E. for practitioners of magic) increase accordingly.

The maximum level a player character can reach is 15. We have found characters any higher than that tend to be difficult both to play and to G.M. Plus, given the typical scale of Experience Points used for this game, a player should have to run his character for years to get beyond even 10th level.

Autistic Psychic Savant & Genius/Natural

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,075
Level 2: 2,076 - 4,150
Level 3: 4,151 - 8,300
Level 4: 8,301 - 16,600
Level 5: 16,601 - 26,300
Level 6: 26,301 - 36,600
Level 7: 36,601 - 56,300
Level 8: 56,301 - 74,600
Level 9: 74,601 - 88,300
Level 10: 88,301 - 124,600
Level 11: 124,601 - 184,300
Level 12: 184,301 - 210,600
Level 13: 210,601 - 310,300
Level 14: 310,301 - 370,600
Level 15: 370,601 - 430,300

Diviner

Level 1: 0,000 - 1,925
Level 2: 1,926 - 3,850
Level 3: 3,851 - 7,450
Level 4: 7,451 - 15,000
Level 5: 15,001 - 21,500
Level 6: 21,501 - 31,500
Level 7: 31,501 - 41,500
Level 8: 41,501 - 54,000
Level 9: 54,001 - 75,000
Level 10: 75,001 - 105,000
Level 11: 105,001 - 140,000
Level 12: 140,001 - 190,000
Level 13: 190,001 - 240,000
Level 14: 240,001 - 300,000
Level 15: 300,001 - 350,000

Fire Walker

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,050
Level 2: 2,051 - 4,100
Level 3: 4,101 - 8,250
Level 4: 8,251 - 16,500
Level 5: 16,501 - 24,600
Level 6: 24,601 - 34,700
Level 7: 34,701 - 49,800
Level 8: 49,801 - 69,900
Level 9: 69,901 - 95,000
Level 10: 95,001 - 130,100
Level 11: 130,101 - 180,200
Level 12: 180,201 - 230,300
Level 13: 230,301 - 282,400
Level 14: 282,401 - 354,500
Level 15: 354,501 - 426,600

Ghost Hunter

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,150
Level 2: 2,151 - 4,300
Level 3: 4,301 - 8,600
Level 4: 8,601 - 17,200
Level 5: 17,201 - 25,500
Level 6: 25,501 - 36,000
Level 7: 36,001 - 52,000
Level 8: 52,001 - 73,000
Level 9: 73,001 - 98,000
Level 10: 98,001 - 134,000
Level 11: 134,001 - 184,000
Level 12: 184,001 - 240,000
Level 13: 240,001 - 295,000
Level 14: 295,001 - 365,000
Level 15: 365,001 - 425,000

Latent Psychic

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,100
Level 2: 2,101 - 4,200
Level 3: 4,201 - 8,400
Level 4: 8,401 - 17,200
Level 5: 17,201 - 25,400
Level 6: 25,401 - 35,800
Level 7: 35,801 - 51,000
Level 8: 51,001 - 71,200
Level 9: 71,201 - 96,400
Level 10: 96,401 - 131,600
Level 11: 131,601 - 181,800
Level 12: 181,801 - 232,000
Level 13: 232,001 - 282,200
Level 14: 282,201 - 342,400
Level 15: 342,401 - 402,600

Medium

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,100
Level 2: 2,101 - 4,200
Level 3: 4,201 - 8,400
Level 4: 8,401 - 16,800
Level 5: 16,801 - 25,000
Level 6: 25,001 - 35,000
Level 7: 35,001 - 50,000
Level 8: 50,001 - 70,000
Level 9: 70,001 - 95,000
Level 10: 95,001 - 130,000
Level 11: 130,001 - 180,000
Level 12: 180,001 - 234,000
Level 13: 234,001 - 285,000
Level 14: 285,001 - 345,000
Level 15: 345,001 - 410,000

Nega-Psychic

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,000
Level 2: 2,001 - 4,000
Level 3: 4,001 - 8,200
Level 4: 8,201 - 16,400
Level 5: 16,401 - 24,500
Level 6: 24,501 - 34,600
Level 7: 34,601 - 49,700
Level 8: 49,701 - 69,800
Level 9: 69,801 - 94,900
Level 10: 94,901 - 129,000
Level 11: 129,001 - 179,100
Level 12: 179,101 - 229,200
Level 13: 229,201 - 279,300
Level 14: 279,301 - 329,400
Level 15: 329,401 - 389,500

Ordinary People

Level 1: 0,000 - 1,875
Level 2: 1,876 - 3,750
Level 3: 3,751 - 7,250
Level 4: 7,251 - 14,100
Level 5: 14,101 - 21,200
Level 6: 21,201 - 31,200
Level 7: 31,201 - 41,200
Level 8: 41,201 - 51,200
Level 9: 51,201 - 71,200
Level 10: 71,201 - 101,500
Level 11: 101,501 - 136,500
Level 12: 136,501 - 186,500
Level 13: 186,501 - 236,500
Level 14: 236,501 - 286,500
Level 15: 286,501 - 326,500

Parapsychologist

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,120
Level 2: 2,121 - 4,240
Level 3: 4,241 - 8,480
Level 4: 8,481 - 16,960
Level 5: 16,961 - 24,960
Level 6: 24,961 - 34,960
Level 7: 34,961 - 49,960
Level 8: 49,961 - 69,960
Level 9: 69,961 - 94,960
Level 10: 94,961 - 129,960
Level 11: 129,961 - 179,960
Level 12: 179,961 - 229,960
Level 13: 229,961 - 279,960
Level 14: 279,961 - 329,960
Level 15: 329,961 - 389,961

Physical Psychic

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,300
Level 2: 2,301 - 4,600
Level 3: 4,601 - 9,200
Level 4: 9,201 - 18,400
Level 5: 18,401 - 26,800
Level 6: 26,801 - 36,900
Level 7: 36,901 - 51,100
Level 8: 51,101 - 71,200
Level 9: 71,201 - 96,300
Level 10: 96,301 - 136,400
Level 11: 136,401 - 186,500
Level 12: 186,501 - 236,600
Level 13: 236,601 - 286,700
Level 14: 286,701 - 336,800
Level 15: 336,801 - 396,900

Psi-Mechanic

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,400
Level 2: 2,401 - 4,800
Level 3: 4,801 - 9,600
Level 4: 9,601 - 19,000
Level 5: 19,001 - 27,000
Level 6: 27,001 - 37,000
Level 7: 37,001 - 52,000
Level 8: 52,001 - 72,000
Level 9: 72,001 - 96,000
Level 10: 96,001 - 131,000
Level 11: 131,001 - 180,000
Level 12: 180,001 - 229,000
Level 13: 229,001 - 278,000
Level 14: 278,001 - 337,000
Level 15: 337,001 - 396,000

Psychic Healer

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,140
Level 2: 2,141 - 4,280
Level 3: 4,281 - 8,560
Level 4: 8,561 - 17,520
Level 5: 17,521 - 25,520
Level 6: 25,521 - 35,520
Level 7: 35,521 - 50,520
Level 8: 50,521 - 71,000
Level 9: 71,001 - 96,100
Level 10: 96,101 - 131,200
Level 11: 131,201 - 181,300
Level 12: 181,301 - 231,400
Level 13: 231,401 - 281,500
Level 14: 281,501 - 341,600
Level 15: 341,601 - 421,700

Psychic Sensitive

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,240
Level 2: 2,241 - 4,480
Level 3: 4,481 - 8,960
Level 4: 8,961 - 17,920
Level 5: 17,921 - 25,920
Level 6: 25,921 - 35,920
Level 7: 35,921 - 50,920
Level 8: 50,921 - 70,920
Level 9: 70,921 - 95,920
Level 10: 95,921 - 135,920
Level 11: 135,921 - 185,920
Level 12: 185,921 - 225,920
Level 13: 225,921 - 275,920
Level 14: 275,921 - 335,920
Level 15: 335,921 - 395,920

Mage/Arcanist

Level 1: 0,000 - 2,200
Level 2: 2,201 - 4,400
Level 3: 4,401 - 8,800
Level 4: 8,801 - 17,700
Level 5: 17,701 - 25,700
Level 6: 25,701 - 35,700
Level 7: 35,701 - 50,700
Level 8: 50,701 - 70,700
Level 9: 70,701 - 95,700
Level 10: 95,701 - 135,700
Level 11: 135,701 - 185,700
Level 12: 185,701 - 225,700
Level 13: 225,701 - 275,700
Level 14: 275,701 - 325,700
Level 15: 325,701 - 385,000



Step 8:

Rounding out the Character

The following tables and charts are entirely *optional*. Use them or not. Use some, not others. They are provided for the convenience of those who might want them. To make random determinations, roll percentile dice. **Game Master Note:** These tables are also handy for whipping up Non-Player Characters.

Birth Order

01-25% First Born.	56-75% Last Born.
26-35% Second Born.	76-85% First Born of Twins.
36-45% Third Born.	86-95% Second Born of Twins.
46-55% Fourth Born.	96-00% Illegitimate.

Weight

01-10% Skinny; underweight.
11-30% Thin.
31-60% Average.
61-75% Husky.
76-89% Potbelly.
90-00% Obese; seriously overweight.

Height

01-30% Short.
31-70% Average.
71-00% Tall.

Note: Average height for a human male is six feet, two inches (1.88 m). Female: Five feet, nine inches (1.75 m).

Age

Note: These are all optional tables and it may be best if the player ignores this table and picks any age he'd like for the character.

01-25% Teenager: 14-19 years old. Full of spit and vinegar; craves action, adventure and new ideas, as well as finding one's place in the world, and being special or important. Add 1D4 to Base I.S.P. and 1D4+4 to Base P.P.E.; -1 to Perception Rolls.

26-50% Twenties: 20-29 years old. College age or time for starting a career, or getting married and/or starting a family.

51-75% Thirties: 30-39 years. Typically mature, skilled and settled into a career and/or family.

76-85% Forties: 40-49 years old. Firmly entrenched in a career, children (if any) may be college age, hair is starting to head north or turn grey, but still in good to excellent physical condition.

86-90% Fifties; 50-59 years old. Career is like an old friend or a stale, predictable trap. May be looking for adventure and change. Children (if any) are grown and may be starting families of their own. Feels the aches and pains of age, but still in good health and spry. Reduce Spd attribute by 10%.

91-95% Sixties: 60-69 years old. May be considering retirement or working part-time, although a character who loves his job may keep on working. Children (if any) are grown and settled in their lives. Feels the aches and pains of old age creeping in, but still fairly spry for one's age (looks and acts fifty). Reduce Spd attribute another 10%, also reduce P.S., P.P. and P.E. by 10%.

96-99% Seventies & Eighties: 70-89 years old. Retirement age, though heads of companies, artists, writers, entertainers, advisors, consultants and others with a desk job (or light manual work) may continue to work full- or part-time. Reduce P.S., P.P., P.E. and Spd attributes another 10%, also reduce skill performance by -10%, and -2 on Perception Rolls, initiative, combat bonuses, and the number of attacks per melee round.

100% Nineties and older: An old timer, but may be wise and a living storehouse of information, experience and history. Reduce all physical attributes by half, and mental attributes by 20%.

Age Psionics First Manifested

01-12% As a child (under the age of 12).
13-30% Early teens (12-16).
31-50% Late teens (17-19).
51-75% Early twenties (20-24).
76-00% Only recently.

Disposition

01-10% Mean or bitter. The glass is half empty, he doesn't get his fair share, and tends to be suspicious, spiteful and vindictive.

11-15% Shy. Quiet and timid, tends to be a loner, but fairly sure of oneself.

16-23% Gung-ho. Guts and glory type who sees himself as a hero, and enjoys tackling obstacles, challenges and participating in combat.

24-29% Worry wart. Nervous and cautious about everything.

30-35% Hothead. Bold, and quick-tempered or emotional. Feels things deeply because he or she cares. May be a good, nice person or a hotheaded jerk.

36-43% Gambler. Likes to take chances for himself and is always looking for a way to even the odds and make a big score.

44-48% Blabber-mouth. Nice guy, but talks too much and may say the wrong thing to the wrong person.

49-54% Wild man. May mean well, but tends to be bullheaded, overconfident, takes unnecessary risks and tends to rush into situations without thinking it all through.

55-61% All around good person. Kind, generous, compassionate, and positive. The glass is usually half full.

62-67% Arrogant. Confident and self-assured to the point that he feels he is the best at what he does. Likes to take charge and direct others whether they appreciate it or not. May underestimate others.

68-75% Tough guy. Cocky and self-reliant. May be a lone wolf or the strong, silent type.

76-81% Braggart. May be a nice person, but likes to brag about his or her abilities, accomplishments and exploits.

82-86% Paternal. Tends to be overprotective of others, especially friends, and is especially overbearing toward young characters and children.

87-91% Easy going. Unflappable and calm most of the time; laid back and accepting of others. Trusts almost anyone until they are proven unworthy of that trust.

92-95% Complainer. Constantly aggravated about something.

96-98% Peacemaker. Hates discord between friends, family, and co-workers and likes to help others mend fences.

99-00% Schemer/Dreamer. Always looking ahead, never in the present, and dislikes the past. Thinking ahead and plotting for the future is a good trait sometimes, but a bad one other times, because he tends to miss the obvious ("what if . . .") and forgets the reality of the here and now.

Environment Growing Up

01-20% Agricultural; farm or ranch.

21-40% Country community, small town or village.

41-60% Suburbia. Prosperous, upper-middle class city or town. Minimal ethnic diversity.

61-85% Population Center. A large populated city like Miami, New York, Detroit, Chicago, Toronto, Mexico City, London, Paris, Hong Kong, etc.

86-00% Urban City. A small to medium-sized city.

Land of Origin

01-05% Australia

06-10% Africa/Middle East

11-30% Europe or United Kingdom

31-50% United States of America

51-60% Canada

61-70% Mexico/Central America

71-80% South America

81-90% China/Asia

91-00% India/Indonesia



Family History with the Paranormal

01-10% Powerful ancestry. Great, great, granddad (or mom) was a shaman, sage, seer, soothsayer or demon slayer, and so was his predecessor and several generations before them! Most family members in recent generations have given up such professions (it seemed a little "out there" and embarrassing in these modern times), but there has always been talk about premonitions, clairvoyance, seeing ghosts, feeling evil spirits, strong hunches, and trusting your feelings.

11-25% None! Nobody in this family ever remembers anybody talking about ESP or seeing ghosts. Always thought it was the stuff of sci-fi films, television, fiction and comic books.

26-40% Some, but nothing much. Aunt Matilda knew cousin Selma gave birth to a baby girl on a Wednesday morning, Grandpa Johnson dreamed the winning three-digit lotto numbers, and Aunt Mary dreamt that her son would die a soldier in the desert two months before the start of the Gulf War, that kind of thing.

41-55% Some definite history dating back at least two or three generations (probably doesn't know much about earlier generations). Mom could sense things and had precognitive dreams about the future and family members. Grandma used to converse with the dead, hold seances, see omens in the garden, and warned of evil spirits, demons and dark magic. Or maybe someone in the family was a healer, or gifted in some other way. In any case, psychic phenomena (premonitions, palm reading, ghosts, etc.) and supernatural evil were talked about as matter of fact reality and no one is surprised when a family member gets a powerful "hunch" or a dream that comes true.

56-70% Long history of psychic phenomena in the family dating back 1D6+4 generations! Gypsy fortune tellers perhaps, professional psychics, healers, mediums, etc., going as far back as anyone can remember, though some family members have "the gift" and some don't.

71-85% No history of psychic phenomena is known in the family, but everyone always kept an open mind about such things and held the idea that it *could be* true. There are, after all, many things science can't explain and which people accept on faith. This family likes to think there are still mysteries to be uncovered.

86-00% No recent history of psychic phenomena in the last two generations (until now?), but the grandparents used to whisper about some relative or part of the family that "had queer powers" (or "dabbled in magic" or "dealt with spirits" or his spirit is said to "haunt the old farm").

Reason for Paranormal Investigation

A desire to be a psychic investigator (amateur or pro) isn't commonplace or a common goal for most people. It's not normal. And the reasons why the character got into this strange hobby or line of work are revealed below. All reasons are written in such a way that the character may or may not have psychic abilities.

01-15% Just Curious. The character is an enthusiastic and lifelong student of the paranormal and supernatural. As a youngster, the character avidly read and collected used books and magazines on the subject. Every story of a UFO sighting, a haunted house, or a mysterious killing, seemed fascinating. The character is still more intrigued than frightened by the paranormal and the arcane.

16-25% A Gift and a Responsibility. The character is religious or a spiritual person by nature. A figure he respects (priest, teacher, parent, etc.) told the character he was special, "gifted" and that he had a responsibility to use his gift to help others and make the world better. **Note:** The *gift* could be psychic abilities or an affinity for magic, or an openness to ideas, people or being a good, kind soul who cares about others. Deeply spiritual/religious, the character sees all his talents and abilities (supernatural or conventional) as a blessing and responsibility.

26-35% Witness to the Supernatural: At some point in the character's teenage years, he or she was witness to a major supernatural

event. Ever since then the character has been interested in learning more and coming to understand the mysterious forces at work in the world.

36-40% Traumatic Experience: From complete disbelief or ignorance of the supernatural, the character has become obsessed with the phenomena. This interest was caused by a traumatic exposure to a supernatural event in recent years.

41-50% Haunted: For some reason, ever since the character was a child, ghosts have always shown up whenever he was around. Some mysterious quality about the character just naturally makes ghosts curious, neither harmful or hurtful, just curious.

51-55% Was once Mentally Ill. At one time the character was institutionalized for a severe mental problem caused by an encounter with the supernatural he/she cannot remember. Roll once on the *Random Insanity Table* to see what the character still suffers from, but other than this problem the character functions fine. There is a remote chance (01-03%) that under severe stress or fear the character might remember what it was that drove him into a catatonic state that lasted for 1D6 months before he became well enough to get better with a year of therapy.

56-60% Former Drug Addict/Alcoholic. Character used to be an addict or an alcoholic, but has been clean and sober for the last 1D6 years. During the character's days as an addict, he/she saw and experienced some things on the streets involving the supernatural. Though others have written them off as drug induced delusions, the character knows better, and has been investigating the supernatural and paranormal ever since he's straightened himself out.

61-65% Befriended by a Sage. Early in the character's life, a sage (actually a Psychic Healer or Psychic Sensitive) told the youth that he had special gifts that would eventually become known to him. The sage told him not to be afraid and they talked about the mysteries of life, the universe and the paranormal. This may have been one entire summer or a year or two. The sage could have been a neighbor, a friend or relative visiting a neighbor or just someone who visited the character's favorite place (park, playground, railroad tracks, etc.). Then one day the sage disappeared. Doesn't know if the sage simply moved away or what, but the character still remembers the wonderful conversations and the insight they provided.

66-70% Imaginary Friend. The character had an imaginary friend who told him stories about psychic abilities, what a gift being psychic is and how one must use the powers for good, to help others. Sometimes the imaginary friend told the character things about himself and the future, other times they just talked about life and death, and all kinds of things. As the character got older, the imaginary friend appeared less and less often. By the early teens (unless a Medium), the friend stopped coming. With the maturity of age, the character has come to believe the "imaginary friend" was really a *ghost* (perhaps a family ancestor; e.g. Uncle Mel who died when the character was only four years old). If a Medium P.C.C., the ghost remains with the psychic as his "Spirit Guide."

71-75% Con-Artist. In his youth the character earned money as a flimflam man, pretending to be "psychic" and doing card readings and other chicanery to bilk money out of chumps. Along the way, the character ran into some genuine psychics and had a close encounter (or two) with the supernatural. Since then the character has gone straight and regrets his days as a con artist. He is now contemptuous of charlatans who pretend to be psychic to cheat people and may even make a point of revealing them as fakes.

76-85% Tragedy: One or more people the character loved, died as the result of a paranormal or supernatural experience. (If psychic, maybe the character even had a premonition it would happen). Whatever the tragedy, the character was powerless to stop it. He's vowed on that day never to be powerless again. So he investigates the unknown and tries to help others endure, survive and triumph over the supernatural.

86-90% Chance or Accident (or fate). The character never thought about psychic powers, ghosts or demons, and then, WHAM! Something happened (powers appeared and/or something happened involving the supernatural) that drew him into the realm of the supernatural. It all happened so fast that he just reacted. When it was over, he (or she) was a changed person. His worldview forever changed and expanded, he couldn't go back to pretending there weren't monsters and mystery in the world. Returning to an ordinary life was impossible. It was time to find out what else was out there.

91-95% Shaman/Priest/Seer. The character learned about the paranormal and the occult in another culture that quietly accepts and embraces the existence of the supernatural world and magic. This could make the character a Native American Indian, Chinese, from India, Haiti, or a traditional African, Australian Aborigine, and similar. The character respects the traditional beliefs and accepts the supernatural and paranormal are real. He or she may even have had some very preliminary training as a shaman, spiritual healer or practitioner of magic. **Bonuses:** +1 to Perception Rolls, and +1 to save vs magic or possession (pick one).

96-00% Psychic Family: Everyone in the character's family is the equivalent of a P.C.C. (even if the character is not) and so the character has grown up around psychic abilities and the paranormal all his life. He knows it is real and it's interesting, so he studies and investigates it. **Bonuses:** +1 additional Lore skill of choice at +10% and +1 on Perception Rolls.

Outlook on Being Psychic

This table is for psychics only, and reveals how they feel about having their psionic abilities and knowledge of the supernatural.

01-10% Pleased. Welcomes having abilities that make him special. There is no fear, regret or worry. The psychic just accepts them and uses the abilities the best he can.

11-20% Frightened. It's all a bit overwhelming and scary. The more the character experiences, the stranger, more troublesome and scary the world becomes for him. Ignorance is bliss, and those who don't know about the supernatural and paranormal are the lucky, blissful ones. For him, everything is work and worry.

21-30% A Gift from God. The psychic feels blessed, favored and honored. Vows to use these gifts responsibly, compassionately, justly and in the name of God. May be mildly or devoutly religious.

31-40% A Curse from God. The psychic asks, why him? Why has he been given the burden of these powers, knowledge and the grave responsibilities that come with them? Uses them grudgingly and with a sense that he is to suffer for having them and having to deal with demonic forces. Is sure they will be the death of him some day.

41-50% A Matter of Destiny. The character believes he has these abilities for a reason. Perhaps, his second chance to right some wrong or injustice he did in his youth, or for something a family member did, or to rise from a low station in life, or to restore his family's honor, or to prove he is not a loser, or to start a new, better path, or some reason that holds significance for the psychic. Committed to being a good person and using his abilities for justice, right and goodness.

51-60% Embarrassed. The psychic abilities make the character feel like a misfit or freak. On one hand, they're very cool, on the other, they just aren't normal. Tries to use them responsibly, but never likes to talk about them with ordinary people, and pretends to be a normal person. (The word *normal* is used deliberately to drive home the point that the character does *not* feel normal.) Tries not to use the abilities in public or make a public spectacle of himself.

61-70% Fascinated. The character is amazed at what his paranormal abilities can do and the expanded world they have enabled him to see. Fascinated and intrigued by all of it, psychic powers, magic, demons, monsters, and the world of the supernatural. Never grows tired of it, is not really afraid of it, and wants to learn and experience more.

71-80% Sense of Duty. Life is a mystery, one must plumb its depths to live it fully. This is one of this character's credos. So is the notion that a person who is given much has much to give in return. This character enjoys his psychic abilities, tries to live responsibly and sees his powers as an honor and a duty to help others.

81-90% Gonzo. The psychic loves having psionic abilities. Loves it and loves using them. They make the character feel important and powerful – like a super-hero. May thrive on conflict and trouble (goes with the super-hero self-image), and may also be a bit too overconfident and underestimate his opponents.

91-00% Uncertain. It all seems so impossible and incredible. Even if the character has had psychic abilities for years, they still make him uncomfortable and awkward. But then the character has never quite felt comfortable in his own skin. The responsibility weighs on the character a bit more than it should. He worries if he's doing everything he can or should, and is always a little hesitant to use his powers. Wonders why he has "the gift" instead of someone more important, or stronger, or certain.

Insanity

The use of insanities is left entirely to the discretion of the Game Master. However, considering the nature of this game and the horrific supernatural forces our heroes encounter, it seems reasonable (and even likely) that some or all may ultimately suffer from one or more insanities. Certainly any number of Non-Player Characters, villains and monsters may suffer from insanities.

(Designer Note: At the suggestion of, then, social worker and gamer, Paula Leasure, insanities were made an *option* and have appeared in Palladium products since the release of the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** in 1983. Though we have always kept them "optional" rules, it seems that most players (as in 97%) use and enjoy the insanity tables. I think it's because a) it makes sense, b) there is much more openness about real life mental health, and c) an insanity (or three) gives the character the classic "tragic flaw." Personally, I suspect "c" is the biggest factor. Having one or more insanities makes the character more interesting. It gives him or her more personality, history (because the insanity is always the result of a traumatic experience) and maybe even a badge of honor if the hero suffers because he was trying to save somebody, or destroy a terrible evil. Once acquired, the insanity becomes a character quirk and an Achilles' heel; a weakness or problem that is always present and something which the hero must struggle with to overcome. Suffering from a minor insanity like a phobia or obsession is the most common and least debilitating of the insanities.

Please Note: The inclusion of mental illness is not meant to belittle or make light of mental problems. I, personally, know a number of people who struggle with depression, anxiety, addiction, and bipolar disorders, among other disorders. Mental illness is no laughing matter and I'm proud of each and every one of my friends who haven't given up and fight to find balance and contentment in their lives. I have the greatest respect for the healthcare professionals who struggle equally hard to help these tortured souls. However, none of that changes the fact that having insanities in a *role-playing game* is interesting, appropriate and fun to play. They are especially appropriate in a game that deals with horror, fear, powers of the mind, and monsters most people don't believe exist. – Kevin Siembieda)

How Insanity Works in BTS-2

All player characters are assumed to start off mentally and emotionally sound. Any insanities are developed from that point forward and are the result of mental, emotional or physical trauma from events that occur in the game.



Game Masters should be very judicious in handing out insanity and *not* make everyone crazy or any one character bogged down with a zillion debilitating illnesses. A character that is a mental wreck is no fun to play and dishing out insanities like candy on Halloween is mean-spirited or foolish. Use common sense and logic.

Being scared out of one's wits is not grounds for insanity. Neither is being attacked by something that slithered out of a nightmare, especially if the character kicks its butt and comes out winning the day. However, being buried alive for hours or days, or nearly dying at the hands of some hideous thing, or seeing something horrific, like the sacrifice of several people or children, slow death by something sick and disgusting, and witnessing or experiencing torture or something truly abhorrent (i.e., the worst thing most people could imagine), these *may* be grounds for insanity. Use *yourself* as the barometer. If you think some particular experience would send you off the deep end, then it's probably fair to assume the same thing will happen to the player character and assign him an insanity.

Also take into consideration the character's personality and the way he/she has been played. Let's use this common, real life example: I know many people, male and female, who are scared of, or hate, bugs, especially spiders, worms, cockroaches, and other "creepy crawlers." Heck, I've known women who don't even want anything as harmless as a moth or grasshopper near them. Now, imagine such a person being plunged from head to toe, into a vat full of live, disgusting insects. They'd freak out. And here comes an example of freaking out without getting an insanity: The threat of it happening, it nearly happening, and even being dropped into the vat of living vermin for 1-10 minutes will cause the individual to scream and squirm and try to escape (if possible), but it's *NOT* going to drive them nuts. However, being completely covered in the insects for an hour or more, or buried alive with them, or believing the insects will eat him alive, that might give a character a lasting phobia about bugs or being buried alive, or both. **HOWEVER**, it would not have that effect on everyone. Staying with the real life analogy, *I like bugs*. Yep, Kevin Siembieda is a bug guy. As a kid I used to catch, collect, study and even raise bugs. I've read up on them and handled them, and find them fascinating. I know which ones are dangerous and which ones aren't (which is most insects found in urban settings, by the way). So while being lowered into a vat of cockroaches or worms or maggots would be disgusting, it wouldn't freak me out. Number one, I know they are harmless. Number two, they don't scare or revolt me. I'd be fine. Now if I was confronted by a supernatural creature whose body was composed of living insects, and/or the insects looked alien, or behaved in an unnatural way, or had weird powers, *that* might freak me out, and *might* traumatize me to the point that I would get a lasting insanity from the experience – though not likely if the bugs turned out to be harmless. **Note:** Bear in mind the character's M.E. (Mental Endurance) attribute as a helpful guideline. If the character's M.E. is 15 or higher he's probably very mentally resilient, but another character with an M.E. of 6, 7 or 8 experiencing the same thing might be traumatized for life!

In my opinion, it is only the most deep-rooted, gut-level, life and death traumatic experiences (including the character dying and being brought back to life via extraordinary medical, psychic or magical means, as well physical and/or psychological torture – and all torture has a psychological purpose and impact) that should result in a lasting insanity that is *assigned* to a character by the G.M. without any chance to save. Not a mamby-pamby, little fright, but life threatening, mind numbing experiences. Oh, and the G.M. might assign a specific phobia or other insanity or simply instruct the player to roll on one of the following tables for a *random* insanity.

A **psychological trauma** may result from a violent, emotional experience or shock. As psychic investigators, the characters will be somewhat desensitized to horror, and prepared and hardened to frightening, unnatural and bizarre experiences. A trauma that will result in an insanity will have to be quite horrible.

Save vs Insanity dice rolls. There will also be some curses, magic, and creatures that have the *potential* to create/cause insanity. In these cases, the player needs to roll 1D20 and get a 12 or higher to save (the exact number required will vary depending on the creatures or magic involved, and will always be higher if cast by a Demon Lord, Dark God or Alien Intelligence). In this case, the character may add any M.E. attribute bonus to *save vs insanity*, as well as any (rare) bonus to *save vs insanity* he may get from a P.C.C. or other resource (enchanted amulet/charm, etc.).

Trauma

Having a character roll on the insanity tables after a terrible trauma is very appropriate, realistic and fun; adding a new element to the character and the ongoing story. What constitutes a traumatic experience is, in part, up to the Game Master and the actual situation.

The following is a guide to some traumatic situations requiring a roll for an insanity.

Accidentally causing (or being unable to prevent) the death of several innocent people. Primarily applies to characters of a good or Unprincipled alignment and who are likely to be engulfed by feelings of regret, sorrow and failure. Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

In the alternative (or in addition to the insanity), the character might turn to alcohol or drugs (G.M.'s decision), drinking or getting high to forget the incident or to punish himself for his perceived failure. Yet another alternative might include becoming *obsessed* with the creature, person, cult, or Demon Lord/god (and all who serve it); hates it and longs to battle and destroy the one responsible.

Death! The character dies – or at least falls into a coma – having been killed in a brutal or terrifying manner, or at the hands of a truly horrific being or circumstance (eaten alive, after being tortured, having something alien enter his body, etc.). Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

Drug induced hallucinations that were particularly terrifying, hideous, or realistic. Roll once on the *Phobia Table*. If extremely traumatic, lengthy, or reoccurring hallucinations, roll on the *Random Insanity Table*. A real life encounter with the subject of the traumatic hallucination is likely to cause more trauma. 70% chance of developing another insanity; roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

Long period of physical and/or mental torture. Two to eight weeks: Roll once on the *Random Insanity Table*. Nine weeks to several months: Roll once on the *Random Insanity Table* and once on the *Neurosis Table*.

Near Death experienced under horrifying, gruesome or bizarre circumstance, like at the hands of a slobbering or terrifying monster, or excruciating method of being killed. Roll on the *Neurosis Table* or, perhaps, the *Phobia Table*.

Near Death experience: A terrifying, frightening or unusual brush with death. Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

Possession and being made to do several repugnant, despicable or terrible acts. Actions that go against the character's moral fiber and/or which hurt loved ones or innocent people, particularly children. Roll on the *Psychosis Table*.

Prolonged physical and/or emotional abuse. May involve weeks, months or years of captivity, belittlement, threats, beatings, torture, and acts of extreme humiliation. Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*. If an obsession is rolled, the obsession is probably a deep rooted hatred toward beings of that nature or perhaps anyone who imposes such humiliation on people, and a desire to strike out at them.

Sensory Deprivation, probably for several days, but perhaps only several hours if the deprivation is accompanied by deliberate, directed input designed to generate terror, a sense of deep loss and other extreme emotions. Roll on the *Psychosis* or *Affective Disorder Table*.

Severe physical disability or ugly scarring. 01-50% chance of alcohol or drug addiction, or roll on the *Obsession Table*.

Severe emotional trauma. 01-50% chance of alcoholism or drug addiction; drinks to forget or to punish himself for a perceived failure. 51-90% develops a *Neurosis*. 91-100% develops an *Affective Disorder*.

Transformation. The character has experienced being turned into something physically (or emotionally) horrible, monstrous/inhuman. Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

Violation. The character is physically, mentally or emotionally violated and molested. Roll on the *Random Insanity Table*.

Witnessing or experiencing a shocking, grotesque atrocity. Roll on the *Phobia Table*.

Witnessing the terrible or shocking death of a deeply loved one. Roll on the *Psychosis Table*.



Insanity Tables

Roll percentile dice for random determinations.

Random Insanity Table

Note: More than one phobia, obsession, psychosis, and affective disorder is possible. If the same one is rolled, ignore it and roll again.

01-10% Reborn. The trauma turns the character into a different person. Alignment reversal: Good becomes evil, evil becomes good, Anarchist becomes Principled or Scrupulous, Unprincipled becomes Aberrant or Anarchist. Also make a random roll on the *Disposition Table* in the section on Optional Character Background also presented under Step 8.

11-20% Neurosis. Make a random roll on the *Neurosis Table* in this section.

21-25% Compulsive Liar/Cannot Tell the Truth. Lies about big and little things, even if of a good alignment. Can't help himself. Most lies are harmless, but they can be annoying and can get the character and his teammates into trouble.

26-30% Kleptomaniac. A compulsion to steal, even if the character is of good alignment and doesn't need the item. Steals inexpensive and valuable items, basically whatever strikes the character's fancy.

31-40% Obsession. Make a random roll on the *Obsession Table* elsewhere in this section.

41-50% Phobia. Make a random roll on the *Phobia Table* elsewhere in this section.

51-60% Affective Disorder. Make a random roll on the *Affective Disorder Table* elsewhere in this section.

61-70% Hypochondriac. The character is constantly concerned about sickness, disease and poisoning. He exaggerates the slightest discomfort and illness he may suffer and is constantly under the belief that he is "coming down" with something. He *may* avoid others who are sick even with the common cold, may blame others for his illnesses ("he coughed in my direction yesterday") and is likely to have a half-dozen "quack" cures for every ailment imaginable. Most taste terrible, or are ridiculous, and none of them work.

71-80% Psychosis. Make a random roll on the Psychosis Table elsewhere in this section.

81-87% Recluse. The character prefers to be alone. He is usually quiet and unobtrusive, staying in the background and hoping to remain unnoticed. Feels uncomfortable in crowds and is -10% on skill performance and -1 to Perception Rolls when in the spotlight (everyone is watching or have their hopes pinned on the character's actions). No penalties when nobody is watching, when alone or with just a few people.

88-94% Homicidal Rage. Despite the name, the character often seems outwardly calm and composed, but is extremely intense and focused on revenge/striking out at the person or cause of his quiet, burning rage. May seriously hurt or kill someone without realizing it. Penalties: Cannot pull a punch, will not dodge, does an extra 1D6 damage in all physical attacks and does triple damage on a Natural 20;

has extreme difficulty controlling himself/stopping himself from going too far (may need somebody to pull him off his opponent). This even applies to minor provocations where the character gets caught in a brawl or becomes the target of insults, is cut off in traffic (road rage), etc., let alone the heat of actual combat. Friends and associates should be prepared to intercede and pull the character off his victims. **Note:** This is not a berserker rage and the character can be reasoned with, calmed down and will not attack friends without considerable provocation.

95-00% Addiction. Whatever the trigger, the character is addicted to drugs or alcohol and is on a path of self-destruction whether he sees it that way or not. See the description on Addiction toward the end of this section.

Affective Disorders Table

01-10% Mania. The character is highly motivated, positive about himself and admires his abilities and capabilities. He is endlessly energetic (hyperactive), but ignores his own limits and makes rash, impulsive decisions. Becomes perturbed by criticism or any suggestion of inadequacy and blames others for his mistakes and shortfalls. Penalties: -1 on Perception Rolls and -10% on skill performance (both because he cannot stay focused on any one thing, and is easily distracted and bored), but is +1 on initiative and +1 to dodge.

11-20% Bipolar. The character suffers from dramatic and erratic mood swings that affect the personality and performance. Roll percentile dice once every 8 hours or when a situation radically changes (good to bad, bad to worse, bad to good, etc.).

01-20% Balanced: A relatively normal state of mind. However, because the character has come to crave the highs, he does feel inadequate when "normal." Penalties: -5% on skill performance and -1 on all combat moves (strike, parry, etc.) when the character is in the limelight or has to make a critical move or skill. **Note:** Normal is fleeting without drugs, and most bipolar people hate taking drugs because they make them feel detached from their emotions and unable to experience the extreme highs the person enjoys even if it means suffering through the lows.

21-60% Depressed: Feels sad, inferior and unmotivated as if mired in glue. Penalties: -1 on Perception Rolls, -3 on initiative, -1 on all combat moves (strike, parry, etc.), and -20% to *all* skills (including Secondary Skills).

61-00% Manic: Feels positive, energized, empowered and capable of achieving anything! However, he is also quick to make arbitrary decisions, take unnecessary risks, and ignore the general consensus ("But I thought..."). Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative, +10% on *all* skills (including Secondary Skills).

21-30% Frightened by loud noises to the point of cowering (loses initiative and -1 attack per melee round) and wetting oneself.

31-40% Death Wish. For some reason the character doesn't feel he deserves to live and, subconsciously, puts himself in harm's way, takes dangerous risks, and is willing to sacrifice himself for others, not out of bravery, but because he is less deserving to live. A character who battles supernatural evil, for example, is likely to believe it is his destiny to die at the hands of an inhuman fiend. The character is not completely suicidal nor obsessed with death or dying, but certain he will come to a violent and untimely end. In fact, it may only be the character's greater sense of responsibility, duty or compassion that keeps him fighting, mainly to help others.

41-50% Hates bugs of all kinds, and will jump up and try to kill them whenever they are noticed within 15 feet (4.6 m) of him. This includes cockroaches/beetles, fireflies, bees, wasps, mosquitoes, flies, moths, butterflies, centipedes, caterpillars, and spiders. Tends to ignore worms and tiny ants.

51-60% Autonomic Reaction. Hands shake when the character is under stress, has to do something important, feels threatened or feels angry. Penalties: -3 to strike with a gun or other ranged weapon, -15% on any skill that requires a steady hand and precision hand-eye coordination (Forgery, Palming, surgery, most repair skills, etc.).

61-70% Trauma Induced Migraine. The character gets a severe migraine headache (constant throbbing and shooting pain, nausea) as a reaction to one of the following (roll once to determine what is always the cause of the migraines): *01-20%* having to figure out a puzzle or mystery, *21-40%* high stress situations, *41-60%* faced with supernatural evil or life threatening situation, *61-80%* faced with magic (must challenge/stop/battle it), *81-00%* frustrated or angry. Lasts for as long as the stress remains. Penalties: -1 on all combat moves (strike, parry, etc.), -10% on skill performance and -10% on Spd.

71-80% Outraged by acts of violence, becoming violent himself. *01-72%* chance of going berserk and attacking the perpetrator of the violent act without regard for self. Bonuses: +1 to strike and +2 to damage when berserk.

81-90% Hates music and musicians, and will try to destroy or stop the source of those terrible noises.

91-95% Intimidated by the spoken language when under a threatening, frightening and pressure situations. Cannot speak meaningful sentences (must use sign language or written communication), and has difficulty understanding long sentences.

96-00% Hysterical Blindness. When under pressure (battle, an important opportunity, torture, etc.), the character loses his sight until the pressure is removed. Roll for each situation. *01-88%* likelihood of happening. -10 to strike, parry, dodge and all combat rolls while blind; no initiative and skill performance is half. Blindness lasts for 1D6+1 melee rounds.

Neurosis Table

01-07% Anxiety. The individual is overwhelmed by an unreasonable fear or apprehension that does not require a real source (i.e., the character isn't afraid of a specific thing, as is the case of a phobia, but generally feels worried, anxious and disoriented). Those who suffer from anxiety find it debilitating, feeling out of sync, foggy and tense most of the time. Roll percentile every 8 hours to see how the character is feeling and the degree of penalties. Oddly enough, a true crisis situation may not make the character feel worse.

Penalties: *01-25% Mild Anxiety:* -5% on skill performance, -1 on Perception Rolls, and -1 to save vs Horror Factor.

26-50% Moderate Anxiety: -15% on skill performance, -2 on Perception Rolls, and -2 to save vs Horror Factor.

51-75% Severe Anxiety: -30% on skill performance, -3 on Perception Rolls, and -4 to save vs Horror Factor. Missing blocks of memory is also a symptom of severe anxiety. They have trouble remembering details and may not remember events, television shows or an article they read just 12-24 hours ago, but might remember something that happened a few minutes later in clear detail. ("What did I eat for breakfast? Hmm, I don't think I ate breakfast. Um, I don't remember.")

76-00% Feeling Good! No noticeable anxiety. No penalties; +1 on Perception Rolls.

08-14% Panic Attacks. The character suffers from mild anxiety around the clock, but is also given to severe panic attacks when alone and scared, when something really important relies on the character or he is in the spotlight with everyone looking, and when feeling frustrated or confused. A panic attack will cause the character's heart to race, he may not be able to catch a breath, pain may shoot through the chest or stomach, and he can't think clearly. **Penalties:** Reduce the number of attacks per melee round, combat bonuses, Spd, Perception Rolls, and skill performance all by *half*. **Note:** The duration of a panic attack may feel like an eternity, but only lasts 1D6 melee rounds (often less than a minute).

15-21% Fear of Animals. More than a simple phobia, this character has been so traumatized (perhaps chewed on by the family pet while a little nipper) that he avoids all animals, will push away the cutest pet, run away when confronted even by a tiny animal like a mouse, and will kill it whenever he feels cornered by one. Insects, fish, sea-life and fellow humanoids are not included in this irrational fear.

22-28% Disgusted by anything sticky and will go to any length to avoid touching it.

29-35% Fear of the Dark. Never liked the dark when younger, hates it since being exposed to the paranormal and/or the supernatural. Who knows what horrors may be lurking in the dark? The character becomes a gibbering zombie when locked or placed in dark places, alone. **Penalties:** Only one attack/action per melee round, no bonuses, no skill capabilities, speed is reduced by half. Will collapse (fall unconscious) after 2D4 melee rounds and will remain catatonic until removed from the darkness or a light is lit. Has trouble sleeping at night. Also -3 to save vs Horror Factor that involves creatures of darkness.

36-42% Worried about Germs/Disease and Obsessed with cleanliness. Washes the hands frequently, hates using public bathrooms, dislikes shaking hands, avoids other people's garbage and leftover food, will not drink out of the same container from which someone else drank, nor touch food that someone else took a bite out of or was handled by someone with an obvious cold or cough, and must clean up any area he has to use.

43-49% Invasion of the Body Snatchers: Acute paranoia toward all supernatural entities, demons, monsters, shape changers and those of alien origin or mutations of humans; but especially shape changers and beings who can possess others. ("They're out to get you! They could be anybody!! Anybody! Even ... you!?!")

50-56% Fear of Heights. Uncle Goober used to dangle the character by one foot, out of windows. Now the character is terrified of heights to the point of being frozen when above the second story. The character is fine as long as he can't see how high up he may be.

57-63% Thinks He's Being Followed. The character finds himself frequently glancing in mirrors, and stopping to look and see whether or not he's being followed. This includes checking behind himself, looking around, constant sideways glances, checking to see if doors are locked (checking the same doors 1D6 times each), and similar compulsive paranoid behavior. **Note:** The character is not paranoid in the sense that he thinks people are out to get him or are conspiring against him (the character is likely to have numerous trusted friends), he just has this constant feeling or anxiety that he may be followed or is being watched.

64-70% Fear of Success. "Mom always said I wasn't any good." The character will sabotage himself at critical moments when things matter most. The following minuses apply during critical, or high pressure moments (battle, danger, watched by others, etc.): -15% to all skills, -3 to strike, parry, initiative and damage.

71-77% Psycho-Reliance (Luck Fixation). The character becomes convinced that his "good fortune" is because of a particular item, a "lucky charm." The character touches, taps or kisses the charm for good luck before entering a battle or tackling any difficult situation. If the character loses the item, he suffers the following penalties until either the item is recovered or he can find a replacement "good luck" charm, which won't be easy (this is all completely psychosomatic). **Penalties:** -5% on all skills, -3 to save vs Horror Factor, -3 on initiative and -1 on all combat moves. Any other coincidental misfortune will be attributed to the loss of the lucky charm.

78-84% Personal Cleanliness: Compulsive need to be clean. In fact, the character will wash his hands and face 2D4 times in a row before he "thinks" he is clean. He will also wash his clothes whenever he can, and bathes frequently. He hates being dirty or engaging in something that will make him dirty and tries to avoid it. Will change into clean clothes whenever he can and apologizes for being dirty or having a tiny stain on his clothes.

85-91% Selective Traumatic Amnesia: The character will not remember traumatic event (life threatening, life and death battle, extreme horror). He will function okay during the actual event, but will not remember it 15 minutes later. Can't handle the stress and blocks it out. The character can hear about it like a third person without a problem, but will not personally remember the incident, his involvement or any details about it.

92-00% Obsessive-Compulsive about Safety/Security. Will check to see if a door is locked, a weapon is loaded, that he has his holy symbol(s), has cell phone/radio, I.D., and similar 1D6+2 times. May also insist that his teammates use identifying code words and signals to prove they are who they claim or seem to be.

Psychosis Table

A psychosis is any severe mental disorder in which the person partially or completely withdraws from reality and becomes delusional. Psychotic behavior is often anti-social, violent or self-destructive.

01-08% Fascination with death in all its forms. The character examines and studies ways one can die and kill, as well as implements of death, how the human (and non-human) body reacts/responds to the threat of death/fear reactions, tolerance to pain, survival responses, and even the philosophical concepts of death, the soul, life after death and so on. It is interesting to note that the character is not afraid of death and is not morbid about it. He is simply fascinated by it. Others may find him to be disturbingly callous and ghoulish.

09-16% Paranoid. A general suspicion that everybody is out to get you, so therefore, nobody can be trusted. The character is a bit secretive and careful about what he says in front of whom, and keeps to himself. Does not trust psychics (because they can read your mind, including psychics who can't read minds) or supernatural beings and hates those who can charm, possess or use mind control the most.

17-24% Manic Depressive. Alternate severe depression one week (nobody loves him; he is a loser, incompetent and is going to die if he is not careful; -15% on all skills and reduce Perception Rolls and combat bonuses by half), followed by a manic episode the next week (everything is great, he is the best there is, life is grand! +10% on all skills, +2 on initiative, and all bonuses are normal).

25-32% Paranoid Schizophrenic. "They're out to get me!" Voices tell the character that most everybody hates and/or fears him. Thus, he believes, "they" are out to get him (torture, kill, imprison, hurt, cheat, discredit, etc.). As a result, he has trouble sleeping (because he knows

that would make him vulnerable to "them"), is constantly jumpy/nervous and is suspicious of others, sometimes even long-time friends. The character blames all of his misfortune on others and sees conspiracies everywhere. Tends to be a loner and distrusts everybody except his closest comrades. May believe the voices are a spirit guide, angel, or god, and anything in-between.

33-41% Overinclusion. A mental perception in which the character draws irrational and irrelevant associations and conclusions from the facts ($2+2 = 52$). Once that conclusion has been reached, the character can't let it go even if a mountain of evidence is provided to prove otherwise. This is the character's view and he's sticking to it (and will take the precautionary measures he deems necessary to combat and/or defend against it). A form of schizophrenia.

42-50% Superman Syndrome. The character thinks he is stronger, faster, smarter, and more handsome than anybody else. He tends to respect only brute strength, power and ruthlessness. As a result, the character accepts foolish challenges, takes dangerous risks and often underestimates his opponents or the chance of failure/defeat. If it is any consolation, the character is usually cheerful, helpful and positive.

51-58% God Syndrome. The character believes he is a divine being because the voices in his head tell him so. As such, the narcissistic character believes he is better than anyone else, and is above the law, judgement, and the comprehension of mere mortals. Consequently, he ignores the law, may have questionable morals (depending on the alignment) and does as he pleases. The character is not necessarily mean about it, nor blatant or deliberate about breaking the law (though he can be), he just doesn't see them as applying to him. The character will also refuse to pay the consequences when accused of wrongdoing and will feel cheated and unjustly persecuted if forced to pay.

The least offensive characters are cocky, arrogant, bossy, condescending and trivialize everything that does not directly involve them (they are the center of their universe). The most extreme believe they are truly deities and act accordingly as directed by their alignment. Some are reasonably benevolent gods while others are cruel, vengeful or malicious gods.

59-66% Hysterical Aggressive Reaction. The character reacts in anger and violence to one particular thing or occurrence. This "trigger" is usually a response to accusations and criticism about his appearance, courage, honor and virtue, such as being called a coward, sissy, wimp, cheater, ugly, stupid, crazy, etc. However, the reaction may also be a response to the actions of others that reminds the character of something that was traumatic in his own life (may tie in to other insanities). This can include things like a child being beaten, acts of torture or cruelty, seeing someone attacked by an animal, a particularly threatening monster, and so on.

In most cases, the character flies off the handle, ranting and raving like a lunatic, shoving, threatening or challenging his accuser or the perpetrator of the "trigger" action (i.e., "How would you like it if I slapped you around like that, punk?!"). The slightest act of antagonism, aggression or intolerance toward him, like pushing him away, a smart remark, ignoring him, etc., will send the character into a fury against whomever or whatever set him off.

67-74%: Hysterical aggressive reaction to fear/phobia. In this case, the "trigger" is something the character has a phobia about, except instead of cringing in fear, he lashes out to destroy the object of his fear. This is usually a tangible thing like spiders, snakes, a particular monster, etc. For example, a character with a phobia about insects sees an itty bitty ant crawling on the shelf behind the bar in a club. He's likely to shout something like, "Oh my god! Look out! Get out of my way!" Then he leaps over the bar and swings at the ant with his beer bottle, chair, etc., shouting, "Did I get it? Did I get it? God, I hate those things!" Of course, in the process he may have caused a panic (after all, what is it that has frightened this person to such a degree?) or caused damage by his extreme actions.

If the phobia is something like a fear of the dark, he will fight anybody (to the death) who tries to put him someplace dark or who tries to take away his light, and he will do just about anything to get out of it. Likewise, a phobic character might turn to unreasonable behavior if confronted by his fear. If the hero who is afraid of ants should spy an alien bug, he might hysterically attack it even though the bug has no clue the hero is there. Obviously, this can draw his fellow adventurers into some serious (and pointless) conflicts (and the reason why this phobia should not include very common things, like people).

75-82%: Mindless Aggression. Roll percentile dice again.

01-94%: Semi-functional mindless aggression. When frustrated, angry or upset, there is a 01-72% likelihood of going berserk and lashing out at anybody who gets in the way. The character pushes, beats and lashes out (stands and fights anybody who opposes him) until physically restrained, rendered unconscious or killed! It takes 3D4 minutes of restraint or unconsciousness before the character regains his composure.

95-00%: Non-functional, homicidal maniac! Continually going berserk at the slightest provocation as well as when frustrated, angry or upset. He fights to severely injure or kill those who upset or oppose him. The character must be confined constantly (or killed). He has only one lucid day a week during which time he appears completely normal and rational, and will probably spend his time trying to talk his way out of confinement.

83-90%: Jekyll and Hyde. The character hears a voice in his head and feels powerful emotions contrary to his original alignment. There will be moments, especially when under stress, angry or drunk, that the voice speaks so loudly and convincingly that the character will respond to it. The response is the opposite of the character's normal, original personality and can be frightening, as if he were a completely different person! When he returns to normal, the character may regret his actions and try to make restitution, but there is little he can do when his other personality takes over. This means if the character is a Principled or Scrupulous good character, his opposite Hyde persona will be one of the evil alignments. As a result, in the heat of combat, or under stress, the Hyde persona may surface and engage in acts of cruelty, intimidation, torture, belittlement of others, random homicidal violence, and so on.

91-00%: Become a Psychiatrist. The character thinks he is a psychiatrist and sees ordinary quirks, legitimate fears and concerns as affective disorders, psychosis, neurosis, phobia or obsession. They are all sick (even if only he can recognize this)! The character will try to help people by counseling them and offering his "expert" or "professional" services. Uses a lot of psychoanalysis methods which rely on free association, analysis of emotions and behavior, and speculation on motives and impulses. ("Hmm, that's an interesting response. Did you resent your mother?"). In addition, he is especially fascinated with people who he considers extremely disturbed (i.e. have real insanities), but he cannot help himself, let alone anyone else.





Random Phobia Table

01-03% Contamination (germs, radioactive or otherwise; pathophobia).

04-06% Pain (algophobia).

07-09% Fire (pyrophobia).

10-12% Places reputed to be haunted or domiciles to demons.

13-15% Water (hydrophobia).

16-18% Graveyards.

19-21% Ghosts/Entities.

22-24% Sewers, basements and other damp, dark places.

25-27% Confining enclosures (claustrophobia).

28-29% Blood (hematophobia).

30-32% Cats (ailurophobia).

33-35% A specific supernatural demon/monster (lesser or greater).

36-37% Reptiles, snakes and snake-like creatures (ophidiophobia).

38-40% A specific Supernatural Predator or Trickster.

41-43% Spiders and scorpions (arachnophobia).

44-46% High places (acrophobia).

47-49% Flying (by any means).

50-52% Graveyards, tombs, burial mounds, and other places of the dead.

53-55% Slimes and gooey substances.

56-58% Darkness (nyctophobia).

59-61% Succubus and other monsters with a female persona.

62-64% Open spaces (agoraphobia).

65-67% Strangers and alien beings (xenophobia).

68-70% Being alone (monophobia).

71-73% Insects (entomophobia).

74-76% Being touched (haphophobia).

77-79% Dead bodies, corpses and skeletons (any type).

80-82% Anything related with the number 13 (triskaidekaphobia).

83-85% Chimeras; any amalgamations or unnatural combination of creatures and parts, including cyborgs and shape changers.

86-87% Drugs, even medicine.

88-90% Bats and bat-like creatures (or rats or mice).

91-93% Lightning (including thunderstorms; astraphobia).

94-96% Crowds (ocholophobia).

97-98% Zombies, the undead and being turned into one.

99-00% A specific evil god, demon lord or Alien Intelligence and probably anything associated with it (cultist/worshippers, magic items, statues of it, etc.).

Note: Characters who suffer from a phobia will become terrified when the object of their fear is encountered. If the character is surrounded by friends who can talk and soothe away his fears, the person may be able to contain himself long enough to safely avoid it (01-60% chance). However, the character feels faint, nauseous, and trembles while doing so (reduce attacks/actions per round, combat bonuses, skill performance and Spd by half; speed is at full only if the character is running away from the source of his fear/phobia).

If the character is alone, already nervous, or feels threatened, he will be overcome by fear. This is *phobic panic*.

Phobic Panic: Upon reaching the breaking point, the character's mind will defend itself by responding in one of the following ways:

01-25% Pass out/fall unconscious for 2D4 minutes.

26-80% Flee/run away at top speed! Panic-stricken, the character will ignore the outcries, pleas or needs of others, including his teammates. All the terrified person can think about is escaping. The character will run and run until he is certain he has escaped the object of his fear or until he is subdued and restrained. The person will fight only if there is no other way to escape, and then only until he can get away and run.

81-00% Paralyzed with fear, the character can only whimper, sob or scream as he faces the horror. Physically, the character stands completely rigid or huddled in a corner, immobilized with fear. He can not run, fight, use skills or move in any way (no attacks per melee) until the object of the fear is removed or destroyed, or he is dragged away from it.

G.M. Note: Dealing with the supernatural will constantly send characters into scary, horrifying, bizarre and deadly situations. But it is only the most horrifying and unexpected experiences that *may* create a phobia or other insanity. Remember, the characters will be prepared and hardened to sights, concepts and creatures that might bedazzle the mind of a normal, unsuspecting person.

Random Obsession Table

01-05% **Opposite Sex:** The character either loves the opposite sex and puts that gender on a pedestal and tends to give them benefit of the doubt; or dislikes being around the opposite sex and tries to avoid them, sees them as trouble or the enemy, and assumes the worst of them.

06-10% **Secrecy:** Either prizes his secrecy above all else, or abhors even the thought of keeping a secret.

11-15% **Timeliness:** Either a fanatic about being on time or always late.

16-20% **Wealth/Money:** Either wants it or gives it away.

21-25% **High Technology:** Either loves to acquire and use it or loathes and avoids it.

26-30% **Magic and Magic Items:** Either loves to acquire and use magic or loathes and avoids it.

31-35% Specific Object/Item or Animal: Wants or hates it.

36-40% Appearance: A fashion plate or a slob.

41-45% Danger: Either loves the thrill of danger, which usually means throwing caution to the wind (the more deadly the better), or despises danger and is overly cautious; a jumpy worry wart.

46-50% Food: Covets and pays for only the finest foods and drink (complains about common or plain food; prefers not to eat it). Or eats any slop put down in front of him; the cheaper and nastier, the better.

51-55% Alcohol: Either a heavy drinker with a keen taste for the finest liquors, or a fanatical teetotaler.

56-60% Specific Person: Either desires that person's love, attention or friendship so much they will go to any lengths to impress them, or is obsessed with humiliating or bringing that person down or ruining them. Depending on their alignment, even violence would be considered. This obsession typically involves somebody the character does not really know.

61-65% Specific Supernatural Predator or Trickster. Is either fascinated by the creature and wants to observe and study it, or hates it and wants to destroy it whenever encountered.

66-70% Specific Supernatural Demon (Lesser or Greater). Is either fascinated by the creature and wants to observe and study it, or hates it and wants to destroy it whenever encountered.

71-75% Gambling: Either loves it and bets on everything even when on a losing streak, or never bets on anything and looks down upon those who do.

76-80% Sex or Romance: Loves the idea of being in love and either wants love and romance (and probably looks for love in all the wrong places), or avoids romantic entanglement.

81-85% Revenge: The character is either driven to exact revenge for injustices and wrongdoings to innocent people and teammates (especially by supernatural beings and their minions), or is extremely forgiving, lets go of the past and firmly believes lust for revenge is a potential evil in and of itself and avoids it.

86-90% Solitude: Either loves peace and quiet, and being alone to the point of growing irrationally angry and frustrated if continually bothered or interrupted, especially during quiet times, or can't stand the thought of being left alone even for short periods of time.

91-95% Crime-Busting or Monster Stomping: If a good, Unprincipled or Aberrant alignment, the character loves to be a hero and is obsessed with stomping out crime and/or monsters and evil everywhere. If an Anarchist, Miscreant or Diabolic, the character likes to think of himself as a criminal mastermind and engages in criminal activity and undermining law and order whenever he can.

96-00% Power/Leadership: Either craves power and wants to be a leader of others, or could not care less and prefers to be a follower (even if cheering throngs of people are calling out for him to lead them).

Note: Obsessions are either an intense, irrational love/desire of something or an intense hatred/loathing of it. The former is likely to motivate the obsessed person to obtain the object of his desire while the latter is likely to cause the character to avoid or destroy it. The G.M. can decide which is most appropriate under the circumstances or roll percentile dice to see which way the obsession manifests itself (50%/50% between love and hatred). Obsessive characters typically will go to almost any length to satisfy their irrational feelings.

Cures for Insanity

1. Affective Disorders & Neuroses: Therapy and counseling by a psychologist. Requires a minimum of three months of therapy with the following results:

01-29%: No effect; requires longer therapy (roll again in another three months).

30-69%: Half cured. The character feels the occasional return of the old neurosis or disorder when under stress; 01-48% chance.

70-00%: Total cure! The insanity is gone.

2. Curing Psychoses: Therapy and possible use of hypnosis and drugs are known to control mood swings, depression, schizophrenia, paranoia and stress. Treatment by a psychologist requires 4D4 months of therapy with the following results:

01-33%: No effect; requires another six months of therapy to roll again.

34-68%: Psychosis is replaced by a phobia (this could be an improvement).

69-00%: Total cure.

3. Curing Phobias and Obsessions: There is no known cure for these conditions, but prolonged or repeated exposure to the object of one's fears in a controlled environment, along with counseling, can lessen the intensity of the fear, making it less irrational and manageable (scared but can still function). Treatment by a psychologist requires 1D4 months of therapy, with the following results:

01-39%: No effect; requires 1D4 more months of therapy.

40-88%: Fear is lessened so that the character can function normally, but still does not like the object of the phobia – ugh!

89-00%: Fear is intensified so that there is a 50% likelihood that the character will become completely paralyzed until the source of the fear is removed or the person is physically removed from its location.

Addiction

The character drinks or uses drugs to get high because he *must*. He is ill, cannot tell when he's had too much, and craves booze or drugs more than anything else in the world. Though there are always "triggers" that entice the addict to get high (failure, fear, a rainy day, a sunny day, seeing others drinking, seeing a razor blade or needle, etc.), they are not the true reasons. The individual is sick. Counseling, therapy and abstinence are the only means of fighting addiction and staying clean and sober.

Personality Modification while Intoxicated

01-10% Argumentative, mean, hostile, strong; +2 to damage.

11-20% Quick temper, emotional, aggressive; +1 on initiative, -1 to parry or dodge.

21-30% Impulsive, takes risks and does foolish, potential dangerous things (for him or those around him); +1 on initiative.

31-40% Quiet, laid back, withdrawn, wants to be left alone. -4 on initiative and Perception Rolls, -3 to strike, parry, dodge, and all combat moves, -5% on all skills.

41-50% Paranoid, trusts no one, wants to be left alone.

51-60% Sobbing drunk/junkie. Sad, depressed, and overly sentimental, breaking out in tears at the drop of a hat; -5% on all skills, -3 on initiative and Perception Rolls.

61-70% Overconfident and cocky while intoxicated. May be quick to accept a challenge or try to show off; -5% on all skills and -2 on initiative and Perception Rolls, -1 to strike, parry, dodge and pull punch.

71-75% Loud and verbally belligerent; -5% on all skills and -1 on all combat moves.

76-85% Disoriented; has difficulty following movement, conversation or what's going on around him. No initiative (last to take action), no Perception, -4 to strike, parry, dodge, and perform any combat moves, reduce attacks per melee round and Spd by half, and -50% on skill performance.

86-90% Hyper, always moving, distracted, wants to dance, sing and have fun; -2 on initiative and Perception Rolls.

91-95% Hallucinations/Delirium. Reality slips into fantasy. The character goes through periods lasting 1D10 minutes where he cannot tell fantasy and hallucinations from reality. May think a monster is a person or an old friend, may think a friend is a monster, may think he is being threatened when he is not, see something frightening (and responds accordingly) when there is nothing to be afraid of, think he is someplace else in the world or in another reality, and may be influenced by suggestions and things he sees on TV or hears on the radio or in conversation, etc. ("Get down. Get down! They're bombing us! Bin Ladin's here . . . the terrorists are . . ."). -2 on all combat moves, perception cannot be trusted, and -5 to save vs Hypnotic Suggestion, mind control, illusions and other forms of mental manipulation.

96-00% Super Syndrome. Believes he/she can do anything when intoxicated. +5% on all skills when intoxicated, but -1 on Perception Rolls and all combat moves. **Note:** -10% on skills when sober, because the character believes he can't be his best unless he's been drinking or using drugs.

Totally Wasted (Staggering Drunk)

When totally wasted/drunk/higher than a kite, the character loses control of his motor functions, staggers when he walks, and can barely concentrate enough to have a semi-lucid conversation (fades out in mid-sentence, repeats the same stuff over and over, talks incoherently, mumbles, memory loss/can't find his car, etc.).

Penalties when Wasted: -75% on skill performance (and it takes 1D4 times longer to perform), no bonuses for combat, -10 on perception and initiative, and reduce the number of attacks per melee round and Spd attribute to *two*.

Withdrawal Symptoms

Addiction/Alcoholism can be cured, but requires a dedicated willingness to seek give up the substance, seek aid, abstinence from all drugs/alcohol, therapy and ongoing support (AA, NA, and so on).

First Week: -20% on all skills, no initiative or Perception bonuses, -2 to strike, parry, dodge and all other combat maneuvers, and reduce speed and the number of attacks per melee by half. Feels very sick, shaky, insecure, and agitated. 01-65% chance of going back to drinking/drugs if they are readily available.

Second Week: -10% on all skills, -2 on initiative and Perception Rolls; -1 to strike, parry, dodge, etc., reduce Spd by 20% and attacks per melee are -1. Still shaky, insecure, craves the drug of choice. 01-55% chance will fall back to drugs/drinking if the opportunity is there.

Third through Sixth Week: -1 on initiative and Perception Rolls, -5% on skill performance. Feeling strong and more secure, but also guilty for past deeds and angry at self. 01-55% chance will fall back to drugs/drinking if the opportunity is there.

The Next Six Months: Now is the ongoing battle to *stay* dry/clean of drugs and booze. It's a lot tougher than most people can ever imagine. 01-40% chance will fall back to drugs/drinking if the opportunity is there; +15% if under extreme pressure or anxiety. Roll for each pressure situation, such as near death experience (of self or friend), major failure, crucial situation relying heavily or entirely on the addict, and so on.

After Those Six Months: 01-15% chance will fall back to drugs/drinking if the opportunity is there, but +15% if under extreme pressure, and +10% if the character has stopped going to at least monthly (if not weekly or bi-weekly) meetings or therapy sessions, and +20% if the addict "tries" even one hit of a drug or drinks one glass of booze. Modifiers are accumulative. This is the way it is for the rest of his life. Roll for each pressure situations. **Note:** A character can attempt to beat an addiction, regardless of numerous past failures.

Combat Rules

The Palladium combat system is relatively simple, quick and realistic. It has been thoroughly play tested, tweaked, and improved for years with great success. It is designed to be fast-playing and easy to understand. All combat moves (strikes, parries, dodges, etc.) are resolved by rolling a *twenty-sided die* (1D20).

STEP 1: Determine Initiative

Any time opponents square off for battle, the Game Master must determine who has the initiative. In other words, who will attack first. A successful *Sneak Attack* or *Long-Range Attack* will always have initiative for that melee round (15 seconds). Otherwise, whoever *rolls highest* on a twenty-sided die will attack first. In the case of a tie, re-roll. Initiative is rolled only once per melee round. That roll will determine the pace for the entire melee (15 seconds).

STEP 2: Attacker Rolls to Strike

The next step is for the first attacker to **roll a twenty-sided die**. If the result is a four or less (counting bonuses), the attacker misses. *Any roll above a four will hit the opponent*, unless the defender can parry or dodge the attack.

Body Armor

Any type of natural (monsters and animals) or artificial body armor *will* have an A.R. (Armor Rating).

Against artificial armor, the attack roll – the roll to strike – must be higher than the A.R. to hit the actual character protected by the armor. Rolling under the A.R. strikes, but does damage only to the armor itself (subtract damage from the S.D.C. of the *armor*), not the person in the body armor. That is a good thing in that it is whittling down the armor protection, but the opponent remains uninjured, on his feet, able to strike back and do other things.

Natural A.R. applies to demons, monsters and some animals. In this case, any roll to strike that is under the creature's A.R. may hit but it does *no damage*! Only by rolling a strike that is higher than the Natural A.R. does the attack inflict damage (first to the physical S.D.C., and when the S.D.C. is gone, to the Hit Points). **For example:** Studded leather armor or a light bulletproof vest has an A.R. of 13, this means the attacker must roll 14 or higher to penetrate the armor and inflict damage directly to his foe's body (deduct damage first from the physical S.D.C. of the body, and when that is reduced to zero, deduct damage from Hit Points). In this case, a roll of 5-13 would strike, unless parried, but would only inflict damage to the body armor (reduce the S.D.C. of the armor accordingly). When all the S.D.C. of the armor is destroyed (reduced to zero), the armor is so tattered that it no longer provides any protection (no A.R. and no S.D.C.). After that point, any attacks that are five or higher will strike and do damage to the character's body, unless they are parried or dodged. A roll of 1-4 is always a miss; that's true in hand to hand and long-range combat.

A roll of 1-4 to strike is always a *miss*.

A roll of a Natural 20 is always a hit and a critical strike (double damage), unless the defender also rolls a Natural 20.

Ultimately, combat continues back and forth until one side or the other surrenders (assuming his adversary will accept a surrender and take prisoners) or is slain.

STEP 3: Defender May Parry, Dodge or Entangle

Any time an attacker rolls a successful strike to hit, the defender can choose to parry, dodge, or entangle.

Parrying can be done automatically (without using an attack) by anyone trained in any form of hand to hand combat. A parry *blocks* the attacker's strike, preventing damage from being inflicted. *For example*, a punch can be blocked by the character's hands or arms. A weapon attack (sword, axe, mace, etc.) can be parried/blocked by a shield, sword, or another object held in the defender's hand. A weapon should only be parried with another object. Trying to parry a weapon with one's hand or arm is likely to result in a failed parry and the usual amount of damage being inflicted by the weapon. Parrying a weapon bare-handed is dangerous and all such attempts are *without* benefit of the character's parry bonuses.

A parry can be performed by those with combat training without using up a melee attack/action. Characters with no hand to hand combat training lose their next melee attack every time they parry.

Defending by dodging or entangling means automatically giving up the next melee attack. **Entangle** means the character actually pins or snares an opponent's weapon(s) or arm. A **dodge** means the character physically moves out of the path of the attack. Each dodge uses up one of the character's own attacks per melee round. So constantly dodging means the defender has no opportunity to attack. Only characters with the ability to *automatic dodge* can attempt a dodge (roll to dodge like always) without using up one of their own attacks. An automatic dodge is like a parry in that regard – it can be performed without loss of a melee attack. Rare among humans, it may be an ability of a creature or demon.

Note: The defender can only defend against attacks within his *line of vision*. Attacks from the rear or which are not seen coming cannot be parried, dodged or entangled. The defender always wins ties when parrying, entangling or dodging.

STEP 4: Attacker Rolls Damage

If the roll to strike is successful, it hits and does damage. Human fisticuffs inflict the normal punch damage (typically 1D4) plus any damage bonuses from a high P.S. attribute and/or Hand to Hand Combat and Physical skills like Boxing.

If a handheld weapon is used such as a knife, club, chair, etc., the attack inflicts the weapon damage *plus* damage bonuses from hand to hand combat skills and P.S. attribute. All bonuses are cumulative, so if the character has a P.S. of 20 he adds +5 to the damage he inflicts with his weapon, punches or kicks. If he is using a weapon that is also +2 to damage, the weapon's bonus is added to the damage. And perhaps he also gains +2 from his hand to hand combat skill. Thus the total amount of potential damage inflicted in this example is the weapon, say 2D6, +9 from cumulative bonuses (x2 if a critical strike).

Critical strikes do *double damage*! Combined critical strikes, like a natural 20 and a jump attack, do triple damage. Add the damage bonus to the roll before doubling or tripling damage. A natural, unmodified 20 is always a critical strike. **Note:** A normal human punch inflicts 1D4 damage; a normal kick 1D8. W.P.s will list weapon damage.

A **pulled punch**, whether with fist or weapon, inflicts as little damage as the attacker desires (down to one point), provided he was successful to strike and rolled an 11 or better on a 1D20. A failed attempt to *pull* a punch means full damage, bonus and all, has been inflicted.

STEP 5: Defender May Attempt to Roll with Impact

If the attack is a physical impact from things like a punch, kick, club, mace, hammer, staff, thrown rock, fall, explosion, and similar, the defender can attempt to *roll with the impact*. In order to roll with the impact, the defender must roll 1D20 and *match* or better the attacker's roll to strike. Successfully rolling with impact means the character takes *half* damage! Successfully rolling with a *knockout punch* means the character takes double damage, but is NOT knocked unconscious or stunned. Rolling with a *death blow punch* results in the loss of half of all remaining S.D.C., or Hit Points if S.D.C. is less than 12. Failing to roll with impact means the character has used up one of his melee actions/attacks and still takes full damage from his attacker. Roll with impact counts as one melee action/attack.

Combat Sequence

The typical combat sequence goes like this:

Step One: Everybody rolls for initiative. The character with the highest initiative roll strikes first, the ones next in line follow in descending order.

Step Two: The one with initiative rolls to strike a particular opponent and adds in any strike bonuses he may have.

Step Three: The character under attack can attempt to roll a parry or dodge. The high roll wins. Defender always wins ties.

Step Four: If the strike successfully hits, roll for damage and deduct it from the character's S.D.C., and when S.D.C. is gone, damage is deducted from Hit Points. **Note:** If an opponent is wearing body armor, determine if the strike penetrates the armor (A.R.) and roll damage dice. Deduct damage from the armor if the roll is less than or equal to the A.R. number, or the physical body if the roll to strike is higher than the A.R. number.

Option to parry (or dodge) in hand to hand combat. If successfully parried, no damage is inflicted and the defender readies himself to counter-strike. If the parry fails and the character takes damage, he *may* opt to *roll with impact*, but to do so will count as one of his melee actions/attacks.

Step Five: Now it's the defender's time to return the attack: The character who was under attack follows Steps 2-4, striking back (roll to strike), and his opponent may try to parry or dodge, then determine whether or not damage is inflicted (and how much) and repeat the process.

One on one melee combat goes back and forward like this for the entire melee round; first one strikes and one parries, then the other strikes and so forth. The melee round ends when each character has used up all of his attacks.

Next melee round: Start again by having everybody roll for initiative (step one) and repeat steps 2-5. This continues until one set of combatants is triumphant over the other. This can be when one side or the other are all slain, surrender, are captured or flee.

Note: The description always seems to make combat *sound* more complicated than it really is. In game play it is a fast, back and forth, the first guy (the one who won initiative) strikes, the defender parries or dodges, damage is rolled if struck, and then it is the defender's turn to strike. The opponent, in turn, can try to parry or dodge (or just take the damage) and then strikes back. The defender parries, dodges or stands and takes the damage, and then strikes back. Simple.

Oh, if one fighter has *more* attacks per melee than the other guy, this teeter-totter combat continues until the one with more attacks has the advantage. At that point the one who is out of attacks can only try to parry the incoming attacks from his opponent. He may opt to dodge, but each dodge will take away one of his attacks from the *next* melee

round, leaving him in an even worse situation until soon, all he may be able to do is run and dodge, which can happen. Watch a boxing match, the boxer who is faster will throw more punches (attempts to strike) than a slower or less experienced opponent. When both combatants have used up all their attacks that melee round is over and the next one begins. A melee round lasts approximately 15 seconds in fictional game time, but can last several minutes in real, player time, especially if the player group is large.

Spreading out combat among several pairs of fighters

Most gaming groups have 3-6 players, all of whom are likely to be matched up against their own adversary at the same time. That's 3-6 pairs of fighters in the same melee round. Some Game Masters play out the entire melee combat between one set of fighters (i.e., one NPC villain vs one player character) and then move on to the next player. This can work out okay, especially since the initiative roll determines who goes first, second, third, and so on. However, I find this approach is often *anticlimactic*, dull and boring for the rest of the players waiting their turn.

Instead, I *hop* from one set of combatants to the other, trying to leave the most dramatic or decisive clash for last. This means I let the first villain and player character take a whack or two at each other (i.e., one or two melee attacks), and say something like, "okay, you guys are going at it hot and heavy," or, "you're holding your own for now." Then I turn to the next player to give him a turn, "The madman you're facing screams and charges, what do you do?" Inevitably he parries or strikes or dodges and his combat is engaged. I let two melee attacks unfold, put him on pause and turn to the next player and repeat.

This creates a sensation of *simultaneous action* for all the players. And psychologically, because each player is *waiting* for their next turn while watching the rest of the *team*, it creates a sense of anticipation, excitement and camaraderie. Likewise, if the character's teammates are doing well, it makes each individual player more anxious for his next turn to do just as well or better. If his teammates are doing poorly, it creates a sense of concern and immediacy that *he* must vanquish his foe *to help* his buddy(s). Wow, when done right, the action is pulse-pounding and even heart-stopping at pivotal intervals.

Use this pause, switch, return method along with *cliffhanger suspense* and try to build to a satisfying *climax*. For example, as one of the free player characters, having vanquished his adversary, looks on, he sees one of his teammates losing his fight. Things look bad.

The free character tells the Game Master that he is running over to help his buddy or taking aim at his buddy's opponent. The G.M. says, okay, but seems to otherwise ignore him, or says something like, "okay, you're charging over there (or taking aim), but in the meanwhile . . ."

The G.M. turns to the player whose character is under brutal attack and faring poorly. The G.M. allows another exchange between the villain/monster and the beleaguered player character; after all, one melee attack and counterattack takes only two or three seconds.

If played out right, the *free character* is shouting, "I leap at the villain," or "I strike with my sword," or "I shoot, I shoot!" But the G.M., still looking at the beleaguered character, says, "The villain, caught in a blood fever, doesn't see or hear the free character. All he can think about is finishing you off. He raises his clawed hand (or takes aim, or whatever) and . . ."

And *that's when* the G.M. turns to the free character and says, "roll to strike." Cool, huh? Very dramatic.



Of course, it should be orchestrated so that the beleaguered character still has a parry or dodge option or a chance to strike should his teammate's attack miss or not finish the villain off. Likewise, give the down and out character other options. For example, "you hit," says the G.M. to the free character. "Surprised and enraged, the villain/monster turns to face *you*" – or swings to fire a quick shot at the free character. Maybe the villain is staggered and ready to go down, but is so crazed with battle-rage he is fighting to the death. Or now the free character, surprised by how quick and, perhaps, how devastating the villain's attack on him was, is the one in trouble. Ah, but here's the coup de grace, the beleaguered character has been forgotten, giving him a *free shot* at the bad guy! An attack that might be the last blast needed to finish the fiend off, or now facing both player characters, the two finish him off together, or the villain runs away (or tries to). However it turns out, there is a sense of *camaraderie*, *drama* and *triumph* that ends in a climactic and rousing way. I've actually had the rest of the group cheer when the down and out character delivers the final blow or the bad guy runs off with his tail between his legs. It's all about pacing and presenting the action in a dynamic way.

Remember, you, as the Game Master, are much more than a referee or the voice of a faceless bad guy, you *orchestrate* everything. It's your job to set up the action to deliver the most punch. Not manipulate and force the action, but to *arrange* and *orchestrate* how it all goes down.

– Kevin Siembieda

Two against one

More often than not, two or more player characters will gang up on one superhuman opponent. Whatever the case, the "one" will find himself dividing his attacks between his multiple attackers, perhaps first striking the closest or who is doing the most damage and then the other. However, use logic, if one of the multiple attackers is doing more damage than the others, or represents the greatest threat, then the "one" may repeatedly direct all or most of his attacks at that opponent while ignoring the others.

The "one" can try to *parry* incoming attacks from as many as three adversaries, but a fourth attacker gets a free shot (no parry for the "one" on that attack). However, the "one" can only return his next attack at one of his opponents, which is why his counterattacks must, ultimately, be divided. (I'll hit the ugly demon this time – parry, parry, parry – and hit the winged monster next time.) Depending on how the battle goes, the "one's" strategy and targets may change, and at some point he may need to call for help or abandon the fight and try to run away.

Combat Terms & Moves

Attacks per Melee: Characters with no hand to hand combat training get only *one* attack/action per melee at levels 1, 6, and 12. No automatic parry or dodge and each attempt counts as one melee action. P.P. and W.P. bonuses apply to combat moves.

Characters with any kind of formal hand to hand combat training (Hand to Hand: Basic, Expert, etc.) usually start off with four attacks/action per melee round. Each specific Hand to Hand Combat skill will indicate how many attacks the character starts with. This number grows with experience.

Automatic Dodge: Certain characters and creatures are able to *automatically dodge* an attack without using up a melee attack/action. It is purely a defensive move in which the dodger bobs, weaves, bends or twists his body out of harm's way. Roll for a dodge as normal (the automatic dodge is not an "automatic" success). An automatic dodge works just like a (automatic) parry in that the act of dodging does *not* use up any attacks to perform. Bonuses to auto-dodge come from the character's P.P. attribute and any special bonus specifically for it (the

bonus, skill or enhancement will say "automatic dodge"). Unless it specifically says a character has an Automatic Dodge, he does NOT.

Attribute Bonuses: Combat and saving throw bonuses gained through physical or mental strengths that give a character an extra added degree of agility, strength, endurance, etc. (see the eight attributes).

Back Flip: The back flip involves throwing oneself backwards with the arms and shoulders, flipping the legs completely up, over, and back down on the ground into a standing position. The result is that one quickly moves backwards by a full body length. Doing a back flip counts as one melee attack/action and can be used as a dodge or for entertainment.

If used in place of a dodge, the character must roll higher than his opponent's strike roll using only the natural die roll (do not include any dodge bonuses). Failure to beat the strike means taking full damage *without a chance to Roll with Punch*. Success means avoiding the attack like a dodge.

Back Flip: Escape. If used in place of a strike (when it's the back-flipping character's turn to strike) this removes the character from combat and counts as one melee attack/action. To get within striking range, he or his opponent must close ranks (move closer) and whoever does so spends one melee action/attack doing so. A Back Flip Escape also gives the back-flipping character the initiative.

Back Flip: Attack. This is especially useful against someone attempting some kind of back strike. Once the opponent is detected in the rear, the back flip moves one back into combat range. A back flip can also be used as a combined strike against an opponent to the rear of the character. Used with either a basic kick (1D8 damage), Karate kick (2D6 damage) or a backhand strike. If striking with a back flip use only the bonus to back flip (not strike). Cannot be used with death blow or knockout/stun. This combat maneuver uses up one melee attack/action.

Blind or Being Blinded: Here are the definitive penalties and conditions for humans being blinded or fighting in absolute darkness without optical systems to see.

Penalties: Ignore all of the character's normal combat bonuses (they don't count; natural rolls only, minus the penalties) and the blind character is -10 to strike, parry and dodge, disarm, pull punch and similar combat moves! Speed is reduced by 30-50% (or should be) only because the blind character is unsure of himself and running or moving quickly is likely to cause him to stumble or trip into something and fall down (lose initiative and one melee attack/action), slam into a wall (1D6 S.D.C. damage, triple that if running) or run right into the arms of his opponent or some other danger. Obviously any skills requiring *vision* are impossible to perform.

Attacks per melee round and initiative are unchanged, but the character is lashing out wildly and guessing where his opponent is. This means the blind character has a good chance of accidentally striking a friend or innocent bystander by his wild flailing about or "blind shooting."

Body Block/Tackle: This is a combination of moves that involves a body block and a knockdown attack (counts as two melee attacks). A successful body block strike against a fellow human does 1D4 damage plus P.S. damage bonuses, and the opponent is likely to be knocked down. A successful strike always inflicts damage from a shoulder, elbow, or tucked head, unless his opponent dodges (no damage and no knockdown).

The victim who is hit can avoid being knocked down only by trying to maintain his balance and must roll percentile dice. A typical Body Block ram has a 01-50% chance of knocking an opponent down and characters with no special balancing ability must roll *above* that number of fall.

Knockdown Modifier: Add 5% to the roll the victim needs to exceed for every five points of P.S. above 20. So an attacker with a P.S. of 30 requires his opponent to roll 60% to save vs getting bowled over. Characters with a special balancing ability from a skill such as Acro-

batics or Gymnastics must roll *under* their current skill level to keep their balance (if 45% they must roll under 45, if 80% they must roll under 80). A successful maintain balance means the victim is not knocked down but loses one melee attack, and takes full damage. **Note:** Characters and creatures with Supernatural P.S. and/or greater bulk/weight, or size or speed have an increased likelihood of knocking an opponent down and inflict greater damage. These special instances are noted under each character description.

Knockdown Penalties: Being knocked down causes the character struck to lose initiative (if he had it) and one attack/action for that melee round, plus he is knocked 1D6 feet (0.3 to 1.8 m) away from where he was standing at the moment of the attack. A roll with impact can reduce damage by half, but counts as one melee action.

Body Flip/Throw: A Judo style throw or flip that uses an attacker's own momentum and leverage to "flip" or "throw" him off his feet and onto the ground. Damage is 1D6 points plus P.S. damage bonus (if any), and the victim also loses initiative (if he had it) and one melee attack. A body flip counts as one melee attack. A victim of a throw can try to *roll with impact/fall* to diminish the damage (half if successful), but other penalties are unchanged.

Combat Bonuses: All appropriate bonuses available to the character are added to the various fighting abilities such as strike, parry or dodge, as well as initiative and saving throws. High physical attributes, certain Physical skills, Weapon Proficiencies (W.P.), the occasional O.C.C. bonus, racial bonus, and genetic enhancement *may* provide one or more combat bonuses. All applicable bonuses are combined and added to the character's dice rolls. Do not combine the strike bonus with the parry bonus, and so on; each combat maneuver is considered a separate category, so only the various bonuses to strike are added to the strike roll, bonuses to parry added to the parry roll and so forth.

Critical Strike: A powerful, special or nerve shattering strike that inflicts double the usual amount of damage. Critical strike damage can be inflicted with bare hands or with a weapon.

Damage: The following are some of the typical damage amounts inflicted by common types of physical combat attacks. Remember to add any applicable damage bonus for P.S. attributes 16 and higher.

Hand Strikes:

Backhand Strike (average): 1D4

Backhand Strike (martial arts): 1D6

Body Flip: 1D6

Human Fist/Punch: 1D4

Karate/Martial Arts Strike/Punch: 2D4

Elbow/Forearm: 1D6

Power Punch: Does double damage, plus any other damage bonuses, but counts as two melee attacks. Applicable to all hand strikes.

Foot Strikes:

Kick Attack (basic/average): 1D8 (or 2D4)

Karate Kick Attack: 2D6

Leap Kick: 3D8, but counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Knee: 1D6

Backward Sweep: No damage, but knocks down opponent if strike is successful (he loses one melee action and initiative).

Trip/Leg Hook: No damage, but knocks down opponent if the strike is successful (he loses one melee action and initiative).

Power Kick: Does double damage, but counts as two melee attacks and cannot be done with a Leap Kick.

Miscellaneous:

Thrown/Dropped Small Objects: 1D4 or 1D6

Thrown/Dropped Large Objects: 3D6 per 100 lbs (45 kg) +10 per 40 feet (12.2 m).

Falling: 1D6 damage per 10 feet (3 m).

Collision: 2D4 per 10 mph (16 km).

Death Blow: A special attack designed to kill an opponent in one or two strikes! This attack is often limited in hand to hand combat to the roll of a "Natural" (no bonuses apply) high strike number; i.e. death blow on a Natural 18-20. Whenever the words "death blow" are presented without limitation, the character can use a death strike whenever he desires, however, such a devastating attack counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Human vs Human: Against humans and natural creatures, the attack does double the normal damage, including P.S. bonuses, direct to Hit Points. This attack can be used with punches and kicks or hand-held weapons such as swords, clubs, etc. It is *not* applicable to guns and does not work through armor; the armor must be removed or penetrated. **Note:** Does not work on ghosts, spirits, ethereal beings, energy beings or Astral Travelers/Beings, nor robots and other machines.

Human vs Supernatural Beings: Pretty much the same as above, only a successful "death blow" is so devastating to the creature's body that it cannot bio-regenerate injury from a death blow for 1D4 hours!

Disarm: The act of disarming is simply getting rid of the opponent's weapon; it does no damage. It can be used as a defensive move in place of a dodge or parry, or can be done as an attack/strike.

The disarm move is a strike, hold or grappling maneuver that causes an opponent to drop his weapon or whatever he's holding. Counts as one melee attack/action. Disarm does not give the weapon to the character making the disarm move. True, the item is forced out of the victim's grasp, but it is either knocked away or falls to the ground.

Typically an opponent is disarmed on a roll of a Natural 19 or 20 when used as a defensive move. Roll a disarming strike to attack as usual – high roll wins. A failed disarming attack does no damage and means one's opponent remains armed, is probably mad, and ready to strike.

Dodge: A character dodges by *moving* out of the way of the attack. Dodging always takes up one attack/action per melee round. To dodge, the defender must roll equal to or higher than the attacker's strike roll on a twenty-sided die.

Entangle: A defender can attempt to trap the weapon or arm of an attacker. This is done instead of parrying or dodging, and takes up one attack per melee. An entangle is successful if the defender rolls above the attacker's strike roll. It takes one attack and a roll to entangle to keep an opponent's arm or weapon entangled every melee round. In order to get free, the entangled opponent must roll a dodge against the entangle roll.

Hand to Hand Combat: Fighting skills that provide the character with attacks per melee, bonuses, and techniques. Characters without combat training have only one attack per melee and have no automatic chance to parry.

Hit Points: This is the number of points of damage a character can take before dying. Characters don't lose Hit Points until their S.D.C. is down to zero. A character's base Hit Points is the P.E. attribute plus 1D6. Another 1D6 of Hit Points is gained every time the character advances an experience level. Lost Hit Points are not recovered without medical attention and recuperation.

Holds: Using both hands, the attacker grabs on to some part of the opponent's body and attempts to immobilize him. If the strike is successful, then the victim is helpless until released. Holds do no damage. Neither the attacker nor the victim can attack, parry or dodge while the hold is working. It's easy for the attacker to hold the victim so that some third character can attack unopposed or attack from the rear.

Getting out of a hold requires agility. Both the victim and attacker roll twenty-sided dice and add in their P.P. attribute scores. The person doing the hold also gets to add in all his bonuses to hold and from the P.P. attribute (if any). High roll wins! If the attacker wins, then the hold continues. If the victim wins, then the hold is released and combat can continue.

Types of holds include:

Arm Hold: This involves twisting the arm around to the victim's back. Any items in the hand of the arm being held can be easily removed.

Leg Hold: The victim is on the ground with his leg held up. There's no way for him to get up until the hold is released.

Body Hold: Any number of wrestling holds. The victim can be held on the ground or in a standing position.

Neck Hold: The victim is held around the neck from behind. This leaves the victim totally vulnerable to attacks from any other character.

Horror Factor (HF): Some creatures are so alien, monstrous-looking and frightening, that they exude what is called a Horror Factor. See the Horror Factor description under *Psychic Combat* for a complete description.

Initiative: Whoever gets to attack first is considered to have the initiative and is the "attacker." Initiative is automatic in sneak attacks and long-range attacks. In most other cases, each opponent rolls a twenty-sided, highest roll gets the initiative. Rolling for initiative takes place at the beginning of each melee round of combat.

Karate Kick Attack: A special move and type of kick attack that is designed to do more damage than an ordinary kick. A typical Karate Kick does 2D6 damage (+P.S. damage bonus if any), a knee attack 1D6. Counts as one melee attack. Anyone trained in hand to hand combat can do a basic kick or knee attack, but only characters with Hand to Hand: Commando, Expert or Martial Arts can perform a Karate Kick. Commando and Martial Arts can also perform the other Foot Strikes (see *Damage* earlier). Also see Leap Kick.

Karate Punch/Strike: A martial arts strike that does 2D4 damage.

Kick Attack: This is the simple act of using one's legs and feet to kick an opponent. A typical Kick does 1D8 damage. Anyone can try to kick an opponent.

Leap Kick: A Leap Kick is performed by the character putting all of his energy into what is in effect a power kick by leaping completely off the ground and attempting to kick an opponent with everything he can muster. A typical Leap Kick does 3D8 damage (+P.S. damage bonus if any), but counts as two melee attacks/actions. Only characters with Hand to Hand: Commando or Martial Arts can perform a Leap Kick and other Foot Strikes (see *Damage* earlier).

Knockdown: Getting knocked down, falling or getting struck by a fast, heavy vehicle, or explosion, or falling or getting knocked back dozens of yards/meters (30 feet/9 m or more) will cause the character to take damage from the force of the impact. While most armors are padded, they only provide so much protection.

Damage: Inflicts 1D6 Hit Point/S.D.C. damage for every 20 feet (6 m) one falls or is knocked back. And figure 1D6 points of damage for every 20 S.D.C. in an explosion. Round down. If the fall/knock back is 100 feet (30.5 m) or more, there is a 01-65% chance of being temporarily knocked out for 1D6 melee rounds.

Penalties: In ALL cases, when a character is knocked down or off his feet he automatically loses initiative and one melee attack/action. This is true even if the character is knocked down right where he was standing or only a few feet/meters.

Knockout/Stun: Anyone hit by a knockout or stun attack will be temporarily incapacitated. The victim is not necessarily unconscious, just dazed – reduce attacks per melee to one and no combat bonuses for a stunned/dazed character for 1D4 melee rounds.

Long-Range Attack or Ranged Attack: An attack done at a distance using a long-range weapon or power. Provided the attacker is not seen, the defender automatically loses initiative and may not dodge the first attack that melee round from a long-range attack.

Melee or Melee Round: Exactly 15 seconds. The segment of time combatants have to strike, counter and/or return strike. Generally, playing characters have two or more attacks per melee.

Miss: A roll of 1-4 to strike (after bonuses) is always a miss. A roll of one misses regardless of bonuses.

Multiple Attackers: Takes place when an opponent is faced by more than one attacker. Characters with hand to hand combat skills can attempt to parry any attacks within their line of sight, from up to three attackers. The defender from multiple attackers can strike at only one target at a time Paired Weapons for a rare exception).

Natural Twenty: This is the result of 20 when rolling a twenty-sided die. A strike with a Natural Twenty will always be a critical strike. If someone with a strike bonus of +2 rolls an 18, then they have an attack roll of 18 plus unnatural, bonus modification; NOT a Natural Twenty, and it is not a critical strike. A Natural Twenty beats all other rolls and can only be parried or dodged by another Natural Twenty.

Paired Weapons: Certain kinds of weapons, such as sais, nunchaku, daisho, knives, clubs and swords, can be used as paired weapons. Users of paired weapons can strike and parry simultaneously, can do twin strikes against a single target or against a pair of targets, and can parry two different opponents at the same time. In other words, combatants skilled in paired weapons often can do two actions for every one of their melee attacks (i.e. strike and parry). However, a twin, simultaneous strike with both weapons means losing the automatic parry and leaves the character open to his opponent's next attack without benefit of a parry (dodge is optional but uses up a melee action). Also see *W.P. Paired Weapons*.

Parry: A defender can attempt to parry most physical attacks. This is done by blocking the attacker's blow with a weapon or hand. Characters trained in hand to hand combat can parry without losing melee attacks. Bullets and energy attacks cannot be parried!

Power Punch: A haymaker thrown with everything the character has, his every last ounce of strength. A power punch ALWAYS counts as two melee actions. A power kick can also be done. For characters with normal P.S., it does double damage in Hit Points and/or S.D.C. (normal punch damage of 1D4 times two plus any possible P.S. or Hand to Hand Combat damage bonus on top of that). Characters with extraordinary augmented P.S. or Supernatural Strength clearly indicate the damage inflicted in the listings presented at the beginning of this section.

Punch: A normal human punch does 1D4 damage. A karate style punch or chop does 2D4 damage. A power punch does double damage. In all cases, include any P.S. attribute bonus (for P.S. 16 and higher) as well as any damage bonuses from a Hand to Hand Combat skill, or special powers.

Pull Punch: The ability to control the force of a hand to hand attack, whether it be a punch, kick or with a hand weapon. Usually used to reduce the blow to less than killing force. The character can choose to do half damage, quarter damage, a single point or no damage at all. A character must declare a pulled punch, and the player must roll 11 or better on a twenty-sided die (1D20) to successfully pull his punch. A failed roll to pull means full damage is accidentally inflicted.

Roll with Impact: Hand to hand combat fighters can reduce the damage from physical blows and falls by rolling with the force of the impact. If the defender is successful, then only *half damage* is taken from the attack. Roll with punch/fall does not work against energy blasts, bullets, fire, blade weapons, psionics, magic or radiation. Victims must roll higher than the attacker's roll. Falling characters must roll a 14 or higher, on a twenty-sided die, to roll with the fall.

Saving Throws: Occasionally, characters must roll to save against exotic attacks like poison, gas, disease, drugs, etc.

Curses: 15 or better.

Disease: 14 or better.

Lethal Poison: 14 or better.

Non-Lethal Poison: 16 or better.

Harmful Drugs: 15 or better.

Acids: No save possible – dodge!

Insanity: 12 or better (sometimes higher).

Magic: 12 or better to save vs basic spell magic; 16 or better to save vs

ritual magic. The save against magic will be higher (13, 14, 15, and even 16) if the spell caster is high level.

Psionics: 10 or better for most P.C.C.s/Master Psychics.

12 for Major & Minor Psychics (like the Latent).

15 for ordinary people and animals.

S.D.C.: This stands for *Structural Damage Capacity*, which is the amount of damage an object can absorb before breaking. Living creatures also have S.D.C.; it represents their physical resistance to damage. All the S.D.C. of a living thing must be reduced to zero before the Hit Points can be affected by normal attacks.

Simultaneous Attack: Instead of defending with a parry, dodge or entangle, a character can choose to do a simultaneous attack. In this case, the character does not defend (“Go ahead, hit me; I can take it!”) and simply attacks in response. The advantage of a simultaneous attack is that neither opponent can parry, dodge or entangle. In all probability, both will take damage. Exception: An opponent skilled with Paired Weapons can engage in simultaneous attack (with one weapon) AND parry (with the other), OR, both the paired weapons can be used to strike with NO parry.

Sneak Attack: An attacker may lie in wait (ambush), attack from behind, or sneak up (Prowl) on an opponent. If the foe does not discover the attacker, then the sneak attack is successful. The sneak attacker always has initiative, and the defender is not able to parry or dodge the sneak attack.

Strike: Anyone attempting to hit an opponent must roll to strike. As with all combat rolls, a roll to strike is made with a twenty-sided die.

Throw: Simply, this means throwing a weapon or object. Rolling to throw is exactly the same as rolling to strike, except that there are different bonuses per weapon type. See Weapon Proficiency.

Using Weapons: A character may use *any* type of weapon from a gun to a knife or a rock, but gets no combat bonuses, such as strike or parry, unless he has a *Weapon Proficiency (W.P.)* in that particular weapon. This applies to modern and ancient weapons.

Hand to Hand Combat

These are the standard level by level tables that present the *accumulative bonuses* offered by the common forms of hand to hand fighting in the **BTS-2** setting. When characters advance a level, the player can come to this section to see what new bonuses apply to the character.

Note: ALL bonuses are accumulative. That means each new level offers new bonuses and combat capabilities that are *added* to those previously acquired. Certain Hand to Hand fighting styles also impart bonuses to one’s physical attributes as well as perfection of the fighting form. Also see Boxing and Wrestling in the *Skill* section.

Number of attacks per melee: To simplify matters, each type of Hand to Hand Combat indicates the number of attacks the character starts with, typically four.

Characters with

No Hand to Hand Combat Skill

Level 1: Starts with one hand to hand attack per melee round. This reflects the character’s pitiful fighting skills.

HOWEVER, the character gets *TWO non-combat melee actions* at first level. A *non-combat action* involves some activity other than fighting (operating a machine, driving, locking a door, running, hiding, helping others, etc.).

Level 3: +1 attack per melee round and +1 to dodge. +1 *non-combat melee action*.

Level 6: +2 *non-combat melee actions*.

Level 9: +1 attack per melee round, for a total of three “attacks” per round (each attack counts as two *melee actions* for this character). +1 *non-combat melee action* for a total of six *melee “actions.”* That’s it.

Hand to Hand: Basic

This is an elementary form of hand to hand combat training. Though it hardly stacks up against some of the more advanced forms of fighting, one who has trained in Hand to Hand: Basic still fights with combat skill compared to the simple, everyday folk without training.

Note: Basic combat training enables the character to use any basic/common attacks, including Punch, Elbow, Kick, Knee, Disarm, Dodge, Entangle, Body Block/Tackle, Body Flip/Throw, Roll with Impact, Power Punch (but not a Power Kick) and Pull Punch – but *no* special moves or martial art attacks such as Automatic Dodge, Back Flip, Holds, Karate Punches, Leap Kick or other moves.

Level 1: Starts with four attacks/actions per melee round; +2 to pull punch and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Level 2: +2 to parry and dodge.

Level 3: Kick attack does 1D8 points of damage.

Level 4: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 5: +1 to strike and disarm.

Level 6: Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20.

Level 7: +2 to damage.

Level 8: Judo-style body flip/throw; does 1D6 damage, and victim loses initiative and one attack.

Level 9: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 10: +2 to pull punch and +2 to roll with impact/punch/fall.

Level 11: +1 to parry and dodge.

Level 12: +1 to strike.

Level 13: Critical strike or knockout from behind.

Level 14: +2 to damage.

Level 15: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Hand to Hand: Expert

This is the fighting style taught to police officers, soldiers, bodyguards, thieves, and anybody else who will be expected to live by violence. While it lacks the mastery of the Martial Arts, an Expert fighter knows how to scrap quickly and efficiently. At high levels, especially, those with this skill can often hold their own against dedicated masters of the martial arts.

Note: Expert combat training enables the character to use any basic/common attacks, including Punch, Elbow, Kick, Knee, Disarm, Dodge, Entangle, Body Block/Tackle, Body Flip/Throw, Roll with Impact, Power Punch, Power Kick, and Pull Punch and even some martial arts moves (as noted below) – but unless noted below the character does *not* have special moves or martial art attacks such as Automatic Dodge, Back Flip, Holds, Karate Punches, Leap Kick or other moves.

Level 1: Starts with four attacks/actions per melee; kick attack 1D8 damage, +2 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with punch, fall or impact.

Level 2: +3 to parry and dodge, and +1 to pull punch.

Level 3: +2 to strike, +2 to disarm, and can perform a Karate Punch.

Level 4: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 5: Can perform a Karate Kick, does 2D6 damage.

Level 6: Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20.

Level 7: W.P. Paired Weapons and backhand strike (average, does 1D4 damage).

Level 8: Body flip/throw; does 1D6 damage, and victim loses initiative and one attack.

Level 9: +1 additional attack/action per melee and +1 to disarm.

Level 10: +3 to damage.

Level 11: Knockout/stun on an unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20.

Level 12: +2 to parry and dodge.

Level 13: Critical strike or knockout from behind (triple damage).

Level 14: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 15: Death blow on a roll of Natural 20.

Hand to Hand: Martial Arts

A form of martial arts that takes and mixes techniques from many different sources.

Note: Martial arts combat training enables the character to use any basic/common attacks, including Punch, Elbow, Kick, Knee, Disarm, Dodge, Entangle, Body Block/Tackle, Body Flip/Throw, Roll with Impact, Power Punch, Power Kick, and Pull Punch as well as the martial arts moves noted below.

Level 1: Starts with four attacks/actions per melee; +3 to pull punch and +3 to roll with impact/punch/fall, and body flip/throw; does 1D6 damage, victim loses initiative and one attack.

Level 2: +3 to parry and dodge; +2 to strike, and may perform Karate and any *hand* strike/punch.

Level 3: +1 on initiative, and may perform a Karate-style kick (does 2D6 damage) and any foot strike except leap kick.

Level 4: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 5: Leap kick (3D8 damage, but counts as two melee attacks), and +2 to entangle.

Level 6: Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20.

Level 7: W.P. Paired Weapons, can perform Holds and is +2 to disarm.

Level 8: Back flip and back flip escape.

Level 9: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 10: Back flip attack and +2 to disarm.

Level 11: +4 to damage and +1 on initiative.

Level 12: +2 to parry and dodge.

Level 13: Knockout/stun on an unmodified roll of 18, 19 or 20.

Level 14: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 15: Death blow on a roll of a Natural 20.

Hand to Hand: Assassin

This style of fighting is a specialized science of killing generally taught by secret organizations such as organized crime cartels, secret government "wet working" bureaus, military black ops, and so on.

Note: Assassin combat training enables the character to use any basic/common attacks, including Punch, Elbow, Kick, Knee, Disarm, Dodge, Entangle, Body Block/Tackle, Body Flip/Throw, Roll with Impact, Power Punch, Power Kick, and Pull Punch and even many martial art moves (as noted below) – but unless noted below the character does *not* have special martial art moves.

Level 1: Starts with three attacks/actions per melee round. +2 to strike. W.P. Paired Weapons.

Level 2: +1 on initiative and +2 additional attacks/actions per melee round.

Level 3: Karate Punch (2D4 damage), +3 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact/punch/fall.

Level 4: Karate Kick (2D6 damage), +4 to damage on all physical attacks, and +1 on initiative.

Level 5: +1 additional attack/action per melee round and +1 to strike with a thrown weapon.

Level 6: +3 to parry/dodge, +2 to entangle and backhand strike (martial arts 1D6).

Level 7: Knockout/stun on an unmodified roll of 17-20 and leap kick (3D8 damage, but counts as two melee attacks).

Level 8: +1 additional attack/action per melee round, +1 to strike with guns, and +1 on initiative.

Level 9: +1 on initiative and can perform back flip.

Level 10: Critical strike on an unmodified roll of 19 or 20.

Level 11: +2 to strike in hand to hand, +1 to strike with a thrown weapon and with guns, and can perform back flip attack.

Level 12: +2 to pull punch and Death blow on a roll of a Natural 19 or 20.

Level 13: +1 additional attack/action per melee round.

Level 14: +2 to damage and can perform Holds.

Level 15: +2 to strike in hand to hand and +1 to strike with guns.

Hand to Hand: Commando

This style of combat is a quick and dirty form of martial arts typically available only to the members of the military, and even then only to special operation teams such as Commandos, Navy Seals, Special Forces and Military Specialists.

Note: Commando combat training enables the character to use any basic/common attacks, including Punch, Elbow, Kick, Knee, Disarm, Dodge, Entangle, Body Block/Tackle, Body Flip/Throw, Roll with Impact, Power Punch, Power Kick, and Pull Punch and even many martial arts moves (as noted below) – but unless noted below the character does *not* have special martial art moves.

Level 1: Starts with four attacks/actions per melee round, W.P. Paired Weapons, body flip/throw, body block/tackle and +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Level 2: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +3 to roll with punch/fall/impact, and +3 to pull punch. Backward sweep kick, used only against opponents coming up behind the character. Does no damage; it is purely a knockdown attack (same penalties as body flip) but cannot be parried (an opponent can try to dodge it but is -2 to do so).

Level 3: +1 on initiative, +1 to disarm, and Karate punch/strike (does 2D4 damage).

Level 4: +1 additional attack/action per melee and Karate kick (does 2D6). The karate-style kick starts with bringing the knee, folded, up to chest level, then the foot is completely extended.

Level 5: +2 to automatic dodge and all foot strikes.

Level 6: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, parry and dodge, and +1 to body flip/throw.

Level 7: +2 to damage, +1 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to disarm, +1 to automatic dodge and +2 to pull punch.

Level 8: +1 additional attack per melee, jump kick, +2 to body flip/throw, and +1 to roll with punch/fall/impact.

Level 9: Death blow on a Natural 18-20! +2 to pull punch.

Level 10: +2 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 on initiative and +1 to strike.

Level 11: +1 to disarm, +1 to pull punch and +2 to body flip/throw.

Level 12: +2 to damage, +1 to parry and dodge, +2 to automatic dodge.

Level 13: +1 additional attack/action per melee.

Level 14: Can perform holds and is +1 on initiative.

Level 15: Critical strike on a Natural 17-20.



Ranged Combat

The following are new, simplified rules involving *guns* and other *modern weapons*. Though a version of these rules first appeared in the sci-fi RPG, *Splicers™*, they were developed for *BTS-2*. These rules are fun, fast and easy to use while reasonably simulating gunplay.

Modern Weapon Proficiency (W.P.)

There is more to shooting a revolver, pistol, rifle and other weapons, than pointing and squeezing the trigger. Even taking careful aim requires practice with the weapon, and different categories of weapons have different applications, quirks and considerations one needs to know to get the optimum performance out of them. A Modern Weapon Proficiency in a particular type of weapon gives the character a good understanding of all of these things, at least in that particular type of weapon. The character will know how to handle the weapon safely and how to use and reload it, disassemble, unjam, clean and otherwise maintain the weapon. He also knows the basic specifications/capabilities of the weapon, such as the type of ammunition it takes, maximum effective range, approximate damage, special accessories for the weapon (gun sights, silencers, etc.), and the weapon's quirks, strengths and weaknesses.

The character has also had hours (perhaps years) of training with the weapon and continues to work out with the weapon on a regular basis. This means target practice and practical experience with it in the field and, as a result, he has a good *feel* for the weapon; its weight, its kick when fired, the sound of gunfire, and performance/exactly what it can do. A character with a Modern W.P. can make aimed and "Called Shots" (aimed at a specific location within a larger target, such as shooting a gun out of an opponent's hands, shooting the hand, shooting an antenna, or tire, or whatever). His penalties are also *less* when shooting *bursts* or *wild*.

No Weapon Proficiency (W.P.)

Anybody who does not have a W.P. in a particular weapon type *CAN* pick up a gun and use it, but does so without benefit of any bo-

nuses. The bonuses that follow do not apply to this unskilled character, but a weapon can still be deadly in his hands. P.P. attribute bonuses and Hand to Hand combat bonuses do *NOT* apply to modern weapons.

Furthermore, the untrained shooter does *not* know how to reload or clean the weapon or anything about ammunition, the gun's kick, how to use a gun sight to aim accurately, or anything about guns or gun safety – all he can do is pick it up, aim as best he can and pull the trigger. **Note:** A character with no gun proficiency rolls 1D20 with *no* bonuses to strike, can *NOT* make an *aimed shot* or a *Called Shot* and suffers a penalty of -3 to strike with burst attacks, -5 to strike when shooting a machine-gun or other heavy weapon, and -6 when shooting wild.

Traditional Guns

Any character in *Beyond the Supernatural™* can use guns, but many may not have the desire, interest or training to use them. Remember, although any character may use a gun, but without a W.P. the character has *no* bonus to strike and may have no idea how to reload the weapon once its ammunition payload is spent.

Physical oriented P.C.C.s and combat oriented occupations may provide one or more W.P.s in modern weapons, otherwise the character must select a weapon skill (W.P.) as one of his *Elective* or *Secondary* skills.

Note: See *Skill Descriptions: W.P. Modern Weapons* for complete descriptions, damage, range and details.

W.P. Handguns: A familiarity with all types of handguns including revolvers and pistols. W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14.

W.P. Rifles: A familiarity with the very accurate, single shot bolt-action style of rifles used for hunting and sniping, and automatic and semi-automatic, military assault rifles like the M-16 and AK-47. W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13.

W.P. Shotgun: A familiarity with the classic double-barrel shotgun and police and military versions of shotguns with ammo drums. W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 10 and 14.

W.P. Submachine-Gun: A familiarity with small arms automatic weapons like the Uzi. W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

W.P. Heavy Military Weapons: Familiarity with military hardware, including grenade launchers, mortars, machine-guns, and mini-guns. **W.P. Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 10 and 14.

W.P. Military Flamethrowers: Familiarity with different types of flame casting weapons used by the military and mercenaries. **W.P. Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 2, 5, 10 and 15.

Weapon Modifiers

Bonuses & Penalties Depending on Circumstance

To shoot something the attacker must roll 1D20 and needs an 8 or higher to strike. HOWEVER, the shooter may also have *bonuses* to hit from Weapon Proficiency skills and *penalties* from conditions and circumstances.

Bonuses: The only bonuses that apply to using guns and other ranged weapons are the specific *Weapon Proficiency*, *Sniping skill bonus* if the character has that skill, any applicable bonus from the weapon itself, and the ones that follow . . .

Aimed Shot Bonus: Only a single shot can be accurately "aimed" (no bursts or shooting wild). The skilled shooter is +2 to strike, but the attack counts as two melee attacks. This applies to a single shot fired from a revolver, pistol, bolt-action rifle, semi-automatic rifle, shotgun and grenade launcher. **Note:** An "aimed shot" can only be tried with a single "sniper-style" shot, not a burst or when shooting wild.

A "Called Shot" target specification. This is an aimed shot that homes in on a specific part of a larger target, such as a bull's-eye, an opponent's head, hand, gun, radio, radio antenna, sensor cluster, spotlight, tires, etc., but counts as two melee attacks.

To make a "Called Shot," the player must "call" or "announce" his character's intention; i.e. "I'm going to shoot the gun from his hand," aim and shoot. A carefully *aimed and Called Shot* gets the benefit of the +2 bonus to aim but counts as *three melee attacks/actions*. On the other hand, a quickly aimed Called Shot only counts as two melee attacks, but does not count as a true aimed shot and does NOT get the +2 bonus to strike.

Penalties on a Called Shot: Furthermore, a bull's-eye or any small target is difficult to shoot, and even with an aimed and/or Called Shot, the shooter suffers a penalty of -3 or -4 to strike (sometimes more depending on the target). **Note:** A "Called Shot" can only be tried with a single "sniper-style" shot, not a burst or when shooting wild.

Rolling a Natural Twenty to Strike always hits its target and does double damage (critical strike). The only way it can miss is if the defender rolls a Natural Twenty to dodge!

Single Shot: The standard, non-Aimed, non-Burst, single firing of a ranged weapon counts as one melee attack. No additional bonuses or penalties apply, beyond those gained from W.P. skills and situational modifiers below.

Penalties

Penalties are *accumulative*, so if a character with W.P. Submachine-Gun was firing a burst weapon and shooting wild, he'd be firing the burst weapon at half his usual bonuses as well as suffering a penalty of -6 to strike for shooting wild!

Shooting Blind: -10 to strike what you cannot see, including shooting into ground cover without actually seeing a specific target, and firing around corners without looking.

Shooting Bursts: Automatic firing, or bursts, are not intended for accuracy: reduce the shooter's normal W.P. bonuses to strike by half. If the character does not have a W.P. for the weapon he is -3 to strike.

Shooting Wild: Has a penalty of -6 to strike and applies even to trained weapons experts when the character is terrified, angry/enraged, panicked, off balance, drunk, shooting from a moving vehicle/plat-

form/horseback, spraying an area, shooting while under heavy fire himself, and while running, leaping, dodging, falling or hanging upside down.

Shooting at a Moving Target: -1 to strike someone running (under 20 mph/32 km), -1 to strike for each additional 50 mph (80 km) of speed the target is traveling, and an additional -1 to strike if the target is taking evasive action (zig-zag, leaping behind cover, etc.).

Shooting at Someone Behind Cover: If the target is completely covered/concealed there is no hope of hitting him from a distance, and the shooter will need to find a different vantage point where he can see the character or move in on the place of protection and concealment. If the target is hiding but part of him/it can be seen or if the target periodically pops its head or arm out to shoot back, curse or peek out, the shooter must make a *Called Shot* to shoot him/it and either shoot what little is seen or wait until he pops into the open for a couple of seconds.

Shooting Beyond the Effective Range: One may attempt a shot that is as much as 30% farther than the Maximum Effective Range of any given weapon, but the shooter suffers a penalty of -5 to strike.

A Character's P.P. Bonuses do NOT count when shooting a gun.

Dodging Bullets & Energy Blasts

A character may try to dodge gunfire and energy beams on the condition he knows they are coming and he can see his attacker.

The only applicable bonuses for dodging gunfire or energy beams (from monsters or magic) are the character's P.P. attribute bonus and any O.C.C. bonus to dodge. The defender trying to dodge must match or better the shooter's roll to strike to make a successful dodge.

Dodging Penalties:

-10 to dodge at point-blank range; within 10 feet (3 m) of the shooter.

-5 to dodge at close range, within 50 feet (15.2 m) of the shooter.

Quick Reference – Bonuses & Penalties

All Ranged Attacks: Requires a roll of 8 to strike (including W.P. & Sniping bonuses).

Aimed Shot: +2 to strike (takes 2 attacks).

Called Shot: No bonus, but enables the character to get a bead on very small or difficult specific targets; counts as two melee attacks (possible penalties for small targets).

"Aimed" Called Shot: +2 to strike, but can target very small, specific items and areas (takes *three* attacks; possible penalties for small targets).

Shooting Blind: -10 to strike.

Shooting Bursts: Strike bonuses reduced by ½ (-3 to strike without W.P.).

Shooting Wild: -6 to strike.

Shooting 30% Beyond Normal Range: -5 to strike.

Target is Moving: -1 to strike, -1 additional per 50 mph (80 km) beyond 20 mph (32 km), and -1 for evasive action.

Target is Behind Cover: Requires Called Shot, impossible if complete cover.

Dodging gunfire, within 10 feet (3 m): -10 to dodge.

Dodging gunfire, within 50 feet (15.2 m): -5 to dodge.

Gun Terms

Attacks per Melee: Each individual shot/bullet fired counts as one melee attack. Firing a short burst also counts as one melee attack, but is less accurate. Long bursts and bursts from certain weapons will be indicated in the W.P. description and may count as two (sometimes more) attacks. Thus, if the character has five attacks per melee round, he can

shoot five single bullets or short bursts, or two long bursts and one single shot or short burst. If firing a machine-gun, only two short bursts and one attack with a different weapon or one other type of action is possible. (Note: For energy weapons a "pulse" is typically the equivalent of a short burst and counts as one melee attack, but suffers the usual burst penalty; reduce the bonus to strike by half.)

Damage: The amount of S.D.C./Hit Point damage the weapon inflicts from a single round/bullet and/or short burst.

Range: This is the effective range the weapon can be fired with any measure of accuracy.

Main Body: The "main body" of vehicles and giant creatures is typically the largest area of body mass offered by the target. On people/humanoid creatures that is the upper torso (chest and waist). The main body of an automobile is the large body mass that covers the frame. Parts not considered to be part of the main body include the tires/wheels, legs, arms, hands, sensor cluster, headlights, etc. To strike something other than the main body, the attacker must make a "Called Shot," or roll a *Natural Twenty*. (A Natural 20 always hits its mark, unless an opponent attempting to dodge also rolls a Natural 20.)

Payload: This is how many shots the weapon can fire calculated by how much ammunition the weapon holds before the ammo clip is empty and must be reloaded. "Unlimited" means the weapon draws from an unconventional source such as magic (or in a futuristic setting, a renewable power source or nuclear battery, etc.). Conventional weapons have a finite payload and once all available ammunition is fired, the weapon is useless until more ammo can be acquired.

Weapons and the Player Characters

Guns kill.

That's what they are designed to do. That means they are dangerous and deadly. The S.D.C. rules are designed to mitigate damage and injury to some degree ("Tom, you're bleeding." "Ah, it's nothing, really.") but it does not make the character superhuman or invincible, nor guns any less dangerous. For every amazing story of a real life person who takes eight or ten slugs to the body and still manages to drive himself to the hospital, there are 10,000 incidents where one or two bullets killed or severely injured the victim. That means the use of firearms in the *BTS-2* setting should be done judiciously. Introducing a gun into a situation ratchets up the seriousness and danger.

Careless or panicked use of firearms can hurt or kill innocent bystanders or teammates, damage or destroy evidence and property, and get the quick attention of the authorities. Nothing draws the police to respond faster than a 911 call that "gunfire" can be heard (especially a lot of it), or that an individual "has a gun." Furthermore, weapons and ammunition may be traced back to the character who owns or used the weapon.

Players need to remember this is the age of *CSI*. Advances in forensics, DNA, fingerprint techniques and computer databases make it that much easier for forensic scientists, police and private investigators to identify and track down individuals involved in a crime or incident. While the real world is *not* as resourceful, diligent or expedient as television's portrayal of *Crime Scene Investigation*, *CSI* agents, techniques and resources are real, and are employed by law enforcement, military, CIA and national security departments. Crime scenes that involve the discharge of weapons and/or murder, multiple shootings, terrorism, kidnapping, hostages, arson, the bizarre, and anything "high profile" will involve extensive crime scene investigation and forensic evidence gathering. Fingerprints, blood, fibers from clothing, shell casings (which may have fingerprints that could be traced to the shooter and certainly markings from having been fired that can be traced to the actual weapon if it is recovered), and other "trace and forensic evidence" will be gathered, and there is a good chance that they will be traced, or later linked, to the characters involved. Players need to have their characters think like detectives or police investigators themselves, and that in-

cludes the evidence *they may leave behind*. Evidence that might come back to haunt them. Guns and ammunition are two such bits of potential evidence.

Along these lines, the modern cities of most countries around the world (some third world nations being a *possible* exception) do NOT allow their citizens to carry concealed weapons (i.e., handguns, switchblades, etc.) or own larger ordnance than submachine-guns or rifles. Fully automatic assault rifles, rocket launchers, hand grenades, and military ordnance are *illegal*. Even a strung bow and arrow or unsheathed sword, spear or any obvious weapon is illegal to carry on the street or in public places. Most cities don't even allow the discharge of firearms in one's own backyard even if the backyard is several acres. The story is different in the country where people, homes, and property are much more spread apart, but even in the country one cannot walk around town brandishing a pistol, rifle, knife or other weapon without causing concern. It will frighten people, elicit a call to the authorities and the local or State/Provincial sheriff *will* come to investigate, and when firearms are involved or when lives are threatened, the authorities appear on the scene in 1D4 minutes (typically two minutes or less), even in big cities.

Psychic Combat

Psychic combat works very similar to all other types of combat. Each psionic attack or action counts as one melee attack or melee action, and requires a certain amount of I.S.P. for the character to use it. Insufficient I.S.P. means the psionic power cannot be used. Attacks such as a fiery blast, Telekinetic Punch, and similar count as one of the psychic's melee attacks. The back and forth combat sequence is also the same, only the psychic may use a psionic ability to strike at an opponent rather than his fists or a weapon.

The following data is provided to help players of psychic characters understand and use their special abilities.

1. Mind control powers are abilities to control another character's *mind* and force or induce that individual to do something against his will and to the specifications of the psychic controlling him. Psionic mind control powers include *Hypnotic Suggestion*, *Mentally Possess Others*, *Psionic Invisibility*, *Mind Wipe*, and *Psychosomatic Disease*. Some of these powers are available to humans, others by supernatural beings. All are dangerous. **Note:** Unless a character is already seriously considering suicide, Mind Control can *not* be used to force a character to kill himself. Nor can Mind Control be used to make the character do anything that he or she normally finds abhorrent (i.e. rape, torture, murder, self-mutilation, etc.) or self-destructive. On the other hand, the mind controlled character will obey simple innocuous commands like "give me the gun," "open the safe," "call Tina and tell her to come over," "hand me your car keys," "tell me where I can find so and so," and similar, without hesitation. Likewise, the character will follow, help and protect whoever (or whatever) has control of his mind if told to do so (unless that act is truly abhorrent as well).

Possession is different than mind control, because the possessing being is invading a character's body and taking control of it. Successful possession means the person may look and sound the same, but his mind is not in control of his body, the possessing being is in control of it. And like a person inside a suit of armor, the possessing creature can do whatever it wants to do and the character can do little or nothing about it. In many cases, the mortal's mind is pushed back and basically falls asleep, unaware of what the thing possessing him is doing with his body, or the victim remembers only vague bits and pieces like a dream. See more about possession under the Possessing Entity, page 251.

Telepathy, Empathy and other types of psychic communication, scans and probes are NOT mind control. They do not make the victim do anything. The psychic only hears, sees or feels the thoughts and emotions of the character being scanned or probed. The psychic may

gather information he can use on or against his opponents, but the psychic scans do not control or make the victim do anything he or she doesn't want to do. Unwanted Telepathic communication may play inside a character's head like a radio in the background, and while it may be annoying, and the voice inside one's head may make suggestions, egg on or cajole, it does NOT control or force the victim into taking any action against his will.

Empathic Transmission, Horror Factor and similar psionic powers possessed by supernatural beings do not control the mind, but influence emotions which may cause a character to act a certain way. They do not control a person like a puppet, but induce *emotions* such as hate, fear, despair, etc., that cause a knee-jerk, emotional reaction. The victim is not controlled, but rather he is *affected* by his own emotions brought out by the psionic attack.

2. Psionics that affect the mind and emotions can affect people inside a locked room or car, but only if the attacker knows his desired victim is inside or he can see him through a window or keyhole or some kind of opening (or via Astral Projection). They cannot affect someone in a fast moving vehicle, because they are going too fast to make a connection and since most psionic powers have a short range, the intended victim in a moving vehicle is typically carried out of range in a matter of seconds. Psionic abilities that require "line of sight" will usually indicate as much. Otherwise, area effect powers or being within range and knowing the victim's general location will suffice. This is especially true of many of the psychic abilities possessed by the supernatural.

Empathy can be used to sense the general emotions emanating from inside a room, but only the most powerful one or two of the strongest, most overwhelming emotions or shared emotions can be detected (i.e., most everyone is laughing and having fun or angry and arguing, so that's what is felt by the psychic). Furthermore, even if one strong emotion stood out, the psychic will not know who is feeling that way, only that it's one of the people inside the room.

3. Physical psionic manifestations, including all types of *Telekinesis*, *Hydrokinesis*, *Electrokinesis*, *Pyrokinesis*, *Mind Bolt*, and any physical attack created by a psionic power, usually require "line of sight" – the intended target must be seen, and a physical force will be stopped by a locked door or physical barrier unless the attacker can see his victim/target through an opening or window. Of course, physical psionic attacks can be directed at the door, a vehicle or a barrier.

Note that other limitations may apply, such as the victim must hear the psychic's voice or make eye contact or can only be affected by touch or within a particular range. All psychic abilities will note limitations, restrictions and requirements. Remember, in most cases, a psionic power/attack can only be directed at one specific target/subject at a time.

Note: Psi-Powers requiring *physical contact/touch* can not be used on any character sealed inside a vehicle, nor environmental armor for that matter, unless it is the mechanical armor that is being attacked or targeted.

Psionic powers requiring sound (i.e. the victim must hear the psychic's words, like *Hypnotic Suggestion*) do not work unless the psychic can be heard and is within range. Many military and other vehicles can "turn off" their external audio system and/or radio. If the psychic can not be heard, he can not use that power against anybody. Of course, there are only a few psionic abilities that require verbal suggestions and cues.

Radiate Horror Factor affects anybody who sees and comes within 90 feet (27.4 m) of the psychic.

4. Psionic attacks per melee: Most psionic abilities are activated and performed at the speed of thought, so each psionic attack counts as one melee attack/action. Some psionic abilities require time and concentration, using up several melee actions or even minutes to perform. This will be indicated in the description of the power. Some psionic abilities can be used in conjunction with others, but in most cases, one psionic ability must end before another can be used.

5. I.S.P. boost at ley lines: Psychics cannot draw I.S.P. from living beings or other people, but they can draw upon the ambient P.P.E. at ley lines and convert it into 1D6+1 I.S.P. once every melee round (15 seconds). However, the bonus I.S.P. cannot be stored or held inside the psychic and must be spent that round or it is gone; fades away. A ley line may also increase the potency of a psychic power, increasing **range** and **duration** by 50% when near a ley line (within one mile/1.6 km), and double when actually on the ley line or at a ley line nexus, or as noted in the specific description of the psionic abilities (some see range or duration doubled, tripled and even quadrupled). **Damage** from a psionic attack is also increased by one additional die when on a ley line and increased by two extra damage dice when at a nexus point.

6. I.S.P. Recovery. One I.S.P. per hour of sleep, or two per hour of standard meditation, four or more in a fraction of the time with advanced meditative techniques (see the psi-ability *Advanced Meditation* and the *Physical Psychic P.C.C.*).

7. Psionic Saving Throws:

Non-Psychic – Ordinary Person & Animals: Need to roll a 15 or higher on a D20 to save vs psionic attack. Penalties to save may apply against some of the psionics and powers of the supernatural.

Latent Psychic, Genius, Psi-Mechanic & Ghost Hunter: Need to roll a 12 or higher on a D20. Penalties to save may apply against some of the psionics and powers of the supernatural.

All Other Psychic P.C.C.s: Need only roll a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Penalties to save may apply against some of the psionics and powers of the supernatural.



Horror Factor

All monsters and supernatural creatures have a *Horror Factor (H.F.)*. The Horror Factor represents either the hideous appearance or its overwhelming aura of evil and power, or a combination of the two. Whenever a human/mortal encounters one of these terrors, the character must roll a 20-sided die (1D20) to see whether or not he or she is momentarily stunned by the sheer horror of the thing. This Horror Factor roll might be thought of as a *saving throw* or mental parry. Fortunately, the character only needs to roll for the first melee round of each encounter, *not* every melee of combat.

To save vs Horror Factor (H.F.): Just like a parry, the roll must be equal to or higher than the creature's Horror Factor. **For example:** A Supernatural Predator with a Horror Factor of 13, emerges from an alley. All characters who see it must roll to save against *horror*. In this case, a successful save is 13 or higher. Everybody but poor Thom rolls above a 13 and saves. Thom rolls a nine, so his character is *momentarily* stunned with horror.

A failed roll means the character is so overwhelmed that he is temporarily stunned. In game terms this means the character loses initiative (don't even roll for it), loses one attack/melee action, and cannot defend himself (no parry or dodge) against the creature's *first* attack of that melee round. Fortunately, the character snaps out of the shocked stupor quickly and can join in the combat that same melee. By the second me-

lee round, the character has completely recovered his senses and is functioning as normal; roll for initiative and continue combat as usual.

G.M. Note: If you think it is appropriate, you may also assign a Horror Factor to a *situation* (gathering of cultists engaged in ritual sacrifice, a scene of torture, a brutal murder, etc.) or an *environment* (an especially spooky, creepy, or alien environment).

Perception Rolls

This type of roll uses the same mechanics as combat, Horror Factor, and saving throws. **Perception Rolls** are used to simulate the character's five senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch) in situations where noticing something might be important or relevant. Searching a room, standing watch, listening through a door, peering into night-shrouded underbrush to see what might be lurking there; these are all situations where a Perception Roll might be called for.

To determine whether the character's Perception finds something, the player must roll a 20-sided die (D20). Add Perception Roll bonuses one might have from *Occupation* and *P.C.C.* (if any), and then match the roll to the situation.

Perception Table by Difficulty

The table below indicates the number a character has to roll to correctly *perceive* or notice whatever it is he's looking for or is alert to notice.

4 or better: An Easy Situation Circumstance. Hearing a loud noise, finding a bright-colored object against a white background, finding something hastily and/or poorly hidden; and similar.

8 or Better: Moderate. Looking for something or somebody in a well-lit area; hearing a slight noise; finding something hidden without great thought; and similar.

14 or better: Challenging. Looking for something in poor light, fog, in murky water, or under desperate circumstances (it's an emergency or the seeker is impaired); hearing something over a noisy background or moving or speaking quietly; finding something carefully concealed, camouflaged or masked; and so on.

17 or better. Difficult: Finding something in the dark or masterfully hidden/concealed, hearing something over a loud din or moving silent as the wind (like a snake sliding over a carpet); noticing an enemy (or friend) or something or somebody that doesn't belong amongst great confusion, debris, a large crowd or much activity.

Perceiving Supernatural Involvement

Psychics, Parapsychologists, Psychic Investigators, and practitioners of magic versed in the methods and habits of supernatural menaces can also tell if such dark forces are at work by examining the evidence (bite marks, footprints, claw marks, feces, how a victim was murdered, what body parts might have been eaten, the time or circumstance of the killing, incident or situation, etc.). After examining the evidence the psychic just *feels* the imprint/involvement of the supernatural; feels it in the pit of his stomach or in goose bumps crawling across his body.

8 or better if the evidence is plentiful and obvious.

14 or better if the evidence is spare or "scientifically" inconclusive; a gut feeling.

Of course, truly insufficient and inconclusive evidence means the character has no idea if the supernatural is involved and no number of Perception Rolls will tell him otherwise.



Perception that you are being followed or watched by supernatural evil

15 or better to sense Supernatural Predators and Lesser Demons.

17 or better to sense Demonic Servants and Greater Demons.

19 or better to sense Ancient Evil, a Dark God or Alien Intelligence.

While ninety plus percent of the human race adamantly denies the existence of magic, demons and the supernatural, buried in the back of our minds *is* the racial memory that they *are* all real and very deadly. This buried instinct is tied to our flight or fight response. That's why virtually all of us, at some point in our lives, have felt fear when all alone in the middle of the night for no apparent reason, and dislike the dark in general. Oh, we're not talking about the nightlife, clubbing and the bright lights of the big city after dark. We're talking about those quiet moments when you're alone and the hairs on the back of your neck rise up without reason and a chill runs through your body as if the icy hand of Death brushed against your skin. You suddenly *feel* scared, crept out as if someone or something is watching you. ("What's that noise?!" "Who's there?!" "Oh, it's nothing . . . just the cat, or the wind, or my own silly imagination.") Was that a moment of irrational fear, or something more? A sixth sense, perhaps. A buried instinct kicking in to alert you to a supernatural evil hostile to humans? A gut feeling that you were being watched – stalked – and in danger from . . . what? The dark? Maybe, yes.

For this perception of the supernatural evil to work, the evil being must really be following/tailing/observing the character, stalking him, or be planning to strike. It must also be within 200 feet (61 m) and within line of sight – that is to say it is looking at the character at that very moment. Even with the Perception Roll and sensation of being watched or followed, the character does NOT know where the creature is, and looking all around will NOT reveal it (unless the thing wants to be seen). **Note:** The Psychic Sensitive can sense the evil at whatever the character's normal range is for sensing supernatural evil, and senses if *he* is being watched with a Perception Roll of 15 or better regardless of the nature of the supernatural being (e.g., senses an Ancient Evil, Demonic Servant or Lesser Demon at 15 or higher). It is also important to note that the psychic can only get this sensation when he, specifically, is being observed, not the group as a whole or a teammate within the group.

Perception Rolls vs Stealth & Concealment Skills: A number of skills, among them Prowl, Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Camouflage, and Concealment, have an impact on Perception Rolls. When a Perception Roll is attempted against another character (player or NPC) who is using a Stealth or Concealment skill, treat it as a combat type "roll off." Both characters (the person using the *skill* and the one using a *Perception Roll*) roll 1D20 and the *high roll* wins.

The character using the skill gets a bonus of +1 for every 10 points in his skill percentage (round down). The character using Perception gets to add in his usual Perception Roll bonuses. **Example:** Carl's character is sneaking up on a psychic guarding a door. His Prowl skill is 65%, giving the character a +6 bonus in the "roll off" of *Skill vs Perception*. The psychic has a Perception bonus of +3.

Each character rolls a twenty-sided die (1D20).

Carl rolls an 11 on the D20 and adds his +6 skill bonus for a total of 17.

Todd, playing the psychic on guard, rolls a 16 on the D20 and adds his Perception Roll bonus of +3 for a total of 19. He wins. The psychic hears something (or maybe it's a *feeling*), he turns towards Carl's character, begins to draw his gun and call out to his teammates that there is an intruder. Carl's character bares his fangs . . . he is more than he seems.

Animal Psionic Abilities

Most large mammals seem to have innate, natural psychic senses that warn them about the presence of supernatural forces. This includes cattle, horses, sheep, and predatory mammals (lions, wolves, coyotes, etc.). Ravens, crows, parrots, and birds of prey can also sense the supernatural.

As odd as it may seem, animals associated closely with humans on a friend or helper/worker level have the most pronounced psi-abilities. Thus, dogs, cats, horses, mules and donkeys (as well as ravens/crows) exhibit the greatest extrasensory perception. Each of these animals has the abilities of *See the Invisible*, *Sense Evil*, *Sense Magic*, *Sixth Sense* and *Empathy* (receives only). Sensing range is a 600 foot (183 m) radius and is an automatic instinct that helps the animals *avoid* the supernatural. The animal's reactions will always be the same; intense nervousness, jumpiness, whimpering, hissing, growling, howling and alertness when psionic and magic energies are sensed nearby. If possible, the animals will try to leave the area and will flee if they get the opportunity. Only a loyal canine companion may stay with his human friend and master and attack when the supernatural horror enters the backyard or home.

When cornered face to face with supernatural evil, the animal will attack and attempt to flee. A dog or cat will have the hairs on its back rise, bare fangs and growl or hiss in a menacing warning. A horse will whinny, stomp and rear. If the supernatural creature does not back off, the animal will attack. The cat and horse will attack only to make a path of escape and to let the unnatural being know that they recognize what it is even if disguised. 01-60% of the time, a canine will attack to kill! 61-00% the animal will flee. **Note:** Dogs, cats, and other animals *cannot* be trained to sniff out magic or supernatural creatures. Their natural instinct is to flee from it, so the animals will NOT seek out these forces for anyone or any reason. The animals use of psychic abilities is automatic and natural. Consequently, they do not get or spend I.S.P., the psionic abilities just snap on as a defensive reflex.

Animal Saving Throws: Animals, like humans, get an automatic roll to save vs psychic and magic attacks.

Save vs Psionic Attack: 15 or higher to save.

Save vs Magic: -4 to save.

A Note About Magic

The setting for **Beyond the Supernatural™** is so expansive that I found it impossible to include magic in all the details and glory it deserves, in the basic role-playing game. Sometimes, to do the subject justice, you just can't fit everything into one, all inclusive, rule book. Even if I expanded the book another 100 pages, it would fall short, and I have found giant 350-400 page rule books (including a couple of our own) to be uncomfortable and cumbersome to use handily. Consequently, magic and spell casting characters will be explored in the **Arcanum** core book, which will top out with a page count somewhere around 192-224 pages. Please note that I have designed **BTS-2** in such a way that it can be played with, or without magic. When the magic

system is revealed, players will find it takes a similar approach as psionics, i.e., multipliers for proximity to the supernatural and spells that have the greatest impact on the supernatural rather than the physical world. Don't worry, it will be awesome with some very insidious plot twists and built-in plot devices. **Arcanum** will follow the **Tome Grotesque™**, a vast selection of supernatural menaces and their powers. — Kevin Siembieda

Skill Rules

Beyond the Supernatural™ Two is a little different than most Palladium games where a character's skills are determined by his Occupational Character Class (O.C.C.). In **BTS-2** the character leads a secret life. The public facade is probably ordinary Joe or Jane (or weirdo Jake or crackpot Joan). A person pretty much like anyone else, who goes to work at an ordinary job to support himself, but whose hobby is investigating the paranormal and fighting supernatural horrors. It is the secret life and the unusual orientation that sets the character apart and creates this dual identity: Gardener by day, psychic investigator by night. Once a person has crossed the line and accepted the paranormal, it's difficult to go back to living a normal life, especially if the character also has psychic abilities that keep reminding him of the supernatural world. For many, the world of the unknown becomes a place of thrilling adventure and heroics; for many others, it is a duty, a responsibility they feel they cannot shake. And for still others, the experience is surreal — a dream, or nightmare, from which they can never quite escape.

Whether perceived as a blessing or a curse, having the gifts of psychic abilities or the awareness that the supernatural is real, once a character's eyes have been opened, few can go back to pretending neither exists. They find themselves looking over their shoulders, down dark alleyways, and at media reports and wondering if there is more to what is shown. Wondering if a monster or a touch of magic might not be lurking in the shadows or behind the scenes. Wondering if they should be doing something about it. Worrying that they are squandering a precious gift and should be out using it for the good of others. Worrying that they might have to answer to a higher power if they don't. According to most, the wondering and worrying makes worse sleepless nights than taking the plunge and entering the realm of the supernatural and beyond. For at least trying to deal with what they see and at least trying to help others eases their conscience and makes them feel somehow at home — comfortable — with it all. Many psychics claim it is a simple matter of accepting one's destiny or hiding from it. Even those who discard the notion of *destiny* admit it feels wrong to deny what they are and to do nothing when they have the power to rescue and help others from malicious supernatural forces. And though they claim destiny has nothing to do with it, that sentiment would seem to suggest otherwise.

Victor Lazlo concurred, though he put it like this, "*If psychic individuals are mankind's sentinels and defenders against supernatural incursion, it seems reasonable that instinct or a racial memory manifesting as a sense of duty drives these individuals to accept the role they seem to have been born to fill. Certainly a large majority of the psychics I have spoken to feel it is their responsibility, their destiny, to help others and make the world a better, safer place. Then again, from a purely psychological point of view, so few of us ever feel truly special or gifted that when the opportunity appears, most people rise to the challenge and try to embrace the idealistic position they believe others or God would expect of them.*"

The point is, for the P.C.C.s (Psychic Character Classes) in **BTS-2**, their psychic abilities and/or awareness of the supernatural compels them, sometimes even consumes them, to make investigating and thwarting the supernatural their primary goal or purpose in life. Almost everything else is secondary, even their career. That means for most of

these characters their *job* is a means to an end. A way to make money and support themselves so they can continue to explore the realms of the supernatural. For many, their dream is to get a job that gives them a considerable amount of free time and flexibility while making a lot of money to pay for their dalliances into the unknown. Most wish they'd win the lottery or get a windfall inheritance so they wouldn't have to work a "real job" at all, and could spend all their time on paranormal research and activities. Of course the reality for most is they work only enough to make ends meet and support their extracurricular activities.

Skills, consequently, typically play three roles: Skills that are job related (*Occupational Skills*), (*Elective*) skills that apply to paranormal activities, and (*Secondary*) skills that reflect hobbies and things outside of work and the paranormal, though for many characters, even Secondary Skills will reflect their keen interest and activities in the paranormal.

What follows is how players select skills for their characters. Read on, think about the kind of character you want to play, and build him or her accordingly.

Selecting Skills

Step One is rolling up the character's eight attributes. This is important, because certain skills may compensate for a low attribute. For example, many Physical skills offer bonuses that boost low physical attributes (P.S., P.P. P.E., Spd, and S.D.C.) with bonuses from those skills.

Step Two is choosing a P.C.C. (Psychic Character Class). You can NOT select skills without knowing your P.C.C., because you are probably going to want to tailor the skills to the orientation and psionic strengths and weaknesses of the character.

Step Three, Skill Selection: Most characters will have a reasonably broad range of skills, but the skills presented in this book are primarily ones that make the most sense for the P.C.C.s.

Characters also are likely to pick up two or more **Physical Skills**. It is important to note that Physical skill bonuses are *accumulative*. It is perfectly acceptable within the confines of this game for players to pick numerous Physical skills in order to beef up their character, many providing some kind of combat bonus (to strike, parry, etc.), extra S.D.C., or a bonus to a physical attribute. **Note:** Acrobatics and Gymnastics provide similar abilities and bonuses. If both are selected, add the bonuses and pluses to your overall character as explained. However, abilities such as back flip, climb rope, etc., are not added together, nor is the educational bonus added twice. The "best" proficiency of a duplicated skill ability is taken, and the normal educational bonus is applied. Also, the Prowl and Climb skills given under Acrobatics and Gymnastics are a part of these skills and do not increase with level unless they are selected as separate, additional areas of training (i.e., Prowl and/or Climb are also selected as skills).

Throughout a character's history, he will probably train in some form of **Hand to Hand Combat**. Note that only *one* form of hand to hand combat may be selected. In cases where more than one type is available, the player must select one of them and disregard the others. Hand to Hand Combat is seldom part of an Occupation unless it involves the *military* or *law enforcement*, which means the character will need to select it as an *Elective Skill*.

A note about guns and Weapon Proficiencies (W.P.). Although it is handy to have a character good with weapons, try to play in character and put yourself in that character's position. If you were a psychic and an investigator of the unknown, would *you* have a gun? If the answer is yes, then ask yourself these other questions. What kind of gun is it? How would you get it? Is it legal to use or are you carrying an illegal concealed weapon? (And think about the consequences of that action.) Remember, the **BTS-2** setting is our modern world of today, right now, and the laws and social mores of the time all apply. That means your character cannot go around toting a pistol like the Old West and shoot-

ing up a place without the involvement of the police and potential charges. Even if the character has a legal permit to carry a concealed weapon (like a private eye), he can't go waving it around in public or threatening people with it. Think about the legal, social and immediate consequences of the character's actions, be responsible and play accordingly. Anything that would get you arrested or in trouble (lawsuits, creating a panic, etc.) will get your character in trouble.

Oh, and when it comes to guns and other weapons, some characters may not want one even if they can, and those who do carry a weapon are wise to be discreet and careful with it.

Typical Skill Ranges

Each character has four basic ranges or classes of skills.

Common Skills, basic things anyone with even a rudimentary education will have, such as being able to read and write, count numbers and drive a car.

Occupational Skills, skills that come with one's chosen occupation and are required to do the job. These usually get the highest skill bonus.

The Occupational Skill category will also indicate the number of Elective and Secondary Skills. The more skilled the occupation, the greater the number of *Occupational* and *Elective Skills*. The less skilled the occupation the fewer Occupational and Elective Skills and the greater the number of *Secondary* (informally learned) skills.

Elective Skills, supplemental work skills and/or other areas of interest or acquired through formal education or training. These typically get modest skill bonuses.

Secondary Skills, additional areas of interest the character picked up along the way in school, from friends or siblings, or self-taught through hobbies and other interests. These skills have no bonuses other than a possible I.Q. bonus for having an Intelligence attribute number of 16 or higher.

Additional Skills! Certain P.C.C.s may offer *additional skill selections*. Additional skills reflect a particular orientation of the character, an unusually high I.Q. or additional areas of interest or education.

Common Skills

Either a character has them or he doesn't – and 98% of all characters have these common, modern-life skills, regardless of their occupation.

Mathematics: Basic – Can count and do simple math.

Language: Native Tongue – Speaks the common, local language).

Literacy: Native language – Reads and writes local language).

Bonuses for Common Skills:

Unskilled Occupation: None.

Highly Skilled Occupation: +4% to Language and Literacy, +10% to Basic Math.

Occupational Skills

Like it or not, most of our primary skills, the ones we use every day, are usually related to our occupation. This is especially true of highly skilled and specialized professions like engineers, doctors, lawyers, scholars, entertainers, computer technicians, game designers, artists, etc., but is also true of guys who bust their backs like factory and construction workers, carpenters, and, well, most people. This is the character's *profession*, and not just a temporary job to get by for the moment. The appeal of that job may be personal satisfaction, helping other people, the money and security, personal freedom and free time, or a life-long dream (probably using a personal talent). Whatever the reason, the chosen profession will require a character to have a specific set of skills related to the job.

Pick an occupation, and you get a set of skills required to do the job as well as a few skills related to work and may include skills that are not available as an Elective. Each skill has a bonus indicated in parentheses. The skills that most relate to one's occupation have the highest bonuses.

The Occupational Skill category also indicates the number of Elective and Secondary Skill selections the character can make. The more skilled the occupation, the greater the number of *Occupational* and *Elective Skills*. The less skilled the occupation the fewer Occupational and Elective Skills, but the greater the number of *Secondary* (informally learned) skills.

Elective Skills

Elective Skills are *additional* areas of interest, learning and formal education above and beyond the occupation. The exact number of Elective Skills are indicated under each occupation. However, only certain Skill Categories may be available and others excluded. Any specific restrictions or exceptions will be indicated as will any skill bonuses.

Below is a list of skills, by category, that can usually be selected as Elective Skills. Skill categories that are not normally available, such as Espionage, Military and Rogue skills, *may* be allowed for specific O.C.C.s and will be indicated.

Skills form any of the available categories may be selected as an Elective Skill, but only those categories clearly indicated get an occupation related bonus (typically +10%), as indicated under the Occupation. Some Occupations and P.C.C.s provide an additional Elective Skill bonus or additional skill selections. Some *skills* also provide an additional bonus to other, related skills. All skill bonuses are accumulative.

Communications: Any.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics and Computer Repair only, unless the occupation allows it.

Espionage: None, unless the occupation allows it.

Horsemanship: Any.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics, Automotive Mechanics, Locksmith, and Munitions Expert only, unless the occupation allows it.

Medical: Animal Husbandry, Brewing, First Aid, Holistic Medicine, and Paramedic only; unless the occupation allows it.

Military: None, unless the occupation allows it.

Paranormal Studies: Any.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Wrestling, Assassin or Commando, unless the occupation allows it. Selecting Martial Arts counts as *two* skill selections as an Elective skill unless the occupation allows it.

Rogue: None, unless the occupation allows it.

Science: Any.

Technical: Any.

Transportation: Any.

W.P. Ancient: Any.

W.P. Modern: Handguns, Rifles, Shotguns and Submachine-Guns, unless the occupation (such as military or law enforcement) allows others.

Wilderness: Any.

Secondary Skills

Secondary Skills are areas of knowledge that the character has picked up on his own through learned experience, observation and personal studies. They may be related to the character's occupation or reflect completely other interests and hobbies. Secondary Skills usually are self-taught and do not command the same degree of expertise as

Occupational and Elective Skills. **For Example:** If a character took the *Art* skill as an Elective Skill, he would have the ability of a professional artist. If that same character takes *Art* as a Secondary Skill, however, his ability is that of a talented amateur. Even if a Secondary Skill artist had a higher chance of success than an Elective Skill artist, the Elective Skill artist's work always looks better. That is the essential difference between Elective and Secondary Skills, other than the fact that not all skills are available as Secondary Skills (i.e. the average person cannot self-teach Espionage or Military skills, etc.).

Below is a list of skills, by category, that can be selected as Secondary Skills. No skill bonuses apply, because these skills are self-taught and do not include intensive or professional training. Certain skills (e.g., most Military skills) cannot be learned as Secondary Skills. All Secondary Skills start out at the base skill level.

Communications: Any, except Electronic Countermeasures, Laser Communication, Optic Systems, or Sensory Equipment.

Domestic: Any.

Electrical: Basic Electronics only.

Espionage: None.

Horsemanship: Basic only.

Mechanical: Basic Mechanics and Automotive Mechanics only.

Medical: Animal Husbandry, Brewing, and First Aid only.

Military: None.

Paranormal Studies: Any.

Physical: Any, except Acrobatics, Gymnastics, Boxing, Kick Boxing, Wrestling and any Hand to Hand Combat skill.

Rogue: Gambling and Streetwise only.

Science: Astronomy & Navigation and Advanced Mathematics only.

Technical: Any.

Transportation: Any, except Aircraft (all), Ships/Seamanship and Combat Driving.

W.P. Ancient: Archery, Axe, Blunt, Chain, Knife, Shield, and Staff only.

W.P. Modern: Handguns, Rifles and Shotguns only.

Wilderness: Any, except Herding, Spelunking and Wilderness Survival.

Skill Bonuses

The base skill level is denoted in each skill description. Bonuses received by one's occupation are added to that base skill. This is a one time skill bonus. Characters may also have an I.Q. attribute bonus, and sometimes skills provide bonuses that are added to the base skill level of other skills as a one time bonus.

As the character advances in level of experience, his chances of performing skills successfully (his success ratio) will increase. This is not so much a bonus as a designation of increased mastery of one's abilities with time and experience. The amount that the skill level increases is also noted in each skill description. **For example:** The Physical skill of Swim reads: **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience. This means that a first level character without an occupational bonus has a base skill proficiency of 50%. At second level +5% is added to increase the skill to 55%, at third level it increases to 60%, and so on. If a +10% occupation bonus was applicable, the base skill starts at 60% +5% per level (i.e., 65% at second level, 70% at third, and so on).

New Skills. As the character advances in experience, he *may* also learn additional skills along the way. All new skills begin with a first level success ratio. Thus, if a 5th level character learns a new skill, that new skill is performed at first level proficiency while all his other skills are performed at 5th level proficiency. When the character reaches 6th level, his new skill will be at 2nd level while all of his others will be at 6th level. **Note:** The maximum success ratio for any skill is 98%, regardless of how far the character advances or what modifiers he may enjoy. Humans are not perfect, so there is always a margin for error.

Skill Penalties

Ordinarily, a character's chance of performing a skill successfully is determined by his success ratio for that skill. However, when advanced (or alien) technology or pressure situations are involved, one's success ratio for a given skill is lowered. Likewise, psionic attacks, debilitating magic, illness and injury may also impose a skill penalty on the character. Whether these penalties are accumulative (we suggest they are) is left to the discretion of the Game Master.

Advanced, Unknown (Psi-Mechanic), or Alien Machines and Technologies: A good rule of thumb is a skill penalty of -30% or -40% when trying to figure out, operate, repair, or use such mechanisms and technologies beyond the normal range of technology. This would include most experimental military devices, Psi-Mechanic creations, strange magic items, devices from an alien world and things that fall into the category of *weird science*. In some cases (G.M.'s discretion), the technology may be so different that the character will be unable to use the simplest of devices (-80% to -95% penalty). Likewise, depending on what the item is, a penalty of only -10% to -20% might apply, but the penalty of -30% to -40% is typical. The G.M. should always use his/her discretion when dealing with weird, alien, experimental or futuristic sciences. Remember, within the context of *BTS-2* and other Palladium role-playing games, one may find magical devices that defy conventional science, technology and understanding, with similar types of penalties, -30% to -60%.

Pressure Situations: Executing a skill when calm, cool and collected is one thing. Doing it under the gun (or with a snarling monster breathing down your neck) is something else. For the following pressure situations, negative modifiers apply to characters trying to execute any skill, excluding W.P. and Hand to Hand combat skills.

Cheap, faulty and/or unfamiliar tools: -5% to -15%.

Countermeasures, traps and alarms are in place: -10% to -15%, depending on their level of complexity and sophistication.

Difficult, complex or unfamiliar task: -10% to -15%.

Distracted by outside forces: -10% to -20%, depending upon the source of the distraction and how invasive it may be.

Frightened or jumpy: -5% to -10%.

Lack of sleep/exhausted: -10% if the character has gone 24-36 hours without sleep plus the skill takes 50% longer to perform; -20% having gone 48-72 hours without sleep and the skill takes twice as long to perform, and -30-50% having gone 80 hours or longer without sleep, plus the skill takes three times as long as normal to perform.

Pressure situation, low: -5%, and includes being nervous when working in front of a superior, critic, or a pretty girl, as well as when trying to show off.

Pressure situation, moderate: -10% when it is important to get the job done quickly and done right the first time. Time is of the essence.

Pressure situation, serious: -15% to -20% when failure means there will be serious consequences, losses (of equipment, money, reputation) or trouble (could lead to capture, torture, loss of critical equipment or clue, or opportunity, etc.), or the character himself or several people (perhaps hundreds) will suffer for his mistake.

Pressure situation, deadly: -25% to -30%. Time is running out and dire consequences hang over the character like the Sword of Damocles. If the character fails, he, an ally(s) or innocent people will be seriously hurt or killed! Always a -30% penalty if a loved one or several dozen, hundreds or thousands of lives hang in the balance.

Panic situation: If the character panics and gets hysterical the penalty is -50% on skill performance, combat bonuses are reduced by half, Perception Roll bonuses are reduced to zero, and shooting a gun is "wild." Bystanders and allies may get injured accidentally from the character's wild and irrational response.

Scared: -30% to -50%. The character is so scared he just cannot think straight, plus the skill takes twice as long to accomplish. Increase

the penalty to -75% when the subject of the terror is related to a Phobia insanity. Note that although the character is wracked with fear, he is trying to deal with it and has not run off in a blind panic.

Seriously wounded or ill: When a character's Hit Points are down by 50% or more, concentration is difficult (feels weak, tired, in pain, etc.) and the pain and fatigue are distracting which impairs skill performance: -20% penalty. The penalty worsens to -30% when the character has less than 25% of his Hit Points.

Illness, especially fever, can cause similar penalties. Debilitating illness will usually indicate skill penalties ranging from -10% to -50%.

Drugs, magical charms and psionic attack may also stun, confuse or debilitate the character similar to injury and illness. The specific spell, power or drug will indicate the penalties to apply.

Trying to do something while moving: -5% to -40%, depending on the situation, speed and the bumpiness of the ride.

Note: The G.M. may also impose a *reasonable penalty* to any situation where the character faces an unusual or difficult task. A reasonable penalty will range from -5% to -30%, but, at times, a dramatically higher penalty may be appropriate. G.M.s, use your discretion and be fair.

Using Psychic Abilities on the Job

There are several ways to use one's psychic abilities without creating an uproar.

Concealed. One is to disguise them within a given occupation. Many abilities are unobtrusive and can be employed in an inconspicuous manner or shrugged off as a hunch or good luck. ("What if we look over here?" or "Wow, if I hadn't asked you to take a look at this . . .") Even some of the more flamboyant abilities, such as Telekinesis or Pyrokinesis, can be done in a discreet way so nobody notices and the character does not draw any undue attention to himself other than being exceptional ("Mark, you're the best."). Case in point, a good number of Fire Walkers become firefighters, arson investigators or fire and rescue volunteers where they can put their special talents to good use without anyone noticing. If fact, in the heat of the crisis, no one may notice even a spectacular display of power ("Did you see that? Man, that was weird. Damn, John, you're one lucky son of gun.").

Actually, any occupation that offers a lot of mobility and self-management, like a *detective* or a *field reporter*, allows the character to use his abilities, especially Psychic Sensitive abilities, without anyone noticing. Working alone or in the field with only one or two partners (or a cameraman) allows the character to use his abilities alone and unobserved.

Hiding in plain sight. A more obvious, but equally effective tact is to select or build an occupation around the character's abilities. This could include the Scholar or collector or dealer specializing in the paranormal, arcane and the unknown; or *Stage Magician*, *Escape Artist*, *Circus Act/Entertainer*, *Astrologist*, *New Age store owner (or worker)*, *Psychic Investigator*, *Psychic Medium*, *Fortune Teller*, although they call themselves "life advisors," "life coach," "spiritual counselors," "channellers," "seer," among many other titles (may read palms, faces, auras, tea leaves, crystals, stones, tarot cards, or use divination or all of the above), *Professional Psychic*, *Hypno-Therapist* (Psi-Healer), *Holistic Doctor* (Psi-Healer), *Reiki Master* and other *alternative healing services*. And don't think this is far fetched.

Looking through **PhenomeNEWS**, a real life, tabloid style periodical available in Michigan, the publication is dedicated to the healing powers of spiritualism and New Age beliefs, and there are 150-200 ads every issue for new age services. At least one third to half are alternative healing and therapies, another third deal with "psychic" readings, spiritual counseling and similar services (angels, auras, tarot cards, spirits, palmistry, etc.), and the rest offer a host of related products and services, psychic fairs, psychic speaking engagements, New Age stores

(stones, crystals, candles, books, etc.), and other related topics, goods and services. All are local businesses or events taking place in Michigan. These individuals are making a living and nobody thinks anything odd about them. They are not harassed, although some people may think of them as being charlatans, quacks, weirdos or as simple entertainers, and other people just ignore and forget they are even there. Many work out of their homes or a small storefront, while others travel a regular circuit of *Psychic Fairs*. Hundreds of these fairs go on every month throughout the US and Canada, and it is another example of an alternative life style/business/community that the average person doesn't even know exists. (Did you?) Vendors at Psychic Fairs do psychic readings at their booth/table or sell New Age products. Some Professional Psychics have online sites, and a few even get themselves gigs as a regular radio or cable television personality or celebrity, though the latter is very rare (less than one percent). **Note:** As a rule, a *Psychic Fair* is a modest gathering of psychics who set up a booth like a vendor would at a small comic book, gaming or science fiction convention, where they offer their psychic services for \$30-\$60 per reading (sometimes as much as \$100). When the reading is done, most psychics provide the customer a videotape of the "reading" for their records and future consultation; a tangible product for their cash. Some also sell pamphlets or books about their experiences and observations about psychic phenomena and/or New Age paraphernalia (crystals, pendulums, candles, incense, etc.). There are also guest speakers, demonstrations (meditation, massage therapy, etc.), aura photos (Kirlian photography) and similar events. The atmosphere is generally subdued, respectful and friendly. All participants talk about doing good, finding yourself, healing, and spiritual peace and harmony, making it seem more like a gathering of psychology therapists than psychics, mediums and seers. There is little in the way of overt theatrics or any Hollywood quality about the affair. A Psychic Fair may be held in a hotel conference room/lecture hall, or in the back of a store or a hall at a college or university.

Complete denial. On the other hand, for some characters afraid of being ridiculed or singled out by the public, or sought out by dark forces, the safest answer is to avoid using psi-abilities openly and to take a job that has nothing to do with the paranormal nor offers any opportunity to use psychic powers. Such individuals very much live a secret life – plumber by day, psychic by night. A dual existence enabling him or her to deal with the supernatural in an unobtrusive, covert fashion.

Occupations & Skills

The selection of an occupation establishes the character's means of support (income), flexibility to adventure (come and go as he likes, or not), public perception (how people see the character), and whether or not the character is known for being a psychic or having paranormal knowledge or abilities. An occupation also establishes other available resources, contacts and associates available through the job (access to computers, ancient books, medical facility or services, an inside track with the local police, etc.).

Select *one* occupation. It is presumed that even a young character has already gone through a number of jobs and this is the one he has settled on. As noted elsewhere, the appeal of the job may be the flexibility and freedom (i.e., a low number of hours or a customized schedule), allowing the character to devote as much time and resources to his paranormal activities as possible. The descriptions that follow includes a range of common occupations, but focuses toward work that a character with outside interests and a desire for flexibility is likely to want. Percentile numbers have been assigned to the descriptions for those players who might simply want to *random roll* an occupation. However, the occupation is such a vital part of any character that we suggest an occupation is *chosen* after careful consideration, not determined by a

random roll. A random roll may work fine, however, for the G.M. when creating NPCs and villains.

Note: Pay is the *typical range* for the *average* person in that line of work. There are always exceptions and stars who excel in any profession to makes oodles of money, but they are typically the top two or three percent, not the typical worker in that field.

Also note that these occupational guidelines also make great templates for rolling up NPCs (Non-Player Characters) and villains.

An Alphabetical Listing of 42 Notable Occupations for BTS-2

- 01-02% Antiquities Consultant
- 03-04% Antiquities Dealer
- 05-06% Antiquities Rare Book Dealer
- 07-08% Artist: Illustrator Freelance
- 09-10% Artist: Fine Arts or Crafts
- 11-12% Athletics: Amateur Competitor
- 13-14% Athletics: Extreme Sports
- 15-16% Athletics: Fighting Competitor
- 17-18% Athletics: Sportsman/Outdoorsman
- 19-20% Automotive Mechanic
- 21-23% Bounty Hunter
- 24-25% Communications Engineer
- 26-27% Computer Programmer
- 28-29% Computer Technician
- 30-31% Construction Worker
- 32-33% Criminal: Con Artist
- 34-35% Criminal: Hit Man/Assassin
- 36-37% Criminal: Professional Thief
- 38-39% Espionage Agent
- 40-41% Entertainer
- 42-43% Factory Worker
- 44-45% Firefighter/Fire & Rescue
- 46-47% Journalist/Media Reporter
- 48-49% Landscaper/Grounds Keeper
- 50-51% Medicine: Medical Doctor
- 52-53% Medicine: Paramedic
- 54-55% Medicine: Psychiatrist
- 56-57% Medicine: Veterinarian
- 58-59% Police Officer
- 60-61% Police Detective/CSI
- 62-64% Police Undercover Officer
- 65-66% Police Tactical Assault/SWAT
- 67-70% Private Detective/P.I.
- 71-73% Professional Driver
- 74-78% Psychic Investigator
- 79-84% Psychic Professional
- 85-88% Scholar/Engineer/Scientist
- 89-91% Security Specialist
- 92-93% Skeptic/Debunker
- 94-95% Stage Magician
- 96-97% Survivalist/Militia
- 98-00% Writer: Freelance

01-02% Antiquities Consultant. Highly skilled occupation. This is probably an older person (40 years and older) with a doctorate in history and may have been a college professor or museum curator at some

time in his life. In the alternative, it could be a younger character who grew up in the family business of collecting Antiquities, has at least 4-6 years of college under his belt, and has a love for history, art, artifacts, relics and collecting. Has probably traveled around the world and is very familiar with all kinds of ancient artifacts and collectibles.

Occupational Skills: Appraise Antiques (+30%), Art (+15%), Business and Finance (+20%), Computer Operation (+10%), Find Contraband (+12%) or Lore: Magic Arcane, Forgery (+15%; mainly to identify fakes), History (+20%), Research (+20%), Performance or Public Speaking (+15%), and two Language: Other (spoken), and two Literacy: Other Language (written) skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select seven from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +15% bonus to Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: Add a +10% bonus to any *one* Lore or Occupational skill. This is the character's area of expertise or greatest interest.

Advantages: A good reputation has earned the character the high regard of museums, universities, colleagues, and private collectors across the country (perhaps the world). The character can charge top dollar and reasonable expenses (travel, hotel, etc.) to come and offer his opinion about the authenticity and value of ancient artifacts and collectibles, and his appraisals are accepted by insurance companies. All of this means the character knows a lot of people in high places (i.e. the rich and famous, museum curators, elite collectors and other antiquities dealers). Has a 01-50% chance of tracking down or getting a lead on the whereabouts of just about *anything*; if it really exists he can eventually find it. Of course, acquiring it may be an entirely different story. The character's good reputation and contacts also means he is likely to be able to (01-70% chance +1% for each M.A. attribute point) *see, examine* and *handle* rare and one-of-a-kind items in museums and private collections; supervised inspections, and "associates" may not be allowed to join him.

Disadvantages: Must find time to keep up with contacts and current events, and travel may take him away from a current case (but also opens many doors to other adventures and information). Authenticating ancient relics is more than a 20 minute examination and the character spends 1D6+6 days researching the typical item, tracing its genealogy and history of ownership as well as scrutinizing the details of the item and even doing chemical tests and analysis to confirm its age, composition and authenticity. Some projects may take 1D6+6 months, though time for other work and free time is allowed in these cases. Time may also be spent on the simple enjoyment of studying rare articles and reading ancient texts that less than two dozen people in the modern world may have ever seen up close and out from behind a case of plexiglass.

This is a surprisingly competitive occupation with rivals constantly trying to one-up each other in the acquisition of rare artifacts and the job of appraising them. They also enjoy discrediting each other and discovering details those before them may have missed, so meticulous work and research is required.

Pay: Depends on the client and amount of time and work involved in the appraisal process. A simple "eye-ball" appraisal of a comparatively known or new item (not more than 200 years old) can take ten minutes and cost the customer anywhere from \$100 to \$1,000. Rare, old artifacts could take 4D6 hours to identify, authenticate and appraise at a cost of \$100-\$400 an hour. Truly ancient (2000 years or greater) and previously unknown items take 1D6+6 days of work at a cost of \$1,000-\$4,000 a day plus reasonable expenses. Exactly how much work the character does is up to him, but too little could put the character out of the loop, lose contacts and work, and cause people to believe he's retired.

Without actually having to role-play through each assignment (although some could be the catalyst for adventure or offer clues), roll on

the following table to randomly determine how much the character has earned every three months. The roll is made every quarter.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Work:

01-25% 2D6x\$1,000; work has been light.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 + \$5,000; holding his own.

51-60% 4D6x\$1,000 + \$10,000; doing well.

61-90% 1D4x\$10,000 + \$20,000; doing very well.

91-100% 2D6x\$10,000 + \$40,000; outstanding! Could take the rest of the year off if he wants.

03-04% Antiquities Dealer. A skilled occupation that deals with the appraising, buying and selling of historical artifacts, relics, works of art and collectibles. Most items range from 50 to 800 years old. Has probably traveled around the country and either owns his own antique business, or his own book shop, or works for a shop, auction house, university or museum.

Occupational Skills: Appraise Antiques (+15%), Art (+15%), Business and Finance (+15%), Computer Operation (+15%), Gemology (+15%), History (+20%), Research (+15%), Recognize Weapon Quality (+15%) or Public Speaking (+15%), and two Language: Other (spoken), and one Literacy: Other Language (written) skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: Add a +5% bonus to any *one* Lore or Occupational skill. This is the character's area of expertise or greatest interest.

Advantages: Enjoys the work, gets to travel, and a good reputation will earn the character the high regard of colleagues, universities and private collectors across the region (State or Province) and perhaps the surrounding area (tri-state area, the Coast, etc.). The character makes good money and reasonable expenses (travel, hotel, etc.) to come and offer his opinion about the authenticity and value of ancient artifacts and collectibles, and if he has passed insurance accreditation, his appraisals are accepted by most insurance companies. The character knows a fair number of people, including some wealthy collectors, auction house managers, and a number of dealers and colleagues. Has a 01-30% chance of tracking down or getting a lead on the whereabouts of most items except the truly rare and museum quality pieces. Of course, acquiring it may be an entirely different story. The character's good reputation and contacts also mean he has a reasonable chance (01-60% chance +1% for each M.A. attribute point) to *see, examine* and *handle* rare items in the possession of other dealers and private collections; inspections may or may not be supervised, and "associates" may not be allowed to join him. Gets access to odd items and magical arcane.

Disadvantages: If the character owns the business he has to spend time setting up and maintaining the shop, gallery or business, check in regularly (work at least twice a week and check in every day to handle problems) if he has a manager doing the day to day work, and counts on the sale of items to make money to support him and his business. Authenticating antiques can take as little as 10-20 minutes for items well known to the character or less than 200 years old, but valuable items usually involve some research and take 6D6 hours of research.

This is a surprisingly competitive field with rivals constantly trying to steal clients by having sales, guest speakers, larger selections, rarer items and better shows and auctions. They also enjoy discrediting each other by discovering and publicizing details those before them may have missed.

Pay: \$15 to \$25 an hour depending on how good the character is at his job and/or the size of the shop, plus 5-10% commission on items he locates for the shop and sells. That's \$30,000-\$50,000 in salary plus

about 1D4x10% that amount in annual commissions. How much the character makes annually will ultimately depend on the hours he works.

A full-time employee working as an appraiser and sales person will work 10:00 A.M. till 7:00 P.M., but can work 4-6 days a week and can probably get part-time hours (2-3 days a week) or come in for special appraisals and shows/auctions/sales events, but annual income probably won't exceed \$30,000 even with commissions on sales.

Consultant and Appraisal work. A simple "eye-ball" appraisal of a comparatively known or new item (not more than 200 years old) can take ten minutes and cost the customer anywhere from \$20 to \$40. Rare, old artifacts could take 2D6 hours to identify, authenticate and appraise at a cost of \$40-\$60 an hour. Truly ancient (2000 years or greater) and previously unknown items take 2D6+8 days of work at a cost of \$100 an hour plus reasonable expenses (if any). Appraisal fees are usually waived if the individual is willing to consign it over to the Antique Dealer for sale in his shop, at an auction or online. Exactly how much work the character does is up to him, but too little could give his competitors the leg up they are looking for, or cause the character to lose contacts, work, and access to artifacts.

Quarterly personal income for an *antique shop owner* is as follows; roll for every quarter.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Sales at a Shop:

01-25% 1D10x\$1,000; sales have been terrible.

26-50% 2D8x\$1,000 +\$4,000; sales are so so.

51-60% 4D6x\$1,000 +\$8,000; good sales.

61-90% 1D4x\$10,000 +\$15,000; very good sales.

91-00% 2D4x\$10,000 +\$25,000; outstanding sales! Could take the next quarter off if he wants, and let the staff handle operations.



05-06% Antiquities Rare Books Dealer (and/or the Arcane). A skilled occupation that specializes in appraising, buying and selling books on magic, magic items, the arcane, the paranormal, spiritual, supernatural, demons, cults, monsters, weird, unknown and metaphysical. May also offer other items and artifacts said to have spiritual or magical properties from New Age crystals and candles to antiques and ancient relics. Most items range from the present to 600 years old, but can go back thousands of years. Has probably done a little traveling around the country, and either owns his own book shop, or works for a shop, auction house, university or museum.

Occupational Skills: Appraise Antiques (+15%), Art (+10%), Business and Finance (+10%), Computer Operation (+15%), History (+20%), Lore: Magic Arcane (+25%), Lore: Mythology (+20%), Lore: Magic or Cults & Secret Societies (+15%), Research (+10%), Recognize Weapon Quality (+15%) or Public Speaking (+15%), and one Language: Other (spoken), and one Literacy: Other Language (written) skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +5% bonus to Communications and Technical skills and +12% to Paranormal Study skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: Add a +10% bonus to any one Lore or Occupational skill. This is the character's area of expertise or greatest interest.

Advantages: Enjoys the work, gets to travel a little, and a good reputation will earn the character the high regard of psychics, people interested in the unknown, paranormal, occult and magic, as well as colleges and private collectors across the region (State or Province) and perhaps the surrounding area (tri-state area, the Coast, etc.). The character makes good money and reasonable expenses (travel, hotel, etc.) to come and offer his opinion about the authenticity and value of ancient artifacts and collectibles, and if he has passed insurance accreditation, his appraisals are accepted by most insurance companies. The character knows a fair number of people including some wealthy collectors, museum staff people, other book dealers, colleagues and probably a number of people in the psychic underground community, including psychics. Has a 01-50% chance of tracking down or getting a lead on the whereabouts of most books except the truly rare and museum quality pieces. Of course, acquiring it may be an entirely different story. The character's good reputation and contacts also means he has a reasonable chance (01-66% chance +1% for each M.A. attribute point) to see, examine and handle rare books, scrolls and etchings in the possession of other dealers and private collections; inspections may or may not be supervised, and "associates" may not be allowed to join him. Gets access to odd items and magical arcane.

Disadvantages: If the character owns the business he has to spend time setting up and maintaining the shop or business, check in regularly (work at least twice a week and check in every day to handle problems) if he has a manager doing the day to day work, and relies on the sale of books to make his living; poor sales means trouble. Authenticating known books less than 300 years old and items well known to the character can take as little as 5-10 minutes. Ancient, rare and previously unknown or never before seen books, scrolls, and paper goods involve some research and take 6D6+12 hours of research.

This is a surprisingly competitive field with rivals constantly trying to steal clients by having book sales, guest speakers, larger selections, rarer items and better shows and auctions. They also enjoy discrediting each other by discovering and publicizing details those before them may have missed.

Pay: \$10 to \$20 an hour depending on how good the character is at his job and the size of the shop, plus 5-10% commission on items he locates for the shop and sells on consignment. That's \$20,000-\$40,000 in salary plus an additional amount equal to 1D4x10% the annual salary in yearly commissions. How much the character makes annually will ultimately depend on the hours he works.

A full-time employee working as an appraiser and sales person will work 10:00 A.M. till 8:00 P.M., but can work 4-6 days a week and can probably get part-time hours (2-3 days a week) or come in for special appraisals and shows/auctions/sales events, but annual income probably won't exceed \$20,000 even with commissions on sales.

Consultant and Appraisal work. A simple "eye-ball" appraisal of a comparatively known or new item (not more than 300 years old) can take 5-10 minutes and cost the customer anywhere from \$20 to \$50. Rare, old, strange and unknown books, diaries and other writings could take 3D6 hours of work to identify, authenticate and appraise at a cost of \$30-\$50 an hour. Truly ancient (2000 years or greater), previously unknown items and true magical tomes take 2D6+10 days of work at a cost of \$100 an hour plus reasonable expenses (if any). Appraisal fees are usually waived if the individual is willing to consign it over to the Antique Dealer for sale in his shop, at an auction or online, or an outright sale to him (typically 20%-50% of the anticipated sale price, the high end going to very rare and valuable items).

Exactly how much work the character does is up to him, but too little could give his competitors the leg up they are looking for, or cause the character to lose contacts, work, and access to artifacts.

Quarterly personal income for an *antique book shop owner* is as follows, roll for every quarter.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of sales at a Shop:

01-25% 1D8x\$1,000; sales have been terrible.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 +\$6,000; sales are so so.

51-60% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$8,000; good sales.

61-90% 1D4x\$10,000 +\$12,000; very good sales.

91-00% 2D4x\$10,000 +\$20,000; outstanding sales! Could take the next quarter off if he wants, and let the staff handle operations.

07-08% Artist: Illustrator Freelance: A highly skilled job that requires creative talent, self-discipline and work ethic. Most freelancers can work at home with totally flexible hours. Ultimately, the client wants a quality job on deadline. Should allow extra time for changes.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+4%), Art (+25%; professional quality), Computer Operation (+15%), Creative Writing or Sewing (+10%), Research (+10%), Wardrobe & Grooming (+10%), and Whittling & Sculpting (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but can also select *Disguise* (+10%), *Forgery* (+12%), or *Impersonation* (+5%) from the Espionage category and the character gets a +10% bonus to Domestic, Paranormal Studies and Technical skills. **Note:** May select two additional skills from the Rogue Category if the character grew up in a tough, urban environment like New York City, Detroit, Chicago or Los Angeles.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Can work at home, set your own hours and take on only as much work as needed to cover the bills. Plenty of time to research. The creative and imaginative mind makes the character open to endless possibilities, including the supernatural and magic.

Disadvantages: Better know how to manage your money, because payments on jobs usually show up 1D6 months late, and some jobs pay great while others pay lousy, especially for artists just starting out. Furthermore, as a freelancer, the artist gets no benefits, healthcare or vacation time, and bonuses and royalties are a rarity.

Pay: Artists typically get paid by the assignment/job, so whether it takes the artist four hours or four weeks to paint a cover (and fast is typically 2-4 days, average is 7-14 days) the artist gets the same amount. Common pay rates per common job (small companies and niche outfits pay on the low end of the scale, big companies and mass market on the high end).

- Advertising Art: Equivalent of doing one or two book covers as far as time, but pays \$15,000 to \$30,000. One third for a small-time outfit, half for a modest ad campaign.
- Advertising Story Boards or Concept Art: \$30 an hour or \$500 to \$1000 a full page or panel sequence.
- Automotive Airbrushing Designs: \$200-\$600 for a small job, \$800-\$1,600 for a medium job, and \$2,500-\$10,000 for the entire car; price varies with the quality and detail of the art.
- Book covers \$1,500-\$5,000 depending on the client and the artist's reputation. Wrap-around cover usually pays 50% more to double, but takes twice as long to create.
- Box cover (videogame, game, backing card for toy and other mass market, commercial jobs): \$10,000-\$24,000 (takes 10-20 days).
- Interior black and white illustration/comic book page (pencils & inks): \$150-\$500 per page, typically 24-28 pages of art in a comic. \$500-\$1000 for a comic cover. Most role-playing game companies, alternative comic companies and small outfits pay on the low end of the spectrum. Only top, mass market publications pay \$1,000 to \$3,000 for a single page of art.
- Sign Painting: \$500-\$1000 for an average storefront sign, \$2,000-\$6,000 for an entire wall/side or front of a building.

09-10% Artist: Fine Arts or Crafts: Exhibits and sells artwork at art shows, street fairs/festivals, and galleries, as well as online. May work at home or in a studio (rental) – totally flexible hours, though the

character needs to find time to create new works of art for exhibition and sale.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+4%), Art (+25%; professional quality), Computer Operation (+10%), Creative Writing or Sewing (+15%), Leather Work or Masonry (+15%), Research (+10%), Wardrobe & Grooming or Gardening (+10%), Performance or Public Speaking (+15%), and Whittling & Sculpting (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but can also select *Disguise* (+10%) or *Forgery* (+12%) from the Espionage category and the character gets a +10% bonus to Communications and Paranormal Studies, and +5% to Domestic and Technical Skills. **Note:** May select two additional skills from the Rogue Category if the character grew up in a tough, urban environment like New York City, Detroit, Chicago or Los Angeles.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Can work at home or in a studio, set their own hours and take on only as much work as needed to cover the bills. Plenty of time to research and do other things. The creative and imaginative mind makes the character open to endless possibilities, including the supernatural and magic. Get paid when a sale is made.

Disadvantages: No regular paycheck. Better know how to manage your money, because sales at gallery showings and art fairs may come and go. Art fairs are seasonal, mainly summertime. Self-employed artisans have no benefits or security.

Pay: Artists usually make a variety of items that can vary in price for \$10-\$20 to thousands of dollars.

- Small paintings, nicknacks, statuary, pottery: \$15-\$30 each.
- Medium-sized items, statuary, dolls, sculptures: \$50-\$500 each.
- Large paintings, sculptures or statuary: \$800-\$5,000.

Quarterly personal income for an *Artisan* doing show and gallery sales is as follows, roll once for every quarter.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of sales for an Artist:

01-25% 1D8x\$1,000; sales have been terrible.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 +\$5,000; sales are so so.

51-60% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$7,000; good sale.

61-90% 5D6x\$1,000 +\$10,000; very good sales.

91-00% 1D4x\$10,000 +\$20,000; outstanding sales! Could take the next quarter off if the artist wants.

11-12% Athletics: Amateur Competitor – Ex-College, Semi-Pro Athlete, or dedicated Amateur. This character loves athletics and has a history of being involved in sports, however, he or she has never attained professional conditioning or status. May get work at a recreation center or as a school coach, assistant coach, or camp or sports coordinator.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+6%), Aerobic Athletics or Running, Athletics (General), Climbing or Swimming (+20%), First Aid (+10%), Bicycling or Kayaking/Canoeing (+13%), Gardening or Dance (+10%) and, two Physical or W.P. Ancient skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +5% bonus to Communications, Domestic, Horsemanship, Technical and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: May be limited to weekends and certain days of the week, or a particular time of year; e.g. most active in Spring and Summer if employed by Parks and Recreation, with fewer Fall and Winter events. Likewise, if a coach of a particular sport, the work may be seasonal; Summer for baseball, soccer, and tennis, Fall for basketball and football, Winter for Hockey, and so on. Likely to have some weekdays and nights off, and may have 2-4 months off between seasons. Personal time before and after sporting events, and some interstate travel may be

involved, which may make the character privy to goings-on in a wider range of territory and have friends and connections in a large geographic area.

Pay: \$10.00-\$14.00 an hour for talented but unskilled laborer or amateur coach or activity coordinator for Parks & Recreation or a school (grade school or high school); \$20,000-\$30,000 annual income for full-time, half that for part-time (may be seasonal). Minimal benefits include medical with 50% co-pay on everything, including hospitalization, for full-time employment, nothing for part-time.

13-14% Athletics: Extreme Sports: This character is a skilled competitor and semi-professional athlete who regularly competes in tournaments, contests and events that pay *prize money* to the top 4-10 competitors. Events may include track and field, skateboarding, bicycling, motocross (dirt bikes), tennis, golf, skiing, swimming, bowling, and similar events.

Occupational Skills: Acrobatics or Gymnastics (+15%), Automobile (+13%), Climbing (+20%) or Running, Combat Driving, Performance or Public Speaking (+15%), Land Navigation (+10%), Motorcycle & Snowmobiles or Water Skiing & Surfing (+14%), and two Physical or two Rogue skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Communications, Horsemanship, Paranormal Studies, Physical (when appropriate), Transportation, and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 3, 4, 8, and 12.

Special Bonus: Add a +10% bonus to any *one* Physical or Transportation skill. May be added to an Occupational or Elective skill. This is the character's favorite and best event.

Advantages: Win enough competitions and the character can take it easy or spend time on other interests (like paranormal investigation). May compete only when money is needed or the event is fun, challenging or a sure win (at least in the character's opinion). Some events will be seasonal or regional. Likely to travel across the country, and perhaps even the world, to compete. Thrills, travel, fame (within that sport's circuit) and, with a little luck, money.

Disadvantages: Must find time to practice his craft, stay in shape, and compete in events. Must have the money, necessary equipment, and transportation to get to the competitions. And an injury doing other things outside of competition could prevent the character from competing, or knock him off his game for weeks or months of competitions, which could result in reduced income to no money for that entire quarter!

Pay: Depends on how good or lucky the character is doing. Prize money ranges, on average, from \$10,000-\$50,000 for first place, \$5,000-\$25,000 for second, \$2,000 to 10,000 for third, \$1,000-\$4,000 for fourth place and \$200-\$1,000 for the next six finishers in events that have up to ten prize winners.

Without actually having to role-play through each and every event (boring for the rest of the players, though a tournament can make a fun and different background setting for an adventure), roll on the following table to randomly determine how much the character has won every three months. The roll is made every quarter, but the character has probably participated in 8-24 competitions during that time.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Competition:

01-25% 1D8x\$1,000; lean times.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 +\$3,000; holding his own.

51-60% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$5,000; doing well.

61-90% 5D6x\$1,000 +\$10,000; doing great.

91-00% 2D4x\$10,000 +\$15,000; outstanding performance! Could take the rest of the year off if he wants.

15-16% Athletics: Fighting Competition – Boxing, Wrestling or Tough-Man Competitions: These characters are bruisers who enjoy rough and tumble sports. Many are big guys (though not generally fat).

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+5%), Body Building or Athletics (General), Boxing or Wrestling, Hand to Hand Combat of choice (excluding Assassin and Commando), Kick Boxing or Forced March, Performance or Seduction (+15%), Running or Swimming (+15%), and two Physical or two W.P. Ancient skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Communications, Domestic, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, Transportation, and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select one from the standard available categories at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

Special Bonus: Add a +10% bonus to any *one* Physical or Rogue skill. May be added to an Occupational or Elective skill.

Advantages: Win enough competitions and the character can take it easy or spend time on other interests (like paranormal investigation). May compete only when money is needed or the event is fun, challenging or a sure win (at least in the character's opinion). Some events may be seasonal or regional. Likely to travel across the country and perhaps even the world to compete. The excitement of battle, travel, fame (within that sport's circuit) and, with a little luck, money.

Disadvantages: Must find time to practice his craft, stay in shape, and compete in events. Must have the money, necessary equipment, and transportation to get to the competitions. And an injury doing other things outside of competition could prevent the character from competing, or knock him off his game for weeks or months of competitions, which could result in reduced income to no money for that entire quarter!

Pay: Depends on how good the character is or how lucky he's been. Prize money ranges, on average, from \$10,000-\$100,000 for first place, \$5,000-\$20,000 for second, \$2,000 to 5,000 for third, and that's it.

Without actually having to role-play through each and every event (boring for the rest of the players, though a tournament can make a fun and different background setting for an adventure), roll on the following table to randomly determine how much the character has won every three months. The roll is made every quarter, but the character has probably participated in 8-20 competitions during that time.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Competition:

01-25% 2D6x\$1,000; lean times.

26-50% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$6,000; holding his own.

51-60% 5D6x\$1,000 +\$10,000; doing well.

61-90% 1D6x\$10,000 +\$14,000; doing great.

91-00% 2D6x\$10,000 +\$24,000; outstanding performance! Could take the rest of the year off if he wants, but he's on a roll.

17-18% Athletics: Sportsman/Outdoorsman. A character who competes in outdoors sports and competitions such as fishing, hunting, cross-country hiking, etc.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+6%), Aerobic Athletics or Prowl (+10%), Fishing (+15%), Hand to Hand: Basic, Hunting, Land Navigation (+20%), Outdoorsmanship, Running or Swimming (+15%), W.P. Archery & Targeting, W.P. Rifles and two Physical or Wilderness skills of choice.

Elective Skills: Select five from the standard available categories plus Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Domestic, Horsemanship, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, Transportation, and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +1 to strike with any *one* Ancient or Modern W.P., or +15% to any one Wilderness skill. May be added to an Occupational or Elective skill.

Advantages: Win enough competitions and the character can take it easy or spend time on other interests (like paranormal investigation). May compete only when money is needed or the event is fun, challenging or a sure win (at least in the character's opinion). Some events may be seasonal or regional. Likely to travel across the country and perhaps even the world to compete. Gets to keep and cook his kill, plus the thrill of the hunt, travel, fame (within that sport's circuit) and, with a little luck, money.

Disadvantages: Must find time to practice his craft, stay in shape, and compete in events. Must have the money, necessary equipment, and transportation to get to the competitions. And an injury doing other things outside of competition could prevent the character from competing, or knock him off his game for weeks or months of competitions, which could result in reduced income to no money for that entire quarter!

Pay: Depends on how good the character is or how lucky he's been. Prize money ranges, on average, from \$10,000-\$70,000 for first place, \$5,000-\$25,000 for second, \$1,000-6,000 for third, and \$100-\$500 for the next 4-6 runners-up. Without actually having to role-play through each and every event (boring for the rest of the players, though a tournament can make a fun and different background setting for an adventure), roll on the following table to randomly determine how much the character has won every three months. The roll is made every quarter, but the character has probably participated in 8-20 competitions during that time.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Competition:

01-25% 2D6x\$1,000; lean times.

26-50% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$4,000; holding his own.

51-60% 4D6x\$1,000 +\$8,000; doing okay.

61-90% 1D4x\$10,000 +\$12,000; doing well.

91-00% 1D8x\$10,000 +\$20,000; outstanding performance! Could take the rest of the year off if he wants, but he's on a roll.



19-20% Automotive Mechanic. A grease monkey who enjoys working on cars, rebuilding engines and solving problems. May be male or female, young or old. May own his own garage, work for a garage or car dealer full-time or part-time, or work as a sort of handyman

taking odd jobs on sort of a freelance basis and helping out friends (the latter for cost or close to it). This is an occupation that may appeal to the Physical Psychic and Psi-Mechanic.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+12%), Athletics (General) or Physical Labor, Automotive Mechanics (+20%), Basic Electronics (+15%), Basic Mechanics (+20%), Computer Operation (+10%), General Repair & Maintenance (+15%), Locksmith or Roadwise (+10%), Streetwise or Streetwise: Weird (+14%), and two Transportation skills of choice (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but can also select *any* Mechanical skills and the character gets a +10% bonus on Mechanical, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Appealing to Physical Psychics and any character who likes to work with his hands. Good with cars, handy with machines, and good pay (and benefits if full time). Can usually find full-time or find part-time work anywhere. Likely to develop connections and a good rapport with locals and possibly police and car dealers, especially used car dealers (get 20% knocked off sticker price and they are a good source of part-time work). May have contacts, associates and friends in the automotive industry, community of car mechanics and used vehicle sales – that means car repairs for cost and great deals on used vehicles and parts. May also know about chop-shops and illegal operations (see *Roadwise* skill). There is always a demand for a skilled mechanic, but the work is demanding and can be backbreaking. He can probably pull down 30-42 hours working only three days a week and may be able to find work in the afternoon or nights, though most garages are open from 6:00 A.M. till 6:00 P.M., sometimes till 8:00 P.M. However, there are positions in factories and other shops that work around the clock, or at least afternoons.

Disadvantages: After a long day (10-14 hours) at the garage, the character may be too tired to go out adventuring on the streets. On days the mechanic is scheduled to work, he had better be there on time, sharp and ready to work. Missing scheduled work shifts, coming to work late or unprepared, accidents, and reckless behavior will get the character fired. And mechanics with a rep for being unreliable, off their rocker or reckless won't find work anywhere.

Pay: \$20-\$32 an hour, for an annual salary of \$40,000 to \$70,000. Part-time work for even two days (18-24 hours) a week could still net \$16,000-\$30,000, and working three days \$28,000-\$36,000 a year. Fair to excellent benefits and health care, paid holidays, and 2-4 weeks paid vacation depending on the employer. Fifty percent higher pay for working overtime at most facilities. A freelance mechanic or handyman doing odd jobs on his own time can make anywhere from \$20,000 to \$42,000 depending on how much or how little he works, but has no benefits.

21-23% Bounty Hunter/Manhunter. A professional, freelance, modern day bounty hunter. This individual is typically hired to track down fugitives who have jumped bail. May be hired by the court, an attorney, or family member, but typically by a bail bondsman (the guy who guaranteed the bail money on the condition the accused did not jump bail). May also freelance as a personal bodyguard, bouncer, and perform other jobs that require muscle, street smarts and fighting ability. This is an occupation that may appeal to the Physical Psychic, Latent Psychic and Psi-Mechanic.

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+10%), Body Building or Athletics (General), Boxing or Kick Boxing, Escape Artist or Interrogation (+10%), Hand to Hand Combat of choice (excluding Assassin and Commando), Law (+15%), Undercover Ops (+15%), W.P. Blunt, W.P. Handguns, and two Physical or two W.P.s of choice (Ancient or Modern) and two Rogue or Communications skills of choice (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Rogue, and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 4, 8, and 12.

Special Bonus: +1 to Perception Rolls, and add a +5% bonus to any one Rogue or Occupational skill.

Advantages: Loves the excitement, enjoys manhunting and brawling, gets to legally carry a concealed weapon, the hours are your own, and

work puts you on the streets where you want to be for investigating strange occurrences and the supernatural. Probably has some (and will

develop others through role-playing) contacts with the police, low-level criminals, street people and the owners and managers of select local establishments that cater to criminals and fugitives (i.e., certain bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, crack houses, and hangouts). Hunting human lowlives keeps the character sharp for hunting supernatural scum bags.

Disadvantages: Tough job, dangerous work, out of pocket expenses, and most police and other authorities tend to regard the bounty hunter as a loose cannon and a potential complication. Competition is fierce between other bounty hunters as well as law enforcement, all of whom may be searching for the same fugitive. Income varies.

Pay: Depends on how good the character is or how lucky he's been. Bounty rewards typically range from \$1,000 to \$5,000, with dangerous and clever fugitives ranging from \$5,000-\$20,000. The half million or million dollar reward is super-rare and only applies to the most ruthless killers, terrorists and dangerous criminals. Roll on the following table to randomly determine how much the character has earned every three months.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) of Bounty Hunting:

01-25% 1D10x\$1,000; lean times.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 +\$6,000; holding his own.

51-60% 4D6x\$1,000 +\$10,000; doing well.

61-90% 1D4x\$10,000 +\$14,000; doing great.

91-00% 2D4x\$10,000 +\$24,000; outstanding! Could take the rest of the year off if he wants, but he's on a roll.

24-25% Communications Engineer. Considered a highly skilled position. May be ex-military, could work for a radio or television station, telephone company, or anyone involved in communications, cable, and similar work.

Occupational Skills: Basic Mechanics (+15%), Electrical Engineer (+15%), Computer Operation (+15%), Computer Programming (+20%), Cryptography or Laser Communications (+15%), Electronic Countermeasures (+20%), Technical Writing (+20%), and four Communications skills of choice (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but can also select any Electronics skills (+15%), and gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Science and Technical skills (+10%).

Bonus Skills: If ex-Military (at least a 01-33% chance), the character also gets Hand to Hand: Basic, Running, W.P. Rifle, and two Military or Espionage skills of choice (+10%).

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 5 and 10.

Advantages: High pay, great benefits and the character can probably get part-time or consultation work.

Disadvantage: Unless a consultant or part-timer, the job requires the individual to be on location, wherever that may be.

Pay: \$35 to \$50 an hour on average; \$60,000 to \$100,000 annually for full time work; half that for part-time or freelance consulting. Ex-

cellent benefits for staff positions, including full medical, bonuses, possibly even stock options, but it means going to work, on site, at least five days a week.

26-27% Computer Programmer/Systems Engineer. Considered a skilled position. The worker spends most of his time writing programs, testing programs, creating utilities, tweaking software, and may do some technical support.

Occupational Skills: Basic Electronics (+10%), Computer Operation (+20%), Computer Programming (+24%), Electronic Countermeasures (+15%), Research (+15%), Technical Writing (+20%), and two Communications skills at +10%.

Elective Skills: Select seven from the standard available categories, but can also select Computer Repair, and gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical, and +5% on Science skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 5 and 10.

Advantages: Can work at home as a freelancer or subcontractor, and can send his work over the Internet if he wants. This means the programmer could be working for a company down the street or on the other side of the world. A good reputation means work can be attained anytime. The client only cares about results and meeting deadlines.

Disadvantages: Full-time and onsite jobs pay better and offer great benefits, but steal away personal time for other interests. Employers expect results. Failure to provide results will get the character fired.

Pay: \$20 to \$30 an hour on average; \$40,000 to \$60,000 annually for full-time work, double and triple that amount for programmers with a rep for being the best, or who specialize in troubleshooting. Excellent benefits for staff positions, including full medical, bonuses, possibly even stock options, but it means going to work, on site, at least three days a week. Staff positions may also pay 10% to 20% more, especially to have access to the best.

Note. A Computer Programmer may also do *web design* from his home or a small office. The character is part artist and part programmer. Earns about the same as above.

28-29% Computer Technician. This is the hardware guy. Focuses on physical upgrades, modifications, customization, data retrieval, and fixing other people's mistakes and problems. Considered a skilled position.

Occupational Skills: Basic Electronics (+10%), Computer Operation (+15%), Computer Repair (+25%), Electronic Countermeasures (+15%), General Repair & Maintenance (+20%), Jury-Rig (+10%), Sensory Equipment (+10%), Technical Writing (+10%), and two Communications skills of choice (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, and gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills, and +5% on Science skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 5 and 10.

Advantages: A whiz at computer repairs and customization and can start a business from a spare bedroom or the garage, building and servicing computers for businesses and/or personal computers. Can also do basic repair work on other electronic devices. As a private business or a freelance troubleshooter, the hours are very flexible.

Disadvantages: As a troubleshooter, the character has to be available whenever his clients need him and may be on call, like a doctor. Managing one's own business is even more flexible, but the tech needs to find time to make repairs and build new computers.

Pay: \$20 to \$30 an hour on average; \$40,000 to \$60,000 annually for full-time work. Increase that number by 50% to triple for hardware that is built or customized and sold. \$25,000 to \$35,000 if the character

works only three days a week. NO benefits for the self-employed, full benefits for a full-time employee.

30-31% Construction Worker/Crane Operator. A skilled laborer involved in building, carpentry, excavation, and the use of heavy machines (cranes, trucks, earthmovers, etc.). Work that appeals to guys who like to build, work with their hands, and solve problems.

Occupational Skills: Basic Electronics (+10%), Basic Mechanics (+15%), Body Building or Hand to Hand: Basic, Carpentry (+20%), Escape Artist or Locksmith (+15%), Excavation or Mining (+20%), General Repair & Maintenance (+10%), Jury-Rig (+10%), Masonry or Boat Building (+15%), Physical Labor, Radio: Basic (+10%) and Tracked Vehicles (+16%).

Elective Skills: Select a total of seven from the standard available categories, plus *any* Mechanical skills, and APCs & Tanks, and any Demolitions skills from the Military category, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Demolitions, Mechanical, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 5 and 10.

Advantages: Ideal for characters who like to be outside, build and don't mind working hard to make big bucks. These skilled laborers are always in demand and can find full-time or part-time work anywhere. In fact, part-time work and short jobs (one week or 2-8 weeks at a time) are frequently available for these experts. Although known for their expertise at operating cranes, other heavy tracked construction vehicles and heavy construction (office buildings, hotels, skyscrapers), most are also handy at taking apart, fixing and building anything and everything – shelves, tables, kitchens, plumbing, and on and on. It also keeps the character physically strong and able to handle himself in situations where brawn is an advantage.

Disadvantages: Backbreaking work, long hard hours when the character is working, and even on short assignments for 2-8 weeks, the character will be expected to work six days a week, 10-12 hours a day, and will not have any extra time to do anything else while on the job.

Pay: \$40 to \$60 an hour on average; \$80,000 to \$120,000 annually for full-time work, about \$55,000 working part-time, and even taking odd construction jobs as needed or desired for 3-4 months can pull down \$30,000 or \$40,000 for the year. Great medical and insurance on the job, none when a part-timer leaves the job unless he maintains it on his own at a cost of about \$400 a month.

32-33% Criminal: Con Artist/Huckster. Not all characters are good guys, and this one uses his charm and gift for gab (and any suitable psychic powers) to cheat people out of money, valuables and information.

Character Note: A player character may be an irascible rogue rather than an all out criminal, or supposedly a reformed con man who now applies his abilities against the bad guys. Suitable for NPC (Non-Player Character) villains as well.

Alignment Note for Player Characters: The alignment of this character cannot be better than *Unprincipled* (is tempted to take advantage of anybody, but works hard at trying to do the right thing most of the time and con only bad guys and evildoers), *Anarchist* (self-serving and shows loyalty to those who have earned it, everyone else is a "mark"), and *Aberrant* (evil with a twisted code of honor).

Occupational Skills: Find Contraband (+14%), Gemology or Appraise Antiques (+15%), Hand to Hand: Basic, Intelligence (+16%), Performance (+20%), Public Speaking (+15%), Seduction (+20%), Streetwise (+20%), Streetwise Weird (+15%), and two Rogue or Espionage skills of choice (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories plus Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Domestic, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +1 to initiative, and add a +10% bonus to any *one* skill that is the character's area of speciality or special interest.

Advantages: The hours are your own and you meet a lot of interesting people. Loves mental games, pretending, deceiving and tricking people for fun and profit. Tends to fly by the seat of his pants; quick thinking, charming and resourceful. Has a lot of free time and flexible hours. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with a lot of different people from a lot of walks of life, including low-level criminals, business people, ordinary folks and possibly police and/or the media/reporters.

Disadvantages: A felony record, fingerprints in the national data system, a reputation in certain circles for being a cad and cheat. If a known con artist, the authorities have no reason to like, trust or believe anything this character has to say, and are likely to assume that he is trying to con them to save his own hide or for some other reason that will work to his advantage. If also a known psychic or pretending to be a psychic even if he or she has *no* genuine psychic abilities, he will be known as a con man throughout the psychic community and disliked by most. This is the kind of guy who gives genuine psychics a bad name and hurts the trusting people who come to him for spiritual guidance. Any characters who associate with a "fake psychic" will see their reputation tarnished with other psychics, scholars, paranormal investigators and researchers, and the authorities.

Pay: May depend on what the character can con/trick out of people whether it is a donation or grant supposedly for paranormal research, or to help the homeless, or save the whales, or the fee to commune with a deceased love one. Get the idea? Of course, such a "crook" can only be an Anarchist or evil alignment and may not be liked or trusted by his teammates (Unprincipled alignment only if he targets evildoers). Moreover, this character will also engage in outright thievery if there is an easy opportunity; the temptation is just too much for him to resist. **Note:** Principled and Scrupulous characters will not turn a blind eye to such thievery and will interfere to protect the innocent.

Many of the character's con games should be played out in the course of game play, but also assume the character has some action going on outside the scope of the game (gambling, sports betting, and con games) that nets him the following every quarter; roll percentile every three months.

Earnings for One Quarter (3 months) from Gambling and Confidence Games:

01-25% 1D8x\$1,000; lean times.

26-50% 2D6x\$1,000 +\$4,000; holding his own.

51-60% 3D6x\$1,000 +\$6,000; doing well enough.

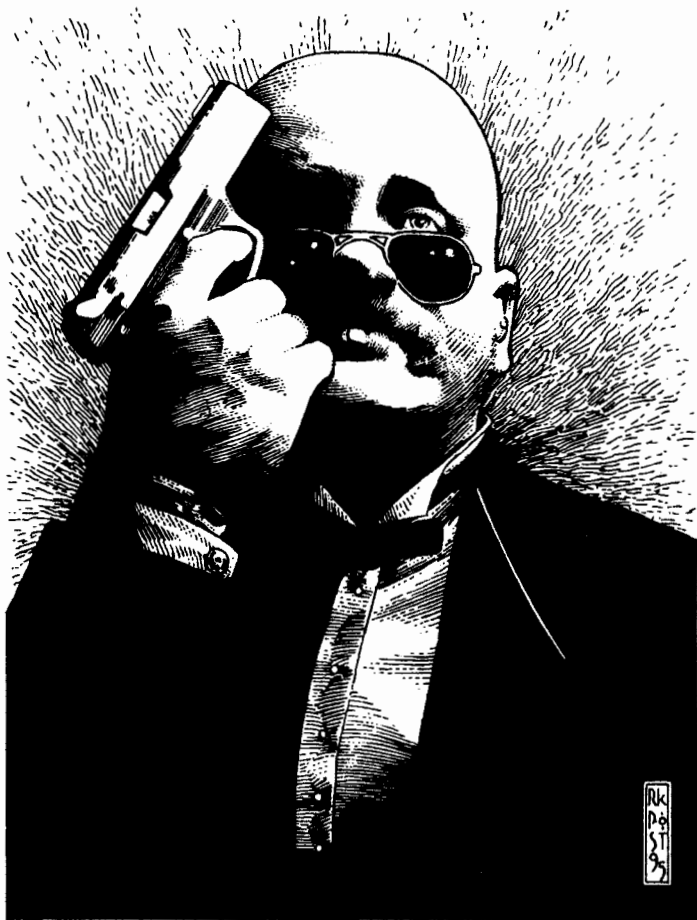
61-90% 4D6x\$1,000 +\$10,000; doing good.

91-00% 6D6x\$1,000 +\$20,000; doing great, why stop now!?

Criminal: Espionage. See Espionage Agent elsewhere in this section.

34-35% Criminal: Hit Man/Assassin. A hired gun who kills people for money. Probably a bad guy and a stone cold killer. May work for the mob, the government, or freelance as a mercenary working for any government, company or individual who can afford him. **Character Note:** A player character who is not evil may be a government agent, a merc who only sells his services to liquidate "supernatural targets" (i.e., monsters, demons, cultists and evil practitioners of magic), or a character who hunts the supernatural at no charge (has a real job) out of revenge. The latter two may be appealing to the *Ghost Hunter* and *Physical Psychic*, and possibly the *Psi-Mechanic* as well. Suitable for NPC (Non-Player Character) villains as well.

Alignment Note for Player Characters: The alignment of this character cannot be better than *Unprincipled* (is tempted to use violence to



solve all his problems, but works hard at trying to do the right thing and save his anger or frustration for the bad guys), *Anarchist* (self-serving and shows loyalty to those who have earned it, everyone else is fair game), and *Aberrant* (evil with a twisted code of honor).

Occupational Skills: Boxing, Hand to Hand: Martial Arts or Assassin, I.D. Undercover Agent (+20%), Munitions Expert (+15%), Prowl or Climb(+15%), Recognize Weapon Quality (+15%), Sniper, Streetwise (+15%), Streetwise Weird (+15%), Tracking (+20%), Undercover Ops (+15%), W.P. Handguns, W.P. Rifle, and one W.P. Ancient of choice.

Elective Skills: Select eight total from the standard available categories plus Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Physical, Rogue, and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +1 to strike with any one W.P. Modern Weapon or any one W.P. Ancient Weapon; the killer's weapon of choice.

Advantages: The hours are your own and you meet a lot of interesting people, at least until they die. Either enjoys killing (may be a sociopath) or the thrill of being the hunter. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with a lot of different people from a lot of walks of life, including some low- and high-level criminals, business people, arms dealers, other guns for hire and possibly bounty hunters and police.

Disadvantages: A felony record, fingerprints in the national data system, and, if a criminal/hit man, is probably *wanted* by the police for murder. If the latter is the case, the character is probably considered armed and dangerous, and law enforcement is authorized to use *deadly force* in his apprehension. Authorities are likely to shoot first and ask questions later, and his associates (the player group) may be seen as his criminal accomplices or fellow vermin. Similarly, even a good guy with a vendetta against the supernatural and/or practitioners of dark

magic is certain to make his share of enemies on the street eager for revenge. This could be a liability for the player group as the entire group may be targeted for retribution.

Pay: If a vigilante hunter/killer of the supernatural and related villains, the character may have to rob from his victims to get money and/or also hold down at least a part-time job. Probably something nondescript and low paying like simple manual labor, stocking shelves, flipping hamburgers, bartender, or working as a bouncer or bodyguard, etc. (the latter three paying about \$15 an hour plus a bonus of 1D4x\$100 a night for a job well done).

A low-end or beginner hit man with mob or drug connections gets paid 1D10x\$1,000 per hit and may get work as a personal bodyguard or leg-breaker between assignments (the latter paying \$1,000 a week). A high-end assassin/hit man gets \$30,000-\$60,000 per hit, but is hired to hit the most dangerous, difficult or high-profile targets. **Note:** Only very high-profile targets like politicians, police commissioners, TV personalities, a mob boss, terrorist leader, rogue assassin and similar targets command a price of \$250,000 to one million dollars and are extremely rare. The big dollars paid for murder shown in the movies is a myth, most street hits are done for \$2,000-\$10,000, but most of the "hitters" are just bloodthirsty punks and street soldiers. Paying \$20,000 to \$60,000 is top dollar and buys a top professional. **Note:** Principled and Scrupulous characters will not condone cold-blooded murder, torture, or brutality, which can only lead to conflict within the group when dealing with a contract killer.

36-37% Criminal: Professional Thief. Not all characters are heroic, and this one is a self-serving thief.

Character Note: A player character may be a thief with a heart of gold, or an anti-hero who is supposedly a reformed thief now applying his thieving skills against real criminals and supernatural forces of evil. May also be a reformed thief turned *Security Specialist* or *Detective* or *Espionage Agent*. If so, he is officially one of those occupations and gets paid accordingly, but uses the skills below. Suitable for NPCs as well as player characters.

Alignment Note for Player Characters: The alignment of this character cannot be anything other than *Unprincipled* (steals only from bad guys and not nice people), *Anarchist* (selfish), or *Aberrant* (evil with a code of honor).

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+14%), Climb or Running (+15%), Hand to Hand: Basic, Law (+10%), Pick Locks (+20%), Palming (+20%), Pick Pockets or Basic Electronics (+15%), Prowl or I.D. Undercover Agent (+15%), Streetwise (+12%), and two Rogue or Espionage skills of choice (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories plus Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +1 to Perception Rolls, and add a +5% bonus to any one Rogue or Occupational skill.

Advantages: Hates working at a real job, loves the excitement of robbing others, and stealing is easy for him. The lifestyle provides the character with a lot of free time and flexible hours. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with low-level criminals, drug dealers, gang-bangers, fences, smugglers, other small-time crooks and the owners, managers and workers at select local establishments that cater to criminals, gamblers and lowlifes (i.e., certain bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, crack houses, and hangouts). A reformed thief *might* also have a few connections with the police and/or security companies.

Disadvantages: A felony record, fingerprints in the national data system, a reputation on the street that might get the thief ratted out by two-bit hoods or street people who know the character and may have heard something about him through the grapevine. Worst, the authori-

ties have no reason to like, trust or believe anything this character has to say, and are likely to assume the worse of this individual.

Pay: Depends on what the thief can steal and how easy it is to sell on the street or fence. Cash is preferred, drugs (prescriptions and illegal drugs), jewelry and electronics are favored next, in that order. Typically only gets 10%-20% of the real value from a fence and pawnshops, 50%-100% from a sucker on the street ("Hey buddy, wanna buy a Rolex?"). Selling stolen goods is something a player should role-play through. **Game Master's Note:** Consider and play the consequences of the thief's actions; i.e., cheating a thug or criminal may result in pay-back later. Getting caught by the police will mean jail unless he can give them the slip or work out a deal. Likewise, stealing from a suspected cultist, mage, witch or bad guy with supernatural ties will have similar dangerous consequences. So will stealing a rare artifact or magic item that may have the owner and his henchmen or demonic forces searching to get it back, and giving trouble to the rest of the group, and they may not even know why. Likewise, stealing an item that is enchanted, cursed or possessed could lead to serious (or humorous) trouble for the thief and his associates.

Getting hired to steal something for a "client" (mobster, wealthy individual, business person, evil sorcerer, etc.) can earn the character \$1,000-\$5,000 and anything else he can put in his pockets without jeopardizing what he's come to steal. Being hired to steal the target item and nothing else pays the thief \$10,000 to \$30,000, but if the employer finds out that the thief also stole other items when he wasn't supposed to, it could earn him a severe beating, a broken kneecap, and half to no payment, and might even get him killed depending on who he has just crossed. Payment is usually on completion of the job, with perhaps, "one large" (a thousand dollars) paid as a retainer. Reasonable travel expenses may also be involved, though local crooks are usually hired to pull a local job.

See *Security Specialist* for salary as a security system consultant, and *Espionage Agent* for spy work.

Detective: See Private Detective.

38-39% Espionage Agent. Industrial, criminal, law agency or government spy (and not necessarily *your* government). Despite what spy movies and fiction books depict, most real spies are not trained assassins, thieves, glamorous people or tricked out with gizmos and gimmicks. Most are ordinary looking, avoid attention or violence. Spies are information thieves, stealing secret (military or industrial) designs, patents, ideas, small prototypes and information. They may also tail, observe, and gather intelligence (info) much like a detective, that will benefit his employer in some way, and may involve using the information to leverage or blackmail a worker, client, a rival, or an enemy. And psychic abilities, especially Psi-Sensitive abilities, are ideal for spy work.

Character Note: A player character may be a professional spy who works for private industry and skirts around being an actual criminal even though he engages in breaking and entering, steals documents, computer files and information, helps to blackmail people and so on, because he is discreet and works for a "legitimate" corporation. Others may be ex-military intelligence still plying their trade as a mercenary or freelance spy for law enforcement agencies, the military, private industry, and individuals who can afford them without "technically" being a criminal. Such freelance work has the spy designated as a "consultant." This character may also ply his trade to get work as a Private Eye or as a Security Specialist. Of course, some are plain old crooks who engage in stealing, extortion and selling secrets to the highest bidder (including the person or corporation he stole it from), and possibly sabotage, but seldom murder. A player character might also be an active government undercover agent (your government or a foreign one) that has infiltrated the player group to learn more about the group, a specific evil-doer they are tackling, or the supernatural or paranormal in general. He

might even be out to recruit them! Suitable for NPCs as well as player characters.

Alignment Note for Player Characters: Any alignment is applicable depending on how the character conducts himself and the types of clients and jobs he takes. For example, a government agent could be good, selfish or evil, a reformed spy, good, selfish or evil, etc.

Occupational Skills: Computer Operation (+25%), Computer Hacking (+20%), Disguise or Escape Artist (+20%), Find Contraband (+14%), Hand to Hand: Expert or Martial Arts, Intelligence (+20%), Photography (+15%), Surveillance (+25%), Undercover Ops (+30%), and two Espionage and two Rogue skills of choice (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Espionage and Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus Communications, Espionage, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +2 to Perception Rolls and double the P.C.C. dollar amount in savings.

Advantages: Can always find part-time and freelance work. Loves the excitement and mind games; has a good head for strategy and tactics, and knows how to play on human behavior. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with low-level criminals, fences, smugglers, other small-time rooks and the owners, managers and workers at select local establishments that cater to criminals, gamblers and lowlives (i.e., certain bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, crack houses, and hangouts). An agent who regularly works for the government, military or law enforcement will also have a few connections with that agency(s).

Disadvantages: Even if the spy has managed to avoid a felony record, he will have worked (and probably gotten his training) from the military/government, law enforcement or a bonded company and has his fingerprints in the national data system. Spies like to be *invisible* and are not likely to have a reputation except in the elite circles where he wants one. That means, however, he probably has no street credit and may be challenged or questioned by even low level street hoods and may be mistaken for an undercover cop.

Pay: \$50-\$100 an hour for a staff position, plus great benefits, and bonuses; the character's work title: "Head of Security" or "Security Consultant" or "Special Operations Consultant."

Freelance Espionage agents get paid by the job plus reasonable expenses (travel, hotel, special equipment). The bigger, more complicated, risky, dangerous, or illegal, the higher the price.

Small: \$1,000-\$8,000. **Medium:** \$10,000-\$50,000. **Big/Risky:** \$100,000-\$250,000; uncommon. **Impossible/Super-Risky:** \$500,000 to two million; rare. **Game Master's Note:** Consider and play the consequences of the spy's actions.

40-41% Entertainer: A professional singer, musician, dancer, comedian, clown, juggler, media actor (commercials, bit parts on television), stage actor, voice actor (radio, TV commercials, cartoons), and similar forms of public entertainment. The actor is skilled and competent, but like most actors is not big-time and makes a modest living. Considered a skilled profession.

Occupational Skills: Body Building or Aerobic Athletics, Dance (+15%), Impersonation or Disguise (i.e., make-up and costume, +15%), Impersonate Voice & Sound or TV/Video (+15%), Play Musical Instrument (one of choice +20%), Performance (+20%), Public Speaking (+15%), Seduction or Gambling (+10%), Sing (+20%), and Wardrobe & Grooming (+20%).

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +5% bonus to Communications, Domestic, Paranormal Studies, Technical and Transportation skills.

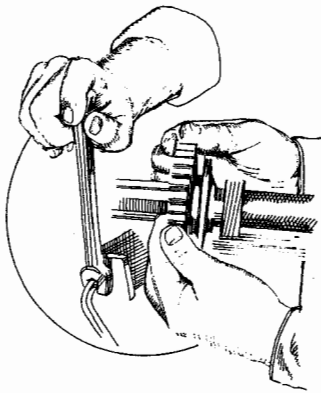
Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +2 to M.A. or P.B. attribute.

Advantages: A good amount of time between jobs, and the work is rewarding and fun. May have some connections in local radio and television, as well as community service and entertainment colleagues. May only have to work evenings, or 3-4 days a week. Since entertainers have a reputation for being quirky and eccentric, any ties to the paranormal or supernatural probably won't have any negative impact on their career.

Disadvantages: The character tends to be memorable and may be recognized due to his work in the entertainment business. Getting bruised up or injured could have a negative impact on the occupation and lose jobs.

Pay: Full-time, modestly successful entertainer makes \$50,000-\$80,000 a year; a part-timer \$25,000-\$35,000 a year. A typical appearance in a commercial or print ad pays \$300-\$1,200, a small part on a TV show pays \$1000 to \$2000, voiceover or musical studio work \$50-\$100 an hour. A gig at a club (D.J., singer, dancer, musician, comedian, etc.) pays \$200 to \$1,200 depending on the quality and popularity of the entertainer and the size of the establishment doing the hiring. Personal appearances at private functions/parties pays \$400 to \$1,500. Big gigs will pay double on the high end but that's it. Probably no benefits or healthcare.



42-43% Factory Worker. This character may work for a big corporation like the steel or automotive industry, or a small independent machine shop. It's hard work, operating heavy machines and presses or working on an assembly line doing parts installation, building or servicing.

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+4%), Athletics (General) or Outdoorsmanship, General Repair & Maintenance (+10%), Physical Labor, Gambling or Streetwise (+10%), Hand to Hand: Basic, Salvage or First Aid (+15%), two Physical or two Rogue skills of choice (+10%), and two Mechanical or two Military skills of choice (+10%; if the latter; the character is ex-military).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Domestic, and Transportation skills. **Note:** May select a total of two additional skills from the Rogue or Physical Categories if the character grew up in a tough, urban environment like New York City, Detroit, Chicago or Los Angeles).

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 3, 7, 11 and 15.

Special Bonus: If ex-military the character also gets W.P. Rifle and Military Etiquette.

Advantages: Good to excellent pay and benefits. Part-time work may or may not be available. Many factories have two or three shifts, so a character looking for days off can probably find it in the factory. Likewise, one can usually get a buddy to "trade" shifts in an emergency. Methodical work gives the character plenty of time to think about things while working. The union should prevent the character from getting fired for being late or missing as many as 16 days of work, provided the rest of his work is on par.

Disadvantages: Hard work means the character is tired at the end of his shift. Rigid work schedule locks the worker into his scheduled hours. Part-time time means few or no benefits.

Pay: \$15 to \$20 an hour for part-time, \$20-\$30 for full time, plus time and a half for overtime, at least at the big factories. That's \$40,000 to \$62,000 a year; half for part-time. Plus a full coverage health plan. Repair personnel and managers make 30-50% more.

44-45% Firefighter/Fire & Rescue: Skilled but high-risk profession. May be part of a Fire Department, rescue unit, or a rescue team for private industry.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+10%), Body Building, Climb (+20%), Computer Operation (10%), Cook or Brewing (+15%), Excavation (+20%), Firefighting (+25%), Paramedic (+10%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Rope Works (+25%), Truck (+14%), and W.P. Axe.

Elective Skills: Select seven from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Domestic, Medical, Science, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +2 to Perception Rolls when dealing with fire, firefighting, rescue and the aftermath of a fire.

Advantages: Good pay and benefits, and can usually find full-time or part-time work anywhere. Likely to develop connections and a good rapport with police, other firefighting units, and hospital personnel at select hospitals. This probably means favors and priority treatment for the character from all of these contacts, associates and friends. High demand for fire and rescue personnel means the character can probably dictate his own schedule when it comes to swapping shifts with buddies on the job. Three shifts a day means the character can work days, afternoons or nights, pull double-shifts for overtime money (50% more than the usual hourly rate) or work 3-4 (12-16 hour) days a week and still pull down 40-50 hours worth of pay. The character also knows something about fire, how it moves, the damage it can do and if a fire is suspicious.

Disadvantages: The stress of the job – a firefighter puts his life on the line every time the truck rolls out – takes its toll on the character, and there will be some days where he just cannot be available to investigate the supernatural. Firefighters are expected to be sharp, responsible and ready at a moment's notice. Missing scheduled work shifts, coming to work late or unprepared, accidents, and reckless behavior will get the character fired. And a firefighter with a rep for being unreliable, off his rocker or reckless won't find work anywhere.

Pay: \$18-\$25 an hour, for an annual salary of \$37,000 to \$50,000. Part-time work could still net \$17,000-\$25,000 a year working as little as three days a week. However, many fire departments insist on having full-time employees only. Excellent benefits and healthcare, paid holidays and 2-6 weeks paid vacation.

Government Agent: See *Espionage Agent*.

46-47% Journalist/Media Reporter. May be a tabloid sensationalist reporter, a newspaper or magazine reporter, photojournalist, TV or radio reporter, online journalist, investigative reporter, beat reporter, or news researcher, and similar media journalists. Whatever the character's exact title or medium for presenting the news, he is a "news hound" always on the prowl for an interesting story, breaking news or an exclusive.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+8%), Computer Operation (+15%), Creative Writing (+10%), Find Contraband or TV/Video (+10%), History or Law (+15%), I.D. Uncover Agent (+12%), Performance or Public Speaking (+10%), Photography (+15%), Research (+20%), Streetwise (+12%), and Wardrobe & Grooming (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select seven from the standard available categories,

but the character gets a +10% bonus to Communications, Domestic, Paranormal Studies, and Technical.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at levels 1, 5 and 10.

Special Bonus: +1 to Perception Rolls and a +10% bonus to one skill of choice (his area of expertise or special interest).

Advantages: Good pay and benefits for full-time reporters with a signed contract to work exclusively for one paper. Hours are flexible, though a story may require around the clock coverage or long hours of research, and the boss expects the reporter to be out on the street digging up a story. A reporter should also have access to the employer's data files and archives, with some newspapers and television news archives going back a century or more!

Part-time and freelance opportunities also abound. Press/Media credentials will get the character into places most civilians can't go, and may get interviews and information from people who want to talk or seeking their 15 minutes of fame – and a good reporter is skilled at exploiting people's guilty consciences, desire to speak out, or to be famous ("Will I be on TV?").

A reporter is likely to develop connections and a good rapport with select people on the street and at city hall, and possibly with members of the police department and local hospitals. Some even pay \$20-\$100 for hot tips from a regular roster of informers at city hall, the police department, hospitals, the morgue and celebrity hot spots (probably clerks, assistants and employees rather than actual police, nurses, doctors or the business owner). The news agency may also have its own network of contacts and news resources.

Disadvantages: The stress of the job – constantly scrambling for leads and a fresh angle on a story, seeing a terrible trim and editing job that ruins the piece, and waiting to get paid. In addition, for every person who loves the media and wants a chance to be a celebrity, there are two who distrust, dislike, and even loathe the media. These people are not likely to open up and may try to avoid reporters and get violent if they are hounded. Likewise, a reporter who is disliked or nosing around may find the tires of his car slashed, the windshield egged, and other acts of petty vandalism.

Pay: \$28,000 to \$45,000 is a typical, full-time, reporter's salary, plus possible bonuses. Freelance reporters get paid by the article and/or photograph, roughly \$200 to \$600 per typical article, \$700-\$1,500 for a special feature, and \$2,500 to \$5,000 for a front page story, big breaking news or an exclusive (x3 that amount if the story is resold to other national syndicates or the national news; uncommon). Front page articles usually deal with a major crisis, expose, conspiracy, whistle blower, an odd or spectacular murder or crime, police corruption, and the involvement of politicians, government officials, or celebrities. A mega-story could bring in five to ten times as much, plus movie and book rights, but that kind of opportunity is super-rare.

And even a small story is NOT likely to be one about paranormal investigators, demons, ghosts, or aliens, unless the reporter happens to be from a sleazy, supermarket tabloid that specializes in sensational headlines or the weird, like the *Weekly World News*. Such tabloids pay roughly the same as above for articles, and double and triple for a really good, authentic photo. Freelancers in any market who have built themselves a name/reputation that sells papers can command two or three times the going rate.

48-49% Lawn & Landscaping/Gardener/Grounds Keeper. The character is trained (probably on the job training) in the care, grooming, trimming and nurturing of trees, plants and gardens, as well as the aesthetics of garden design. Although cutting grass and trimming hedges is part of this job, there is much more to it than that. **Game Design Note:** Strange as it might sound, we ran a couple characters with this occupation in several play tests and it was fun to play.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+10%), Botany (+10%), Gardening (+24%), General Repair & Maintenance (+10%), Identify Plants

and Fruit (+30%), Land Navigation (+12%), Masonry or Whittling (+10%), Physical Labor or Climb (+10%), and Rope Works (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Domestic, Medical (Brewing and Holistic Medicine only), Technical and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select seven from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Seasonal in most parts of the country, so work is slow in the winter months even if the landscaping company also does snow removal. During the Spring and Summer most evenings are free after 8:00 pm. Part-time positions are always available, especially if one is willing to work weekends and have all or most weekdays off. Long hours (6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) means the character can work three days and still get in 42 hours of work, leaving four days a week and evenings available for *personal time*.

Pay: \$9-\$12 an hour for unskilled labor, migrant workers, high school and college kids; \$14.00 to \$16.00 for highly skilled labor and long-time employees; \$20,000-\$32,000 annual income. Minimal benefits include medical with 50% co-pay on everything, including hospitalization.

50-51% Medicine: Medical Doctor. A highly skilled professional healer. May be a general practitioner, surgeon, specialist or researcher.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+4%), Advanced Math (+12%), Biology (20%), Chemistry (+15%), Computer Operation (15%), Medical Doctor (+20%), Pathology (+20%), Technical Writing (+25%), and Toxicology (+20%).

Elective Skills: Select ten from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +15% bonus to Medical, Science, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: High pay, great benefits, and can usually find full-time or part-time work anywhere. Hospital privileges gives the character access to complete medical facilities (operating room, surgical equipment, X-ray machine, EKG, and other medical equipment, medical library, hospital records, drugs, first-aid equipment, and advice and assistance from staff and colleagues). Hours may be flexible for established and well known doctors, and there are areas of medical work like research, pharmaceuticals R & D, forensics, teaching and advisory positions that could take the doctor away from patients and put him in a lab or office.

Disadvantages: Although skilled doctors will always be able to find work anywhere, the patients and hospital chiefs will not be happy about frequently calling in sick, coming in late, lost time or missing scheduled work days, and such behavior will get the character fired. Furthermore, a Doctor is *likely* to be on call around the clock and expected to respond to emergencies. Nor will most employers tolerate unauthorized use of the facility or missing drugs. In fact, stolen or missing drugs and misappropriation of hospital facilities can lead to dismissal, lawsuits, and criminal felony charges, so any unconventional use of medical facilities will have to be done very discreetly. Too many malpractice claims or a large claim will send the doctor's malpractice insurance payments sky-high and ruin a doctor's reputation. Public association with psychics or involvement in high-profile incidents involving the paranormal, the occult and the supernatural may label the doctor a quack and damage (reduce pay by half) or ruin his career (reduce pay by 75%).

Pay: \$50-\$1000 an hour depending on the doctor, the facility and the medical procedure. Annual salaries can range from \$200,000-\$700,000 annually (though \$200,000 to \$500,000 is the norm). A part-time position or consultant or specialist work could still net \$100,000-\$150,000 a year. Excellent benefits for part-timers and full-time doctors, both getting superior health care, paid holidays and full-timers 6-8 weeks paid vacation and profit sharing.

52-53% Medicine: Paramedic. A modestly skilled professional in a high stress job that gets little respect and has life and death demands placed on them. May be part of a fire and rescue unit, hospital or a private ambulance service.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+20%; including ambulance), Automobile Mechanics or Basic Mechanics (+15%), Body Building or Aerobic Athletics, Combat Driving, Computer Operation (15%), Paramedic (+20%), Radio: Basic (+10%), Roadwise (+30%), and Sensory Equipment (+20%).

Elective Skills: Select six from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Domestic, Medical, Science, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select six from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Good pay, good benefits, and can usually find full-time or part-time work anywhere. Likely to develop connections and a good rapport with police, firefighters, and hospital personnel at select hospitals and clinics. The latter probably means favors and priority treatment for the character from these contacts, associates and friends. High demand for ambulance drivers means the character can probably dictate his own schedule as well as swap shifts with buddies on the job. Three shifts a day means the character can work days, afternoons or nights, pull double-shifts for overtime money (50% more than the usual hourly rate) or work 3-4 (12-16 hour) days a week and still pull down 40-50 hours worth of pay. The character also knows all the streets, shortcuts and back alleys (see Roadwise skill).

Disadvantages: The stress of the job – constantly fighting traffic, dealing with the very (often critically) sick and injured, and the responsibility of stabilizing the patient and getting to an emergency room as quickly as possible – takes its toll on the character, and there will be some days where he just can't be available to deal with the supernatural. Although paramedics are always in demand, too many accidents, reckless behavior, callousness and missing too many scheduled work periods will get the character fired.

Pay: \$15-\$22 an hour, for an annual salary of \$30,000 to \$43,000. Part-time work could still net \$17,000-\$22,000 a year working as little as two days a week. Excellent benefits for part-timers and full-timers, both getting good healthcare, paid holidays and 2-4 weeks paid vacation.

54-55% Medicine: Psychiatrist/Psychologist. A doctor specializing in mental illness, personality disorders, stress, anxiety, and the therapy and other treatments to alleviate the problems. The main difference between the two professions is a psychologist is a therapist and cannot usually prescribe medicine, and a psychiatrist has a stronger medical background and can prescribe medication (has the Chemistry: Pharmaceutical skill and may be an M.D.). Both are highly skilled professionals.

Occupational Skills: Anthropology (+20%), Biology (+10%), Chemistry (+10%), Chemistry: Pharmaceutical or Parapsychology (+20%), Research (+15%), Computer Operation (+10%), Lore: Superstitions (+20%), Lore of choice (+15%), Psychology (+25%), Technical Writing (+20%), and Toxicology (+20%).

Elective Skills: Select nine from the standard available categories plus any Medical skill, and the character gets a +15% bonus on Medical and Science skills, and +5% on Communications, Paranormal Studies and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Advantages: May have his own practice, work for a hospital or private clinic part-time or full-time, or serve as a consultant, specialist or researcher for a hospital, clinic, the authorities and/or private industry. May also teach at a community college or university. Good pay, great benefits, respect, and can usually find full-time or part-time positions

anywhere. Hospital privileges gives the character access to complete medical facilities, including the medical library, hospital records, drugs, first-aid equipment, and advice and assistance from Medical Doctors, hospital staff and colleagues. Hours should be flexible (mornings, afternoons or evenings, weekdays or weekends) unless on call for emergencies (and even a part-timer will be expected to see a patient in an emergency). Connections with doctors, colleagues and possibly social workers and the police.

Disadvantages: Psychic investigation and paranormal research under laboratory conditions is one thing, but street vigilantism or being associated with psychics and/or being on the record as believing in ghosts, demons, magic, alternative medicine/psychic healing, and similar elements of the paranormal or supernatural may brand the character as a quack and lose him hospital privileges. It may also hurt his practice, reducing his annual income by 1D4x10%. A very outspoken advocate of the paranormal or alternative medicine may be fired and have trouble finding work for more than half the usual pay, and consultant work is probably right out.

Assuming all else is fine, a doctor or therapist *may* be on call and expected to respond to emergencies around the clock, and failure to do so could have serious consequences for the patient (and potential lawsuits for the doctor). Too many or too large malpractice claims can send malpractice insurance payments sky-high and ruin the character's reputation.

Pay: \$100-\$200 an hour for therapy or consultation with a psychologist or psychiatrist is average. Annual full-time salaries range from \$200,000-\$400,000 annually, part-time work could still net \$80,000-\$160,000 a year, working as little as two days a week or on a part-time consultant or specialist basis. Excellent benefits for part-timers and full-timers, both getting superior healthcare, paid holidays and full-timers 6-8 weeks paid vacation, and profit sharing benefits.

56-57% Medicine: Veterinarian. A skilled professional healer of animals; primarily domesticated animals from cats, dogs and house pets to horses and livestock.

Occupational Skills: Animal Husbandry (+20%), Biology (+15%), Breed Dogs (+15%), First Aid (+20%), Lore: Cattle & Animals (+15%), Toxicology (+10%), Veterinary Science (+20%), and Zoology (+15%).

Elective Skills: Select ten from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus to Horsemanship, Medical, Paranormal Studies, Science and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select six from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Good pay, good benefits, and can often find part-time work. The character's knowledge of animals and biology may also be helpful in identifying new species of animals, mutations, aliens and Supernatural Predators and other inhuman beasts. Access to veterinary medical facilities (operating room, surgical equipment, anesthesia, animal tranquilizers and drugs, X-ray machine, and similar).

Disadvantages: Although skilled doctors will always be able to find work, the patients and their owners rely on the character being available and the employer will not be happy about frequent sick days, coming in late, lost time or missing scheduled work days; they will get the character fired. Furthermore, the veterinarian *may* be on call and expected to respond to emergencies. Nor will most employers tolerate unauthorized use of the facility or missing drugs. (Of course, he'll never know if the character cleans up well and replaces any valuable drugs or equipment.)

Pay: \$15-\$25 an hour; \$30,000-\$50,000 annually. No or minimal benefits for part-timers. Good to excellent benefits for full-time employees, including healthcare, paid holidays and 2-4 weeks paid vacation.

Military Note: Professions from the military are not presented because they are not suitable for most player characters. Military occupations are typically reserved for defense and combat operations in foreign countries, not domestic soil. Furthermore, the comings and goings of military personnel are greatly restricted and under direct military supervision. In short, a soldier's life is regimented and not his own (no flexible hours to go adventuring on the streets to battle the supernatural). Military occupations may, however, appear in a future BTS-2 sourcebook.

Parapsychologist. See *Parapsychologist P.C.C.*



58-59% Police Officer, Beat Cop, Patrol Car Officer. This is your average police officer who responds to reports of criminal activity, violence and suspicious goings-on.

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+12%), Body Building or Athletics (General), Combat Driving, Hand to Hand: Expert, Law (+25%), Military Etiquette (+10%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Running, Streetwise (+20%), W.P. Blunt, and W.P. Handguns.

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Physical, Technical and Transportation skills. **Note:** May also select any or all of the following skills as an Elective: Detect Ambush (+10%), First Aid (+15%), Recognize Weapon Quality (+10%), Roadwise (+5%), and Streetwise: Weird (+10%).

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories at level one, plus one at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12.

Special Bonuses: +2 to pull punch and +1 to roll with impact.

Advantages: Loves the excitement and the idea of helping people and protecting the innocent. Carries a legal sidearm (.38 revolver or 9mm pistol), enjoys discretionary judgement on the streets, has the entire police department and its data files as a resource, and develops some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with members of other police departments, fire and rescue, and select hospital personnel, as well as street contacts (local businesses, and people in the neighborhoods and on the street). Might also have a couple of low-level criminal contacts. Other cops are likely to cover for minor in-

fractions to help a buddy or a fellow cop. Dealing with human vermin keeps the character sharp for hunting supernatural menaces.

Disadvantages: Tough, dangerous work that puts the character in the line of fire every day. Questionable respect, some people love 'em, others do not trust or like the police. Full-time positions only, and a tight schedule, but three shifts should allow the character to pick days, afternoons or nights. Police are bonded so their fingerprints are in the local and national system. Getting involved in paranormal investigation or battles with the supernatural may call the officer's credibility and behavior into question, and result in reprimands or being kicked out of the department. The latter only if the lawman is accused of criminal activities or vigilantism.

Pay: \$35,000 to \$45,000 annually, may be able to increase that amount by 10% to 20% working overtime/double shifts. It is illegal for a police officer to take on part-time work outside the department in establishments that serve liquor, or which involves detective or guard work.

60-61% Police Detective/Crime Scene Investigator: An experienced police officer trained in crime scene investigative techniques and surveillance.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+8%), Body Building or Athletics (General), Combat Driving, Crime Scene Investigation (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert, Intelligence (+12%), Interrogation (+15%), Law (+25%), Military Etiquette (+10%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Running, Streetwise (+10%), Surveillance (+15%), W.P. Blunt, W.P. Handguns and W.P. Shotgun or Rifles.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Physical, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 4, 8, and 12.

Special Bonuses: +1 on Perception Rolls and +2 to pull punch.

Advantages: Has a good head for puzzles and finding clues to put away the bad guys. Enjoys helping and protecting the innocent. Carries a legal sidearm (.38 revolver or 9mm pistol), enjoys discretionary judgement on the streets, has the entire police department and its data files as a resource, and develops some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with members of other police departments, fire and rescue, select hospital personnel, as well as street contacts, paid informers, and low-level criminals, including, pawnshop owners, fences, and the owners, managers and workers at select local establishments that cater to criminals, gamblers and lowlives (i.e., certain bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, crack houses, and hangouts). May also know a few Private Detectives, reporters and government personnel. Other detectives and cops are likely to cover for minor infractions to help a buddy or a fellow officer. Dealing with human vermin keeps the character sharp for hunting supernatural menaces.

Disadvantages: Tough, dangerous work that puts the character in the line of fire every day. Questionable respect, some people love 'em, others do not trust or like the police. Full-time positions only, and a tight schedule, but three shifts should allow the character to pick days, afternoons or nights. Police are bonded so their fingerprints are in the local and national system. Getting involved in paranormal investigation or battles with the supernatural may call the officer's credibility and behavior into question, and result in reprimands or being kicked out of the department. The latter only if the lawman is accused of criminal activities or vigilantism.

Pay: \$40,000 to \$55,000 annually, may be able to increase that amount by 10% to 20% working overtime/double shifts. It is illegal for a police officer to take on part-time work outside the department in establishments that serve liquor, or which involves detective or guard work.

62-64% Police Undercover Officer/Surveillance Specialist. A detective who specializes in surveillance and undercover operations, stings and infiltration.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+8%), Body Building or Running, Electronic Countermeasures (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert, Intelligence (+12%), Interrogation or Seduction (+15%), Law (+20%), Military Etiquette (+10%), Performance (+15%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Streetwise (+12%), Streetwise: Weird (+10%), Surveillance (+20%), Undercover Ops (+20%), W.P. Blunt, and W.P. Handguns.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Espionage and Rogue at +10%, but the character also gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Physical, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 4, 8, and 12.

Special Bonuses: +2 on Perception Rolls and +1 to pull punch.

Advantages: You have to be cool, calm and resourceful to be an undercover officer (M.E. of 12 or higher recommended). This means the character is always thinking and good at pretense and perhaps even disguise. The undercover agent seems to be able to make him or herself at home in any situation or setting and fade into the background or play whatever role is necessary. It's exciting and challenging work, but also very dangerous. More than any other police officer, the undercover operative will have many contacts, associates and informers (half of whom won't even know he's a cop) in all walks of life, including criminals and others who can help him on the street. May also know a few Private Detectives, reporters, government agents, and *psychics* may be part of his network of contacts and informers (especially if the officer is a psychic himself). Having psychic abilities is a big plus in this profession.

Like most police officers, the character enjoys all the usual resources, data bases, discretionary judgement, and support of his fellow officers. Other detectives and cops are likely to cover for minor infractions to help a buddy or a fellow officer. Dealing with human vermin keeps the character sharp for hunting supernatural menaces.

Disadvantages: Undercover work places the officer in the middle of trouble and in harm's way from both sides when shooting erupts. Questionable respect, some people love 'em, others do not trust or like the police. Full-time positions only, and a tight schedule, but three shifts should allow the character to pick days, afternoons or nights. Police are bonded so their fingerprints are in the local and national system. Getting involved in paranormal investigation or battles with the supernatural may call the officer's credibility and behavior into question, and result in reprimands or being kicked out of the department. The latter only if the lawman is accused of criminal activities or vigilantism.

Pay: \$38,000 to \$52,000 annually, may be able to increase that amount by 10% to 20% working overtime/double shifts. It is illegal for a police officer to take on part-time work outside the department in establishments that serve liquor, or which involves detective or guard work.

65-66% Police Tactical Assault/SWAT. These are effectively the *commandos* and combat specialists of the Police Department. They deal with barricaded gunmen, terrorists, hostage situations, bomb disposal and other extraordinary circumstances.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+10%), Climb (+20%), Demolitions (+20%), Demolitions Disposal (+20%), Detect Ambush (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert or Martial Arts, Law (+15%), Military Etiquette (+15%), Prowl (+10%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Running, Sign Language (military; +20%), Tracking (+15%), W.P. Handguns, W.P. Rifles, and W.P. Heavy Military Weapons.

Elective Skills: Select five total from the standard available categories plus any Electrical, Mechanical, and Military skills, all with a +10% bonus, and the character also gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Physical, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 3, 7 and 12.

Special Bonuses: +2 to strike with modern weapons/guns, +1 to pull punch and +1 to roll with impact.

Advantages: Loves the thrill of combat and the idea of helping and protecting people. Carries a legal sidearm (.38 revolver or 9mm pistol), uses Kevlar body armor, and is allowed to deploy military issued weaponry (rifles, explosives, etc.) in situations that warrant them. Knows how to work as part of a team and is a loyal, team player. Has the entire police department and its data files as a resource, and is usually backed up in combat/crisis situations by police officers. May have a few street contacts, but not as many as other law enforcement officers regularly on the streets. The SWAT officer will, however, have contacts within the police department and possibly some military contacts as well. Dealing with human vermin makes the character eager to exterminate the supernatural kind.

Disadvantages: SWAT has a decades long reputation for using excessive violence and commando tactics when "softer" methods might have done just as well without violence. SWAT is called out for only the deadliest of situations involving firearms, explosives, booby-traps, hostage situations, madmen and terrorists. And like the marines, they are the ones who go in first. Questionable respect, some people love 'em, but many others distrust and hate SWAT. Full-time positions only, and a tight schedule, but three shifts should allow the character to pick days, afternoons or nights, though most SWAT members are on call 24/7. Police are bonded so their fingerprints are in the local and national system. Getting involved in paranormal investigation or battles with the supernatural may call the officer's credibility and behavior into question, and result in reprimands or being kicked out of the department. The latter only if the lawman is accused of criminal activities or vigilantism.

Pay: \$40,000 to \$50,000 annually, may be able to increase that amount by 10% to 20% working overtime/double shifts. It is illegal for a police officer to take on part-time work outside the department in establishments that serve liquor, or which involves detective or guard work.

67-70% Private Detective/Private Eye. A professional detective skilled at tracking down people and information, surveillance and security operations. Having psychic abilities only helps the character excel in his or her chosen occupation ("great instincts, Chuck!"). Also see *Security Specialist* and *Espionage Agent*.

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+6%), Basic Electronics (+10%), Computer Operation (+15%), Crime Scene Investigation (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert, Photography (+15%), Research (+15%), Roadwise or Streetwise (+20%), Safe-Cracking or Find Contraband (+15%), Surveillance (+20%), Tracking (+10%), Undercover Ops (+15%) and W.P. Handguns.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Espionage and Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Espionage and Rogue skills, and +5% on Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

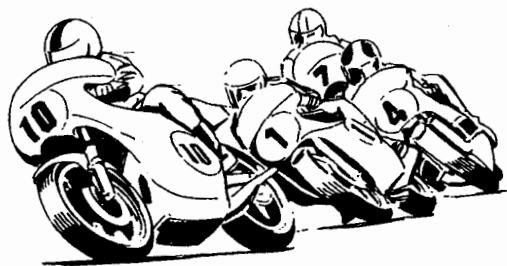
Special Skill Bonus: +1 on Perception Rolls.

Advantages: Full-time and part-time work is easy to find. The hours are flexible, the detective can pick and chose the clients he wants (unless desperate for money), and he enjoys observing human nature in action. This individual also enjoys solving puzzles, piecing together clues, and gathering information and collating data. On routine stake-outs, the detective has time to think about other extracurricular activities and run ideas through his head, or mentally analyze clues and events from the days before. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with other detectives, psychic investigators, debunkers, a few police officers, and low-level criminals, drug

dealers, gang-bangers, fences, smugglers, and pawnbrokers. The detective will also know about entertainment hot-spots and be an acquaintance of some of the owners or managers and workers at select local establishments, including those that cater to cheating husbands, criminals, gamblers and lowlifes (i.e., certain bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, crack houses, and hangouts).

Disadvantages: All detectives are bonded and have their fingerprints on record in the system. Some may also have a reputation on the street, though most detectives try to keep a low profile. That's good, because most establishments don't want trouble and a good Private Eye never lets the subject know he or she is being observed. The character may have good or bad rapport with the authorities, but if it is a good rapport, the police will expect the P.I. to *share* tips and information with them, and will get angry if a "P.I. buddy" doesn't share with them. Police also expect the detective to stay out their way during an investigation, and to obey the law.

Pay: \$26,000 to \$35,000 working part-time (3 days a week), \$50,000 to \$70,000 annually, and may be able to increase that amount by 10% to 20% working overtime/double shifts or doing consulting or security work for businesses. Most Private Detectives have a permit to carry a concealed weapon, i.e., handguns.



71-73% Professional Driver. The character drives a taxi, limo, delivery truck, semi-truck, bus or race car for a living.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+14%), Automotive Mechanics (+10%), Combat Driving, Hand to Hand: Basic, Physical Labor, Radio: Basic (+10%), Roadwise or Streetwise: Weird (+14%), Truck (+16%), W.P. Blunt, and three Transportation skills of choice each at +14%.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Domestic, Physical, Paranormal Studies, Technical and Transportation skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 4, 8, and 12.

Advantages: The character sees and hears a lot of things on the road, and will catch wind of rumors, paranormal activity and strangeness. Flexible hours: days, afternoons or nights and has time to read or research while waiting for the truck to be loaded and unloaded, waiting at border crossings or waiting for clients. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with other drivers, radio dispatchers, and transportation colleagues, and possibly some local police officers. May also know about local "hot spots" such as popular restaurants, local attractions, notable (for being good, bad, or criminal hangouts) bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, and hangouts.

Disadvantages: When on the job, he can't take more than an hour in "lost time" and must meet delivery deadlines and other driving obligations. The character is responsible for the vehicle and/or cargo/passengers, and any harm to them that results from the driver's negligence is likely to get him fired. A reputation for carelessness or trouble will make it hard for the character to find good jobs (reduce pay by 1D4x10% and may have to take hours he'd rather not). **Note:** People tend to notice a taxi or a big truck especially in residential neighborhoods, but *nobody* ever questions what a tow truck is doing in any neighborhood, city or country.

Pay: \$22,000 to \$28,000 working as a truck, taxi, or limo driver part-time, 3 days a week. \$40,000 to \$70,000 working full time. Race

car drivers income can be \$60,000 to \$200,000 racing full-time, mainly in the Spring, Summer and Fall, and mainly on weekends.

Psychiatrist/Psychologist. See *Medical* for this occupation.

74-78% Psychic Investigator. Specialists in dealing with the supernatural and the unknown. An individual who chose this profession has an open mind about the paranormal and the supernatural, or is an actual psychic himself (any P.C.C.), and seeks to understand and learn more about the unknown. Most have had some experience in dealing with supernatural threats and know how to handle themselves against them.

The services offered by a Psychic Investigator (or similar person or business) are likely to include determination of a supernatural or magic presence, the nature of that presence (benign, evil, hostile, dangerous/deadly, harmless, mischievous, etc.), the root cause of the disturbance (magic, ley line, psychic, dimensional portal, Haunting Entity, possession, Supernatural Predator, etc.), and a practical solution to the problem (extermination, communication/negotiation, relocation, a means of protection, and so on). Other services might include consultation and advice, protection from supernatural forces (bodyguard, surveillance or extermination), and scientific and/or historical research in regard to the history of an area or building, the person or enchanted object, that may be responsible, recommendations and psychic contacts, and so forth.

The role of Psychic Investigator is especially appealing to *Autistic Psychic Savants*, *Fire Walkers*, *Ghost Hunters* and *Physical Psychics* who all see themselves as psychic warriors, and who enjoy battling supernatural evil and exterminating monsters. Although they may not be as adept in actual combat, the *Psychic Sensitive* (able to feel, sense and track the supernatural), *Medium*, *Latent Psychic* (with a combination of Sensitive and other psionic powers), as well as the *Psi-Mechanic*, also make excellent *investigators* and *trackers* of the supernatural. Many Psychic Investigation Agencies employ a variety of psychics (including Healers and Mediums) as well as sleuths without any psychic abilities to create a **team** with a wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities. **Note:** The player characters could all be members of such a team. Any P.C.C. can become a Psychic Investigator provided they have the interest, patience and skills necessary. In fact, ALL player characters are something of Psychic Detectives whether they think of themselves as such or not. The Psychic Investigator is simply a character who makes a living at the job. Unlike researchers, these characters go out into the field like real detectives, and may stakeout a haunted house or troubled area, investigate a crime scene, and so on, just like any detective.

Occupational Skills: Computer Operation (+10%), Detect Concealment (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert, Research (+10%), Intelligence or Interrogation (+15%), Streetwise (10%) or Combat Driving, Streetwise: Weird (+20%), Surveillance (+15%), W.P. Handguns or W.P. Blunt, Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%), Lore: Entities & Ghosts (+20%), and three Lore skills of choice (each +15%).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus any Espionage and Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Rogue skills and +5% on Espionage and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 3, 6, 9, and 12.

Special Bonus: +2 on Perception Rolls.

Special Skill Bonus for Non-Psychic: If an ordinary person, not a psychic, the character gets two additional Espionage or Lore skills at +10%.

Advantages: The character makes a living investigating and analyzing the paranormal, magical and supernatural. May also be hired as a freelance investigator or consultant for the government, law enforcement, and private industry, but their main clients are private individuals. They like troubleshooting and helping ordinary people deal with supernatural problems.

May also accept conventional detective work, using psychic abilities to find clues and information that conventional detectives don't have access to. However, the character has to be careful because a "psychic reading" (Object Read, Clairvoyance, Precognition, etc.) is considered nothing more than a "hunch" or "gut feeling," and is NOT evidence of any sort nor probable cause. It does, however, give the psychic a leg up on conventional detective techniques. **Note:** A psychic may also be a *Private Detective* without revealing he or she is psychic. See that occupation for skills and details.

Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with the local media, police, and fellow P.I.s (private investigators), as well as the Lazlo Society website and perhaps the Lazlo Agency itself.

Disadvantages: Skills focus more on Paranormal Studies than actual police/detective skills and procedures, the idea being that the psychic abilities and intuition compensate for lack of real detective skills. Probably has a lousy or questionable reputation (quack) with other Private Eyes and the police, and seldom gets their full cooperation – mocked and poked fun at by trained professional investigators who don't believe or trust in psychic powers.

Pay: Varies. The Psychic Investigator may charge a flat fee (a few hundred dollars to \$1000-\$4000) or an hourly rate (\$30-\$50 per), but often makes allowances for those who don't have money and will often help those being tortured by the supernatural for very little, even free, figuring to make up for it on the next job. Average full-time income ranges from \$45,000 to \$80,000, plus reasonable expenses; half that amount for part-time work. Only the best of the best making \$120,000 to \$250,000. May subsidize income with magazine articles and consultant work (psychic or conventional detective services). Gets 2D4x\$100 per article and writes 1D4+2 of them a year; gets \$50-\$100 an hour as a consultant (double for corporate clients who can afford it), and 1D4x\$1,000 to testify as an expert witness in a court case involving the paranormal, magic or the supernatural, but that is uncommon (once or twice every year or two).

79-84% Psychic Professional. It is easy and cheap for a psychic to start his own business as a "Professional Psychic." All the character has to do is hang out a shingle, drop a thousand or two on advertising, hit a few psychic fairs, and count on word of mouth to do the rest. Professional Psychic may offer one or more of the following services to the public: Psychic readings, aura readings, tarot card reading, clairvoyant services, mediumship (communicating with the dead), channeling, life counseling, hypnotherapy, psychic healing or other related paranormal services – will do parties, events and phone readings (or not).

The character can work alone or with other psychics, from a room in the back of a home or a small storefront or modest business office. Busy streets lined with other shops and services and college campuses make the best locations for brick and mortar establishments, or the psychic can travel, working the psychic fairs and making appointments by telephone. Note that this is the "classic" commercial psychic's approach, and probably the character's main source of income. Ghost and monster hunting, psychic vigilantism and battles with the forces of darkness are probably done quietly on the side. Likewise, psychics who offer Exorcism, psychic interventions and ghost and monster extermination usually make these service known only by word of mouth, which is a lot more effective than one might imagine. ("Jessica's a good person. She and her friends saved us from our, um, problem last Autumn. You can count on her discretion. Here's her number.")

Alignment Note: Characters in this profession tend to be Principled (30%), Scrupulous (35%) and Unprincipled (25%), but can be any alignment.

Occupational Skills: Computer Operation (+10%), Detect Concealment (+20%), Parapsychology or Holistic Medicine (+15%), Photography (+10%), Research (+15%), Streetwise: Weird (+20%), Lore: Demons & Monsters (+20%), Lore: Entities & Ghosts (+20%), Lore:

Magic or Magic Arcane (+20%), and four Lore skills of choice (each +15%).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue skills, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select three from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 2, 4, 7, 10, and 13.

Special Bonus: +1 on Perception Rolls.

Advantages: Pay may be poor and the work can be dangerous sometimes, but helping others is its own reward. Besides, the hours are the character's own, providing great flexibility and plenty of freedom to explore and combat the supernatural. Helping people who are desperate and have nowhere else to turn not only generates the kind of buzz that brings in new clients, but also creates a network of grateful individuals who may be willing to help the psychic at a later time if the opportunity arises.

Disadvantages: For every grateful client who is willing to help the psychic, there are five who want to forget the incident ever happened and want nothing to do with psychics or the paranormal ever again. The job tends to lack respect and credibility, and isn't something you can put on a resume without raising eyebrows. The public and the authorities probably consider the psychic to be a quack or pretender. Let's face it, how many people are going to buy into a sort of underground network of vigilantes who deal with supernatural forces of evil? (Enough actually, because true believers and those who have had all too frightening encounters with the supernatural show tremendous respect for the profession and make up most of the Professional Psychic's clients.)

Pay: Varies. The Professional Psychic typically charges a flat fee (\$25-\$60 for most readings, \$100-\$600 for more elaborate services, and \$30-\$50 an hour for investigative type services and services that require travel). The Psychic often makes allowances for those who don't have money but are suffering at the hands of evil forces, and will often help those in torment for very little or even for free. Average full-time income ranges from \$32,000 to \$50,000; half that amount for part-time work. Only the best of the best make \$120,000 to \$200,000. May subsidize income with magazine articles and consultant work for the police, detective agencies, and private individuals and businesses; gets \$50-\$100 an hour as a consultant. Most psychics tend to avoid public appearances or testifying in court (they usually get turned into laughing stocks).

85-88% Scholar/University Professor/Engineer or Scientist. Basically any highly educated and skilled academic profession. May teach on the high school or university level, be a skilled technician, or involved in research and development, and similar fields.

Occupational Skills: Computer Operation (+20%), Creative or Technical Writing (+20%), Cryptography (+20%), History (+15%), Language: Other (spoken; +15%), Literacy: Other Language (written; +20%), Research (+25%), Public Speaking (+15%), Wardrobe & Grooming (+10%), and four skills all selected from one of the following categories: Communications, Electrical, Mechanical, Medical, Paranormal Studies, Science or Wilderness at +20% (the scholar's area of expertise).

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories plus Electrical, Mechanical and Science, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Domestic, Communications, Electrical, Mechanical, Paranormal Studies, Science and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at levels 1, 3, 7, 11, and 14.

Special Bonus: An additional +10% on any one skill; the character's area of expertise or an area of special interest.

Advantages: Highly educated and knows a great deal about many different subjects. Can get work as a teacher, researcher or advisor almost anywhere. Tenure at a university will give the Professor access to

adjunct assistants and student teachers who can manage 50% of his work load, making a full-time position effectively part-time, but this is usually available only to Geniuses (as in the P.C.C.) and experienced Professors. Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with other people in academia, as well as some unusual and interesting walks of life (explorers, scientists in various fields, psychics, etc.).

Disadvantages: A scholar, not a fighter, poorly suited for combat situations. May tend to overanalyze and want volumes of data before making a decision. Getting involved in criminal, vigilante or high profile incidents involving the paranormal or cults could get the character fired or pay reduced by 30% along with tighter reins on his outside activities.

Pay: Part-time work or consulting work earns the character \$32,000 to \$42,000 annually for 2-3 days work. Full-time position pulls down \$50,000 to \$90,000.

89-91% Security Specialist/Consultant. Installs and tests security systems, looks for weaknesses, as well as performing high end security/guard duty, stake-outs and investigation. This occupation is part detective, part thief and part guard, and focuses on security measures to protect people and defend their homes and businesses from intruders. May be a reformed thief who now applies his thieving skills against the real criminals (and supernatural forces). Having psychic abilities is always a plus in this line of work.

Occupational Skills: Automobile or Motorcycle (+8%), Basic Electronics, Climb (+15%), Hand to Hand: Expert or Martial Arts, Optic Systems (+15%), Pick Locks (+20%), Prowl (+15%), I.D. Undercover Agent (+15%), Radio: Basic (+15%), Surveillance (+20%), T.V./Video or Electronic Countermeasures (+15%), and W.P. Handguns.

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +1 on Perception Rolls, +1 on initiative and +2 to pull punch.

Advantages: Three shifts for guard duty, though Security Specialists get the tough and high profile assignments. Working on a consultant basis, the character has no set hours, though he may be on 24 hour call and expected to answer emergency calls any time of the day or night. Meets a lot of interesting people. Likes to think he's making a difference and enjoys the challenge or thwarting bad guys (and supernatural horrors). Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with other security people, detectives/investigators, and police. A reformed thief *might* also have a few connections with low-level criminals and places of ill-repute.

Disadvantages: All guards and security personnel are "bonded" and have their fingerprints in the national registration system. Being on call and pressing business will interfere with investigations into the unknown and battling supernatural evil. Crooks and people in general tend to underestimate and dismiss guards for hire and even Security Specialists as second-rate, "rent-a-cops."

Pay: Part-time work or consulting work earns the character \$25,000 to \$30,000 annually for 2-3 days work (16-24 hours a week), \$5,000 to \$10,000 more can be earned if long hours (12-16; equivalent to 1-2 extra days work) are put into the job. A full-time salary is \$50,000 to \$75,000 a year. Increase by 50% if a highly regarded "expert." Failure to "secure" can hurt that rep and income.

Getting hired to test a security system by breaking into or circumventing it can cost the client \$1,000-\$10,000. Also see *Criminal: Thief and Espionage Agent*.

92-93% Skeptic/Debunker. The Nega-Psychic is the ultimate skeptic, regardless of what his official *occupation* may be, but there are other skeptics out there, and the occupation of debunkers may appeal to them or the Nega-Psychic. A debunker is someone who does not believe psychic ability, the supernatural or magic are real. They fiercely cling to science and go around trying to find rational explanations to paranormal phenomena, even if it's like forcing a square peg into a round hole. They also denounce psychics as charlatans or misguided individuals, and scoff at the notion of real magic spells and demonic beings.

Occupational Skills: Anthropology (+15%), Basic Electronics (+15%), Basic Mechanics (+15%), Computer Operation (+10%), Creative Writing (+12%) or Technical Writing (+15%), Detect Concealment (+20%), Forgery (+5% to forge, +20% to identify forgeries/trickery), Impersonation (+10%), Research (+20%), Streetwise: Weird (+15%), Lore: Aliens & UFOs, Lore: Cults & Secret Societies, Lore: Magic and two Lore skills of choice (all at +15%).

Elective Skills: Select six total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, Science and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select two from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 2, 4, 6, 9, and 12.

Special Skill Bonus: If an ordinary person, not a Nega-Psychic, the character gets three additional skills that can be selected from Paranormal Studies, Rogue and/or Science skills at +10%.

Advantages: The character makes a living investigating and analyzing the paranormal, magical and supernatural, consulting for the government, law enforcement and private industry, making radio and television appearances, and writing magazine articles and the occasional book on the subject. May also teach at a high school or college or work as a Stage Magician if the right Rogue skills are selected. Loves his job and probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with the local media, police, and fellow skeptics (the latter on a national level via the Internet).

Disadvantages: So blinded by conviction that the supernatural and paranormal are not real that the character will not believe his own eyes, and will create or accept any plausible explanation and insist that is the answer or "real truth." See the *Nega-Psychic P.C.C.* to get a clear idea of how a skeptic and debunker thinks and acts. Disliked and distrusted by the psychic community, and seldom gets their full cooperation knowing the individual will somehow twist whatever they say or do to discredit them or the profession.

Pay: \$28,000 to \$40,000 as an academic (teaching or researching) full time; half that for part-time work. Subsidizes income with magazine articles and consultant work. Gets 2D4x\$100 per article and writes 1D6+6 of them a year; gets \$30-\$50 an hour as a consultant; 1D4x\$100 for a TV appearance, half for radio; and 1D4x\$1,000 to testify as an expert witness in a court case involving the paranormal, magic or the supernatural, but that is uncommon (once or twice every year or two).

94-95% Stage Magician/Trickster: This character is a professional entertainer and master of sleight of hand magic tricks. May work on stage, at bars, nightclubs and restaurants, as well as do parties, conventions, and private events.

Occupational Skills: Cardsharp (+20%), Disguise or Escape Artist (+15%), Palming (+20%), Concealment (+16%), Juggling (+15%), Performance (+15%), Pick Locks (+15%), Pick Pockets (+10%), W.P. Knife or W.P. Sword.

Elective Skills: Select seven total from the standard available categories plus Rogue, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Domestic, Paranormal Studies, Rogue and Technical skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories at level one, +1 additional skill at levels 2, 4, 8, and 12.

Advantages: If psychic, the character uses his special gifts in his show without anybody suspecting it's anything more than a trick. As a Stage Magician, the character is also likely to seem friendly and approachable. Work dates and times can usually be tailored to the character's other vocation (i.e., psychic investigation). Probably has some (and will develop others through role-playing) contacts with actors, agents, and the owners, managers and employees at clubs and entertainment establishments, and possibly some civic associations and politicians via performing at fund raisers. May also know about local "hot spots" such as popular restaurants, local attractions, notable (for being good, bad, or criminal hangouts) bars, nightclubs, strip joints, blind pigs, rave sites, and hangouts.

Disadvantages: When on the job, he can't take time out, and once a gig is booked the Stage Magician *must* make his appearance otherwise refunds will have to be made and no-shows will quickly ruin his career. The character is responsible for his own props, costume, make-up and transportation. A good reputation and favorable response from the audience guarantees future bookings, a bad performance, displeasing the crowd or no appearance means getting more employment will be difficult in the future. Likewise, brawling, drunkenness and carelessness all spell trouble. Damage to a venue as a direct result of the performer (i.e., starting a brawl, inciting a panic or a riot, etc.) will come out of the magician's pay.

Pay: Figure most Stage Magicians make \$22,000 to \$32,000 annually working mainly weekends and 2-3 days a week. A great rep and high demand could double the income but will limit the character's time.

A big venue event pays \$1,500 to \$4,000, performing at a comedy club or nightclub pays \$200-\$800, a private party \$200-\$500, a school or community sponsored event: \$500-\$1000.



96-97% Survivalist, Militia or Weapons Expert: An individual involved in survival and paramilitary exercises.

Occupational Skills: Basic Mechanics (+15%), Intelligence (+10%), Interrogation or Detect Ambush (+10%), Military Etiquette (+20%), Munitions Expert (+15%), Radio: Basic (+20%), Tracking (people; +15%), Wilderness Survival (+20%), W.P. Knife or W.P. Blunt, W.P. Handguns, W.P. Rifle, and W.P. Heavy Military.

Elective Skills: Select five total from the standard available categories plus Military and Mechanical, but the character gets a +10% bonus on Communications, Military, Physical, Transportation and Wilderness skills.

Secondary Skills Available: Select four from the standard available categories.

Special Bonus: +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Advantages: The character is an expert in the use of weapons and military procedure, handy when tracking and hunting the enemy (including supernatural beasts). Probably has some (and will develop

others through role-playing) contacts with similar minded people, ex-military and military personnel (low-level), and possibly police.

Disadvantages: Likes action, but may be a little too quick to pull the trigger. Cutting loose in a firefight is okay in the country, but can be a liability in urban settings where half the character's ordinance is probably illegal. Survivalists and militia folks tend to be a bit paranoid and suspicious of world governments, including their own, law enforcement and politicians (doesn't trust any of them). If the character has been in the military or gotten in trouble with the law, his fingerprints will be in the system.

Pay: \$25,000 to \$32,000 working full-time as a wilderness guide, ranger or assistant to naturalists and forestry/conservation programs. May also work as an animal hunter/trapper/conservationist, or on a farm and other work having to do with the earth, nature, hunting, fishing and wilderness survival. Twenty percent may subsidize their income or work part-time repairing, modifying and customizing guns and ammunition (half of it illegal), earning an extra 2D6x\$1,000 dollars a quarter.

98-00% Writer: Freelance: A highly skilled job that requires creative talent, self-discipline and work ethic. Most freelancers can work at home with flexible hours that are completely their own. Finished articles and manuscripts can be transmitted via e-mail or conventional postal service. Ultimately, the client wants a quality job on deadline. The character should allow extra time for changes.

Occupational Skills: Automobile (+4%), Computer Operation (+15%), Creative Writing (+25%; professional quality), Cryptography (+10%) or Technical Writing (+15%), History (+15%), Lore: Mythology (+15%), Lore: One of choice (+15%), Public Speaking or Language: Other (+15%), Research (+15%), Wardrobe & Grooming (+10%).

Elective Skills: Select eight from the standard available categories, but gets a +10% bonus to Communications, Domestic, Paranormal Studies and Technical skills. **Note:** May select two additional skills from the Rogue Category if the character grew up in a tough, urban environment like New York City, Detroit, Chicago or Los Angeles.

Secondary Skills Available: Select five from the standard available categories.

Advantages: Can work at home, set your own hours and take on as much work as needed to cover the bills. Plenty of time to research and engage in other activities (like psychic investigation). The creative and imaginative mind makes the character open to endless possibilities, including the supernatural and magic.

Disadvantages: Better know how to manage your money, because payments on jobs usually show up 1D6 months late, and some jobs pay great while others pay lousy, especially for writers just starting out. Furthermore, as a freelancer, the writer gets no benefits, healthcare or vacation time, and bonuses and royalties are a rarity.

Pay: Writers typically get paid by the assignment/job, either a flat fee or so much per word. Low paying jobs are two to four cents a word, good paying jobs are five to ten cents a word. Most articles require 2,000 to 12,000 words. Short stories 12,000 to 40,000 words. An entire book \$1000-2000 (on the low end), \$3,000-\$6,000 (on average) and \$15,000 to \$30,000 on the high end, but may include a royalty of 2-5%. Only best-selling authors with a track record command book deals in the hundreds of thousands of dollars or low millions plus 5-10% royalties. The typical freelance writer can scrounge out a living making \$14,000 to \$25,000; the more successful ones \$35,000 to \$60,000, and the most successful ones \$80,000 to \$240,000.

Skills

One of the nice features about most Palladium role-playing games is the many different ways in which players can customize their characters. Skills play a big part in that, because they let each player tailor his character to his desires and make characters of the same P.C.C. different and unique.

The focus of this book is the supernatural, the paranormal and arcane knowledge, so skills are narrowed to those most appropriate for our modern world and the Beyond the Supernatural setting.

Also note that the **Base Skill** percentages for some skills are higher than some of Palladium's other role-playing games. This reflects the high level of education and training available to most characters in our modern world, and the fact that most characters involved in paranormal investigation will be highly educated and/or highly motivated.

This section contains two presentations for skills:

1. Skill List. A comprehensive list of the names of every skill by category, followed by the skill's *base percentage* and the *additional percentage per level of experience*. The list is a quick and easy visual reference for picking skills and determining their percentage.

2. Skill Descriptions. Every skill is described in full. Again, only the skills most appropriate to the **BTS™** setting are presented.

Communication Skills

Creative Writing (25%+5%)
Cryptography (25%+5%)
Electronic Countermeasures (30%+5%)
Language: Native Tongue (88%+1%)
Language: Other (50%+3%)
Laser Communications (30%+5%)
Literacy: Native Language (80%+2%)
Literacy: Other (40%+5%)
Optic Systems (30%+5%)
Performance (25%+5%)
Public Speaking (30%+5%)
Radio: Basic (50%+5%)
Sensory Equipment (30+5%)
Sign Language (25%+5%)
Sing (35%+5%)
Surveillance (30%+5%)
T.V./Video (35%+5%)

Domestic Skills

Brewing (25%/30%+5%)
Cook (35%+5%)
Dance (30%+5%)
Fishing (40%+5%)
Gardening (36%+4%)
Housekeeping (35%+5%)
Play Musical Instrument (35%+5%)
Recycle (30%+5%)
Sewing (40%+5%)
Sing (35%+5%)
Wardrobe & Grooming (50%+4%)

Electrical Skills

Basic Electronics (30%+5%)
Computer Repair (30%+5%)
Electrical Engineer (35%+5%)
Electricity Generation (50%+5%)
Robot Electronics (30%+5%)

Espionage Skills

Detect Ambush (30%+5%)
Detect Concealment (25%+5%)
Disguise (25%+5%)
Escape Artist (30%+5%)
Forgery (20%+5%)
Impersonation (30%/16%+4%)
Intelligence (32%+4%)
Interrogation (30%+5%)
Pick Locks (30%+5%)
Pick Pockets (25%+5%)
Sniper
Tracking (people) (25%+5%)
Undercover Ops (30%+5%)
Wilderness Survival (30%+5%)

Horsemanship

Horsemanship: General (40%/20%+4%)
Horsemanship: Cowboy/Elite (66%/50%+3%)
Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (30/20%+4%)

Mechanical Skills

Aircraft Mechanics (50%+4%)
Automotive Mechanics (60%+3%)
Basic Mechanics (40%+5%)
Locksmith (35%+5%)
Mechanical Engineer (30%+5%)
Munitions Expert (40%+5%)
Robot Mechanics (30%+5%)
Vehicle Armorer (30%+5%)
Weapons Engineer (30%+5%)

Medical Skills

Animal Husbandry (40%+5%)
Brewing: Medicinal (25%/30%+5%)
Crime Scene Investigation (35%+5%)
First Aid (45%+5%)
Forensics (35%+5%)
Holistic Medicine (30%/20%+5%)
Paramedic (40%+5%)
Medical Doctor (60%/50%+4%)
Parapsychology (30%+5%)
Pathology (40%+5%)
Psychology (35%+5%)
Toxicology (40%+5%)
Veterinary Science (50%+4%)

Military Skills

Aircraft: Combat Helicopters (52%+3%)
Aircraft: Jet Fighters (50%+3%)
APCs & Tanks (50%+3%)
Armorer/Field Armorer (40%+5%)
Camouflage (20%+5%)
Demolitions (60%+3%)
Demolitions Disposal (60%+3%)
Demolitions: Underwater (56%+4%)
Find Contraband (26%+4%)
Forced March
Military Etiquette (35%+5%)
NBC Warfare (35%+5%)
Recognize Weapon Quality (25%+5%)
Trap/Mine Detection (20%+5%)

Paranormal Studies

Astrology (25%+5%)
Lore: Aliens & UFOlogy (30%+5%)
Lore: American Indians (25%+5%)
Lore: Cattle & Animals (30%+5%)
Lore: Cults & Secret Societies (20%+5%)
Lore: Demons & Monsters (30%+5%)
Lore: Entities & Ghosts (30%+5%)
Lore: Faeries & Creatures of Magic (25%+5%)
Lore: Geomancy & Ley Lines (30%+5%)
Lore: Magic (25%+5%)
Lore: Magic Arcane (20%/40%+5%)
Lore: Mythology (30%+5%)
Lore: Paranormal & Psionics (30%+5%)
Lore: Religion (35%+5%)
Lore: Superstitions (30%+5%)
Streetwise: Weird (30%+5%)

Physical Skills

No Hand to Hand Combat Skill
Hand to Hand: Basic
Hand to Hand: Expert
Hand to Hand: Martial Arts
Hand to Hand: Assassin
Hand to Hand: Commando
Acrobatics (varies)
Aerobic Athletics
Athletics (General)
Body Building & Weight Lifting
Boxing
Climb (40%/30%+5%)
Fencing
Forced March
Gymnastics (varies)
Juggling (35+5%)
Kick Boxing
Outdoorsmanship
Physical Labor
Prowl (25%+5%)
Running
Swim (50%+5%)
S.C.U.B.A. (50%+5%)
Wrestling

Rogue Skills

Cardsharp (24%+4%)
Computer Hacking (20%+5%)
Concealment (20%+4%)
Find Contraband (26%+4%)
Gambling (Standard) (30%+5%)
Gambling (Dirty Tricks) (20%+4%)
I.D. Undercover Agent (30%+4%)
Imitate Voice & Sounds (42%/36%+4%)
Palming (20%+5%)

Pick Locks (30%+5%)
Pick Pockets (25%+5%)
Prowl – 25%+5%
Roadwise (26%+4%)
Safe-Cracking (20%+4%)
Seduction (20%+3%, plus attribute bonuses)
Streetwise (20%+4%)
Tailing (30%+5%)

Science Skills

Anthropology (40%+5%)
Archaeology (40%/20%+5%)
Artificial Intelligence (30%+3%)
Astronomy & Navigation (30%+5%)
Astrophysics (35%+5%)
Biology (40%+5%)
Botany (40%+5%)
Chemistry (50%+5%)
Chemistry: Analytical (35%+5%)
Chemistry: Pharmaceutical (40+5%)
Genetics (30%+3%)
Mathematics: Basic (72%+3%)
Mathematics: Advanced (64%+2%)
Parapsychology (30%+5%)
Psychology (35%+5%)
Zoology (30%+5%)

Technical Skills

Appraise Antiques (30%+5)
Art (35%+5%)
Breed Dogs (40%/20%+5%)
Business & Finance (35%+5%)
Computer Operation (60%+3%)
Computer Programming (50%+3%)
Excavation (40%+5%)
Firefighting (40%+5%)
Gemology (25%+5%)
General Repair & Maintenance (45%+5%)
History (60%/40%+4%)
Jury-Rig (25%+5%)
Law (General) (35%+5%)
Leather Working (45%+5%)
Masonry (40%+5%)
Meditation (30%+5%)
Mining (35%+5%)
Navigation (40%+5%)
Philosophy (40%+5%)
Photography (35%+5%)
Prospecting (20%+5%)
Recycling (30%+5%)
Research (40%+5%)
Rope Works (30%+5%)
Salvage (35%+5%)
Technical Writing (30%+5%)
Ventriloquism (16%+4%)
Whittling & Sculpting (30%+5%)

Transportation Skills

Aircraft: Helicopter (52%+3%)
Aircraft: Jet (60%+3%)
Airplanes: Propeller Types (50%+4%)
Automobile (60%+3%)
Bicycling (60%+3%)
Boat: Motor, Race & Hydrofoil (55%+5%)
Boat: Sail Types (60%+5%)
Boat: Ships/Seamanship (35%/20%+5%)
Combat Driving
Kayaking & Canoeing (50%+5%)
Motorcycles & Snowmobiles (60%+4%)
Tracked Vehicles (54%+5%)
Truck (56%+4%)
Water Scooters (50%+5%)
Water Skiing & Surfing (40%+4%)

Weapon Proficiencies (Ancient)

W.P. Archery & Targeting	W.P. Quick Draw
W.P. Axe	W.P. Shield
W.P. Blunt	W.P. Spear
W.P. Chain	W.P. Staff
W.P. Forked	W.P. Sword
W.P. Grappling Hook	W.P. Targeting
W.P. Knife	W.P. Whip
W.P. Paired Weapons	
W.P. Pole Arm	

Weapon Proficiencies (Modern)

W.P. Handguns
W.P. Rifles
W.P. Shotgun
W.P. Submachine-Gun
W.P. Heavy Military Weapons
W.P. Military Flamethrowers
W.P. Trick Shooting

Wilderness Skills

Boat Building (25%+5%)
Carpentry (25%+5%)
Dowsing (20%+5%)
Fasting (40%+3%)
Herding (30%+5%)
Hunting
Identify Plants & Fruit (25%+5%)
Land Navigation (36%+4%)
Preserve Food (30%+5%)
Skin & Prepare Animal Hides (30%+5%)
Spelunking (35%+5%)
Track & Trap Animals (20%/30%+5%)
Wilderness Survival (30%+5%)

Skill Descriptions



Communications Skills

Creative Writing. The ability to write prose/stories, poems, and journalistic reports, studies, news, and otherwise entertaining text. Taking the skill twice indicates a professional quality and gets a bonus of +10%. Selecting it once indicates a talented amateur. A failed roll means an awkward and poorly written work that is boring and difficult to understand. Try again. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Literacy*. This skill does not provide a character with the ability to recite his or her written words with any level of charm. See *Public Speaking* for that.

Cryptography. Skill in recognizing, designing, and cracking secret codes and messages. The character must study the code for two hours to attempt to break it successfully. A failed roll means the individual must study the code for an additional two hours before he can try to break it again. The character may attempt to break the code sooner, after only 10 minutes of study, but suffers a penalty of -30%. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Literacy*.

Electronic Countermeasures. The ability to shield, encrypt and protect electronic transmissions, as well as jamming, scrambling, coding and decoding radio, video and wireless transmissions. This skill also includes knowledge in the use of technology to locate electronic bugs/listening devices and deactivate, undermine and otherwise circumvent them. The use of *electronic masking*, scrambling and unscrambling equipment, as well as codes to help foil the detection, interception and interpretation of radio and wireless transmissions is all part of this skill. A radio operator who makes a successful scramble roll can transmit coded or scrambled messages without fear that the enemy will intercept or understand their transmission.

Jamming military or police communications can cause unit confusion and disrupt communications. Military organization breaks down, causing a loss of effectiveness to all but the best units. Just about any high-powered radio can be used for jamming. Armed with a radio, a small guerrilla unit can completely disrupt the maneuvers of large enemy groups. This skill also enables the radio operator to "follow" the enemy's attempted transmissions over jammed frequencies to trace their location or direction of travel. This tactic is extremely useful in finding and eliminating bugs, transmission units, surveillance teams on a stakeout, small squads and enemies in distress. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** Radio: Basic.

Language: Native Tongue. The character has a very good to excellent understanding of his native language. It is not, however, an absolute and total understanding, because there are always words, scientific terms, slang and fancy or outdated words and terms a character may not

know. Thus, the necessity for dictionaries, thesauruses, grammar guides and computer spelling programs. **Base Skill:** 88% +1% per level of experience.

Language: Other. The character can understand and *speak* in a language other than his own. Language is one of the few skills that can be selected repeatedly in order to speak several different languages. Each selection gives the character knowledge of a different language and costs one skill selection each time. Among the major languages used in international commerce are English, French, Spanish, German, Japanese, Chinese, Korean and Russian. Ancient languages like Greek, Latin, Egyptian, Aramaic, etc., may be appealing or helpful to scholars, historians, practitioners of magic and paranormal investigators. **Base Skill:** 50% +3% per level of experience.

Laser Communications. This skill provides the character with an in-depth knowledge of advanced electronics, laser communication systems and fiber optic communications. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** The Radio: Basic, Electrical Engineer, and Computer Operation skills.

Literacy: Native Language. The character can read and write the language of his culture, typically where he was born and grew up (or has lived most of his life). For example, most of us born in America speak, read and write American English, complete with contemporary slang. English is the predominant language, and even if our ethnic heritage has roots in another country (Mexico, Poland, Russian, Cuba, etc.) that language is probably considered a "second language" (or "Literacy: Other" in the context of this game) and may not be known at all. I, for one, have never been able to speak more than a few words of Polish and have never been able to read any. **Note:** The Base Skill number is not higher, because not everyone is highly educated or knows his own language one hundred percent (I don't know every word, do you?). Others are just poor at spelling (like a publisher and author who shall go nameless). That's why we have computer spelling programs, dictionaries and the thesaurus. Reading and writing means the character can read and comprehend the written word, signs, written instructions, books, etc. This skill has no bearing on creative writing. **Base Skill:** 80% +2% per level of experience.

Literacy: Other. The practiced skill at reading and writing a language other than his own (see *Literacy: Native Language*). *Literacy: Other* is one of the few skills that can be selected repeatedly in order to read and comprehend several different languages from around the world. Each selection gives the character knowledge in a different language, but just because he can "read" a foreign language does NOT mean he can speak it or understand other speaking it; only has the most basic understanding of the spoken language, catching one or two words out of ten. (See *Language: Other* to speak other languages.) Each language counts as a separate skill selection. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Optic Systems. Provides expert training in the use of special optical enhancement equipment such as telescopic lenses, laser targeting, thermal imagers, passive light intensifiers, infrared and ultraviolet systems, polarization, light filters, optical scanners, video and digital cameras, holograms and related devices. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. Adds a special one time bonus of +5% to the T.V./Video skill if both are selected.

Performance. The methods and fundamentals used by actors, entertainers, politicians and other public figures to impress and sway the public. A character with this skill knows how to do things with *flair*. If a skill roll is successful, it works like an attempt to charm, captivate, impress, intimidate/alarm or incense (and motivate) the audience. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level. **Bonus:** +5% to the Undercover Ops and Impersonation skills. **Note:** Obvious lies, inconsistencies and evidence to the contrary may ruin the effectiveness of the best performance. G.M.s, use your discretion.

Public Speaking. Training in the quality of sound, tone, pitch, enunciation, clarity, and pace when speaking to the public. The charac-

ter speaks loudly, distinctly and in a pleasing manner. Also includes the practice of good, enticing storytelling, pacing, dramatic pauses and composition of the spoken word. A successful roll indicates the overall quality and charisma of the speaker and spoken word is good to excellent, and people are enjoying listening to him. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. This skill adds a +5% bonus to the Performance skill.

Radio: Basic. The rudimentary knowledge in the operation and maintenance of all sorts of radio equipment, including military radio systems, field radios and walkie-talkies, audio recording devices, wire laying, installation, radio procedure, communication security and Morse code. It does not include the ability to make repairs or operate video equipment. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience.

Sensory Equipment: Individuals with this training can operate, maintain, understand, and “read” or interpret sensory data from all types of conventional, military, medical and scientific equipment, scanners, and sensory devices. These devices include radar, sonar, motion detectors, surveillance equipment, optical enhancements, industrial gauges, instrument panels, medical monitors (EKGs, CAT scans, etc.), life support systems, and so on. Note that characters without this skill cannot understand or operate advanced aircraft, medical equipment or detection/surveillance equipment.

Radar & Sonar Note: The character can expertly use radar (radio echo bounces) and sonar (underwater sound echo bounces) equipment and correctly read the information to precisely locate and track aircraft, ships and submarines, as the case may be. In submarines (and radar for warships and fighter aircraft) there are two methods or types of operations, *passive* and *active*. To use active sonar, the sub must give a pulse of sound to bounce off any nearby ships or objects. This is very dangerous since it immediately gives away the position of the submersible itself. Most vessels will not use active sonar unless absolutely necessary. Most will rely on passive sonar systems. This is much more difficult since the sonar operator must sift through the background noise to find any enemy ships. Sometimes they will not be able to distinguish the location of a ship from the background static. Despite this fact, passive sonar is used because it does not give away the location of the vessel. -15% skill penalty when using passive sonar or radar. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Sign Language. This skill is either a) the universal sign language of the deaf, or b) the military sign language of hand signals used to indicate action, response and combat positions in the field when verbal or radio communication would alert the enemy. Both require line of sight (e.g., one must be able to see the signer). Signing for the hearing impaired requires the sender to do a skill check per every 20 words “signed” to successfully transmit his message. Likewise, the interpreter must roll to interpret every batch of 20 words. A failed roll means a misunderstanding to no idea of what has been said. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Sing: The simple ability to read music and carry a pleasant tune. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Surveillance. The use and deployment of bugs and spy equipment, tailing and stakeouts. The character understands the methods, operation, techniques, tools and devices in using surveillance systems. Includes motion detectors, simple and complex alarm systems, audio/visual recording and display equipment, recording methods, amplified sound systems, miniature listening devices (bugs, line tapping, parabolic electronic ears, etc.), miniature “hidden” cameras, and optical enhancement systems specifically as they relate to camera lenses and spy devices.

A failed roll in the use of surveillance *equipment* means that the equipment does not function as desired, impairing or preventing surveillance; i.e., the bug does not transmit, recording or sound transmissions are garbled, surveillance film is blurred or failed to record, etc.

A failed roll when *hiding* surveillance devices means the bug does not function and is easily discovered through the course of casual activity.

Tailing, or following someone without their knowledge, is another form of surveillance. This also includes stakeout procedures. A failed surveillance roll indicates that the subject has spotted “the tail” and is aware that he is being followed/observed.

Base Skill: 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Basic Electronics* or *Electrical Engineering*, *Computer Operation* and *Literacy* (the latter two are needed only for complex, high-tech systems).

TV/Video. In-depth training in the use of video, digital and audio recording equipment as well as filming, editing, dubbing, title making, duplication, and transmission. Includes the use of field equipment; i.e., portable video or digital camera and studio equipment. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.



Domestic Skills

Note: Characters can attain professional quality by selecting the same Domestic skill twice. Add a one time bonus of +10% and note that the end result is of superior quality.

Brewing: Basic. This is the making of fermented alcoholic beverages from grains or fruits. This specifically includes wine, mead, ale, beer and moonshine, as well as common teas, coffee, lemonade and similar types of prepared drinks. Stronger types of alcohol, such as brandy, rum, and whiskey, are not included, nor are champagnes or fine wines. The first percentile number indicates the chance of success (a failed roll means an undrinkable concoction). The second indicates the quality of the brew; the higher the number, the tastier the drink. **Base Skill:** 25%/30% +5% per level of experience. Adds a +5% to the Holistic Medicine if the skill is known.

Cook. Skill in selecting, planning, and preparing meals. A cooking roll failure means that the food is not properly prepared. It is edible but tastes lousy (greasy, too spicy, sickeningly sweet, sour, burnt, leaves a bad aftertaste in the mouth, etc.). **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Dance. A practiced skill in the art of dancing, the character is especially smooth and graceful; a joy to dance with. Can learn new dance steps/moves much more quickly than somebody who cannot dance. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Fishing. The fundamental methods and enjoyment of the relaxing sport of fishing. Areas of knowledge include the use of lures, bait, poles, hooks, lines, and the cleaning and preparation of fish for eating. Also includes a basic knowledge of freshwater fish, their habits and taste. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Gardening. This skill offers a basic understanding of plant care and aesthetic garden design as well as the ability to grow garden crops, and the skill to create beautiful, decorative gardens with flowers, plants,

shrubs, trees, and decorative rocks that create a feeling of tranquility and harmony with nature (Zen Gardening). This skill can be practiced by anyone. **Base Skill:** 36% +4% per level of experience.

Housekeeping. Techniques and methods of cleaning clothes, bedding, bathrooms, floors, and surfaces, as well as knowledge in the types of cleansers, solvents, soaps and materials for housekeeping. Professional maintenance personnel, maids, and hotel housekeepers will know additional "tricks of the trade" to make a room look spotless, sparkling and inviting; everything in its place, folded properly and presented attractively. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

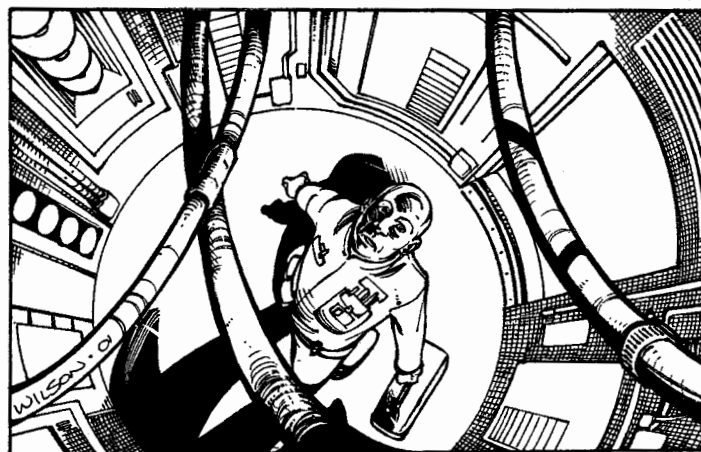
Play Musical Instrument. The individual has learned to play a particular musical instrument with a fair amount of skill. The sound is generally pleasant (except when a bad roll is made). Note that each specific instrument requires a separate selection of this skill. *For example:* A character who wants to play the guitar, violin, and harmonica must select the Play Musical Instrument skill three different times. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Recycle. Knowledge of materials and scraps that have value when recycled, and methods of collecting, cleaning and storing recycled goods. Recycling typically includes paper, lumber, plastic, glass, aluminum (cans, etc.), scrap metal, electrical wiring, circuit boards, and spare electronic and machine parts. **Note:** If the character also has Basic Mechanics (or a superior Mechanic's skill) he can strip down a damaged machine or object of its *basic component parts* and knows what to gather to make useful materials to repair an existing machine or build something new. Includes a very rudimentary understanding of metallurgy. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Sewing. The practiced skill with the needle and thread to mend clothing, do minor alterations, and layout, cut and sew simple patterns. This is not a tailoring ability, but can become tailoring if the player selects this skill twice. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Sing: The simple ability to read music and carry a pleasant tune. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Wardrobe & Grooming. This skill represents a desire and active attempt to improve one's overall appearance, image and "look" through the selection of just the right style of clothing, make-up, hair style, perfume, walk, talk and how one carries him or herself. In short, this is how to dress to kill or make the right impression. Keeps an eye on fashion and trends. **Base Skill:** 50% +4% per level of experience. **Bonuses:** +1 to the P.B. attribute when dressed to impress, as well as +2% bonus to the skills of Disguise, Impersonation, Performance, Undercover Ops and Seduction.



Electrical Skills

Basic Electronics. This is a rudimentary understanding of the principles of electricity, simple circuits, wiring, and so on. This person can do basic wiring, repair appliances, and read schematics as well as assist electrical engineers. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Computer Repair. Knowledge of the internal electronics of computers and related devices (terminals, printers, modems, monitors, circuit boards, etc.). The character can attempt to repair or sabotage computers. Note that figuring out the repair or sabotage procedure counts as one roll, and the actual repair is a second roll. A failed roll means the repair is faulty and does not work (try again). No computer operation or programming skills are included nor required to fix computers. Many computer repair personnel don't even know how to turn the computer on! **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Electrical Engineer. Knowledge of electricity. Characters can diagnose and locate electrical problems, repair complex electrical devices, wire entire buildings or vehicles, and build electrical equipment. The character can also attempt to bypass security systems, alarms, and surveillance systems, but at a penalty of -20% for simple systems and -50% for complex systems (reduce these penalties by half if the character also has the *Surveillance* skill). **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Advanced Mathematics* and *Literacy*. (**Note:** There is a -30% penalty when working on alien or extremely unfamiliar electronics. This includes Psi-Mechanic creations and magic or alien devices. The electrician may be able to puzzle out some of the basic aspects of such a device, and may be able to figure out how to operate the machine, but is unable to completely fathom how it works or how to repair it.)

Electricity Generation. Electricity is generated in a variety of ways: from sunlight, wind and hydro systems (using solar panels, windmills and water turbines) to batteries, combustion engines and generators. This skill gives the character the understanding of how and why these generation systems work and he is able to use, link and repair such motors, turbines and generator systems, but not to build them from scratch. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Basic Math* and at least *Basic Electronics* and *Basic Mechanics*. -40% skill penalty when working on alien, Psi-Mechanic or magical systems.

Robot Electronics. A specialization in the area of micro-circuitry, military engineering, robotics, advanced computers, artificial intelligence, and even experimental bionic systems. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Electrical Engineering* and *Computer Programming*. There is a -40% penalty when working on alien or extremely unfamiliar robot electronics.

Espionage Skills

Detect Ambush. Training which develops an eye for spotting locations and terrains suitable for ambushes and being ambushed. It also provides a rudimentary knowledge of guerilla tactics used by the enemy. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Detect Concealment. This is a skill which enables the individual to spot and recognize camouflage, hunting blinds, trip wires, concealed structures/buildings and vehicles, secret doors and compartments, as well as the ability to construct unobtrusive shelters, use camouflage and blend into the environment. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Bonuses:** +5% to the Camouflage skill.

Disguise. The character knows how to apply make-up, wigs, skin putty, dyes, and other special effects in order to alter his appearance or that of somebody else. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. Also see the Undercover Ops and Impersonation skills.

Escape Artist. The methods, principles, and tricks of escape artists. The character can try slipping out of handcuffs, ropes, straightjacket, etc., using techniques that include hand positioning, tensing and relaxing muscles, keeping hand and wrist joints flexible, popping joints in and out, the study of knots, and one or more hidden lock picking tools concealed on his body. **Note:** Picking locks is a separate and distinct skill. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +5% to the Lock Picking skill.

Forgery. The techniques of making false copies of official documents, signatures, passports, I.D.s, and other printed material. The forger must have an original or photocopy to work from in order to make an accurate copy. Skilled forgers can recognize other counterfeits, but with a skill penalty of -10%. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience; +10% if the Art skill is also known to the forger.

Impersonation. This skill enables a character to impersonate another person or general type of person (soldier, worker, etc.). This means he must have a rudimentary (if not comprehensive) knowledge of the person or general type of personnel that he plans to impersonate. This includes a knowledge of that person or type of person or job, work procedure or protocol, local laws and customs, individual habits, dress/uniform/lifestyle, hierarchy of command/leadership, rank, and speaking the proper language(s). **Base Skill:** 30% to impersonate a general type of personnel and 16% to impersonate a specific individual (which may require weeks of study and special disguise), +4% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +10% to the Undercover Ops skill.

The success of one's Impersonation/disguise can only be determined after exposing oneself to those whom you wish to trick.

A successful impersonation requires the player to roll under his character's Impersonation skill for each of his first *THREE* encounters. Afterward, the character must roll under his skill for each encounter with an officer, high ranking official or close friend or relative. If interrogated/questioned, he must successfully roll after every three questions or be revealed as an impostor. A failed roll means his Impersonation has failed and he may be in immediate danger.

Intelligence. This is the specific training in the practices and principles of recognizing and analyzing sources of information about the enemy, observation techniques, counter-intelligence measures and proper procedure. This includes the practical assessment of sights and sounds, estimation of distance from strategic positions, what to report, handling prisoners of war, and handling captured documents and equipment (tagging and reporting to group leaders or proper authorities). This means the character will be able to accurately estimate ranges, the number of enemies, direction, purpose, and assess the importance of specific information.

Further Intelligence training includes a working knowledge of indigenous guerilla warfare, enemy practices, appearance, and current activities. This enables the intelligence officer to recognize suspicious activity as guerilla actions and identify guerilla operatives. **For Example:** In a combat situation, a particular booby trap, or weapon or mode of operation may be indicative of guerilla activity in the area. It may be up to the character to confirm the existence of the enemy and their strengths, number, and location. Likewise, in a psychic investigation of the supernatural, the particular habits (the way it kills its prey, what it eats, where it lives, etc.) might indicate what the creature is, and once that is known, the character will know how it operates, if it is a lone predator or gathers in packs, etc.

Another area of training made available to Intelligence is the identification of enemy troops, officers, and foreign advisors. This means the person learns the many distinguishing ranks and marks that identify specific military units, special forces, groups, and leaders of the enemy. Such identification can pinpoint and confirm enemy operations, goals, and movement, as well as confirm outside intervention/aid. Law enforcement uses the same fundamentals when dealing with gangs, terrorists, and known criminals and criminal organizations.

Note: A failed roll in any of the areas of Intelligence means that evidence is inconclusive, or that the character has incorrectly assessed the information/situation and is uncertain. A failed roll involving individual clues may mean the person has dismissed them entirely as being meaningless (G.M.s, use your discretion). **Base Skill:** 32% +4% per level of experience.

Interrogation. This skill includes training in the questioning of prisoners, captives and informers, and the assessment of that information. The character knows the techniques to get information from (typi-

cally unwilling) subjects. This includes such old methods as "good cop, bad cop" (one interrogator is threatening and intimidating, the other is sympathetic and friendly), deceiving and misleading the subject into giving away information, and similar methods. The character also can judge if the subject is lying (the Game Master might assess bonuses and penalties depending on how good a liar the subject is, and/or on the victim's M.E., M.A. and P.B.; the higher any or each of these, the more convincing the lies). This skill also includes some basic knowledge on methods of torture, from basic tactics like depriving the subject of sleep, to the old "medieval" instruments, and drugs. **Note:** Only evil characters will routinely or callously engage in torture. This skill will *NOT* work on many supernatural beings, particularly those impervious to pain or who quickly bio-regenerate physical damage, not to mention those who enjoy being tortured. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience; -20% on supernatural creatures.

Pick Locks. The character knows the methods and tools for picking/opening key and basic tumbler type locks. This does not include sophisticated computer or electronic locks. It takes 1D6 melee rounds for each attempt to pick a lock. A failed roll means the lock holds; try again. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Pick Pockets. An ability to remove items from a person without their being aware of it. If a Pick Pockets attempt fails, the item has *NOT* been removed and there is a 67% likelihood of the intended victim recognizing the intent of the action. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Sniper. This skill represents special training in long-range shooting and marksmanship. Only weapons that can be made to fire a single bullet/round (or blast) can be used for sniping; no automatic firing. Acceptable weapons include bow and arrows, crossbows, bolt-action rifles, and other rifles capable of switching from automatic to single shot. **Bonus:** +2 to strike on a *called* or *aimed shot* only.

Tracking (humans & robots). Visual tracking is the identification of tracks, and following the path of men and animals (and the unknown) by the signs they leave on the ground and vegetation. Tracking is a precise art, requiring much practice. The skill includes the evaluation of tracks, indicating whether the subject being tracked is loaded down with equipment, running, moving slowly (by measuring the space between steps), and so on. By this means, the tracker can estimate the subject's rate of movement, apparent direction, the number of people/robots in the party, and whether the person or machine appears to know he is being followed. Other methods of tracking require recognizing telltale signs such as blood and other stains, broken and displaced vegetation, overturned rocks, litter (such as cigarette butts, ration cans, candy wrappers, soiled bandages and campfire remains), and even odors carried by the wind.

Tracking includes recognizing dangerous animals by their tracks, habits and feces. Likewise, tire tracks of vehicles can reveal the size and type of vehicle, the weight of its load, and sometimes even its make and year.

Counter-tracking techniques are also known, and include covering one's trail, misdirection, parallel trails, avoiding obvious pitfalls like littering and others.

A failed roll means that the signs are inconclusive, vague or misleading. Additional signs must be found to verify or clarify (roll again). Three consecutive failed rolls means the tracker has completely lost the trail. Roll once every 40 yards/meters when following a trail, unless it is very obvious, like a caravan of wagons or company of soldiers (60 or more troops). Characters attempting to follow a skilled tracker who is deliberately trying to conceal his trail suffer a penalty of -25% to stay on him. However, the character engaged in counter-tracking techniques travels at slow speeds, about half that of a casual rate of speed (or 1/4 his maximum speed).

Base Skill: 25% +5% per level of experience for both the tracking and counter-tracking abilities. A character trained in tracking humans may attempt to track animals and supernatural beasts, but does so at half his normal skill ability.

Undercover Ops. Training in undercover operations in which the character learns the methods and techniques of blending smoothly into the background and appearing as if he belongs there (just another unmemorable face in the crowd or one of the guys), as well as assuming a false identity and playing a "role" to track, spy upon or gather information or evidence. **Note:** This skill is typically reserved for law enforcement, espionage agents, con artists and other criminal types. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Wilderness Survival. Techniques for getting water, food, shelter, and help when stranded in wilderness regions: forests, deserts, mountains, etc. Characters without this skill will not be able to stay healthy for more than a few days in the wilderness after their supplies run out. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Horsemanship Skills

The Horsemanship skill includes the basic principles of riding, the care and feeding of the animal, recognizing breed and quality, charging, and jumps. There are three main types of horseback riding skills. Each indicates a certain degree of training and expertise.

General/Standard (the typical skill known by most civilized people), **Cowboy** (highly skilled equestrian ability) and **Exotic Animals** (the ability to ride unusual mounts, including alien and monstrous animals from other worlds). Unless stated otherwise, a character can only select *Horsemanship: General*. Cowboy is generally restricted to elite equestrian riders such as genuine cowboys, ranchers, those who compete in equestrian riding competitions and so on. *Exotic Animals* is typically restricted to circus entertainers who might ride an elephant, llamas, or even a tiger, as well as alien beings and demons who may ride a monstrous creature rather than a horse.

Each *Horsemanship skill* indicates a certain degree of training and expertise in riding and handling horses. Each type of Horsemanship has the following skills and areas of knowledge. The higher the skill percentage, the better the skill or ability. **Note:** Tricks and stunts are performed at half the rider's normal riding skill. To avoid being thrown from the horse when jumping, charging, kicking or performing some other difficult maneuver or trick, the character must roll under his second percentile to remain in the saddle and in control of his animal. Also note that the *American Cowboy* is, arguably, the most skilled and versatile horseman in the world with skills such as roping and herding as part of his repertoire of horsemanship related skills; all elements that are not usually available to other horsemen in the world.

Riding & Care of Horses: The first percentile number indicates the character's riding ability and a fundamental knowledge of the feeding, caring, and grooming of horses.

Recognize Quality/Breed: The first percentile number also indicates the success ratio of recognizing the breed quality, age, strength, speed, health, and general attributes/capabilities (race horse, workhorse, warhorse, etc.) of the animal.

Breed Horses: The second percentile number indicates the knowledge in the raising, breaking, training and breeding of horses. It includes shoeing horses, giving birth, and curing minor ailments and injuries.

Jumping: The second percentile number also indicates the success ratio of NOT being thrown from the horse when jumping, charging, kicking or performing some other difficult maneuver or trick. The character must roll under his percentage to remain in the saddle and in control of his animal. Damage from being thrown off a horse is typically 1D6.

Racing: The second percentile number also indicates the success ratio of maintaining control and getting maximum speed while racing at full gallop. A failed roll means the horse runs quickly but 10% short of its maximum speed, but the rider can coax that little extra spirit and speed out of the animal. Once every four minutes, the rider can get the

horse to kick into overdrive and run at 25% faster than its normal maximum. However, this speed can only be maintained for one minute at a time and cannot be done more than three times in a 15 minute period. Maximum running speed can be maintained for a period of minutes equal to the horse's P.E. attribute. Pushing the horse beyond its endurance will cause it to slow down by 30% and after 4D4 minutes, collapse from exhaustion (requires at least a half hour rest and light activity for another hour).

Combat: All bonuses are in addition to other combat skills, Weapon Proficiencies, or attribute bonuses. Applies to the rider, not the horse. The rider gains a combat advantage from the height and speed of being mounted. This provides the following bonuses when charging on horseback, regardless of what Horsemanship skill the character has chosen: +1 to parry and dodge, +4 damage. Note that a person can not shoot a projectile weapon of any kind (bow and arrow or gun) with any degree of accuracy. An aimed shot is impossible on a moving animal! Bursts are possible if the horse is moving quickly, but not at a full gallop. At full gallop, the shooter can fire only as wild.

A General Note about Horses: The horse attack skill reference indicates that the rider is skilled enough to remain saddled while he attacks and has his horse rearing or kicking in simultaneous attack (roll under second percentile number).

Attribute Notes: Horses have a fairly high animal intelligence, roughly equal to that of a dog, and can generally carry or pull 500 pounds (225 kg). A war or work horse can carry about 600 pounds (270 kg) but pull up to five tons, and a pair of workhorses can pull up to 15 tons (but speed of working is a mere 15 mph/24 km).

Speed: Workhorses, Mules & Donkeys: Spd 22 or 15 mph (24 km). Ponies: Spd 36 +3D4 or approx. 25-30 mph (40-48 km). Riding Horse: Spd 48+1D6 or approx. 35 mph (56 km). Draft or Warhorse: Spd 48+1D4 or approx. 35 mph (56 km). Race Horse: Spd 57+1D6 or approximately 40 mph (64 km) with a short burst (1D4 minutes long) of up to 50 mph (80 km), but cannot handle the hardships of the wilderness (reduce H.P. & S.D.C. by 20% for every month forced to function in the wilderness or as a workhorse).

Average P.P.E.: 5D6; sensitive to the supernatural, ley lines and strong magic.

Average Life Span: 7-9 years as a work or strong riding animal, after which the horse is worn out (reduce H.P., S.D.C. and Speed by one third), but can continue to be used for light work, light to medium riding and/or put out to stud for several years to follow; total average life span is 12-15 years.

Hit Points & S.D.C.: The typical riding and race horse has 4D6+6 Hit Points and 5D6+12 S.D.C. Warhorse: 5D6+10 H.P. and 6D6+16 S.D.C. Workhorses and Mules: 4D6+10 H.P. and 4D6+20 S.D.C. Pony and Donkey: 4D6 H.P. and 2D6+12 S.D.C.

Damage from Horse Attacks: The exact damage from a horse's kick will vary with the size and breed of the animal; generally 2D6 S.D.C. from the front legs and 4D6 from the rear legs; +6 damage from warhorses.

Attacks per Melee Round: 2 or 3.

Cost: Donkey: \$600-\$1,200. Mule: \$800-\$2,000. Workhorse: \$1,000-\$4,200. Ponies: \$800-\$4,000. Riding Horse: \$2000-\$6000. Draft or Warhorse: \$3000-\$6,000 untrained; \$15,000-\$30,000 for a trained animal. Race Horse (for sport & gambling): \$20,000-\$500,000.

Horsemanship: General. All the basic skills as noted above. **Base Skill:** 40%/20% +4% per level of experience. The first percentile number indicates riding ability and general knowledge, care, and feeding. The second percentile number applies to trick riding/stunts and breeding.

Combat: All bonuses are in addition to other combat skills, Weapon Proficiencies, or attribute bonuses. Applies to the rider, not the horse. The rider gains a combat advantage from the height and speed of being mounted.

- +1 to parry or dodge while on horseback.
- Inflicts +1D4 S.D.C. damage when on horseback.
- Charge attack (running horse) with a pole-arm or spear: +1D6 damage. The attacker must roll under the second percentile number to avoid being dismounted. Charge attacks count as two melee actions/attacks.
- Horse attack: This indicates that the rider is skilled enough to remain saddled while he attacks and has his horse rearing or kicking in simultaneous attack (roll under second percentile number). Damage from the kick of a horse will vary with the size and breed of the animal; generally 2D6 from the front legs and 4D6 from the rear legs.

Horsemanship: Cowboy. Unless stated otherwise, selection of this skill as an Elective Skill counts as two skill selections. **Base Skill:** 66%/50% +3% per level of experience. The first percentile number indicates riding ability and general knowledge, care, and feeding. The second percentile number applies to trick riding/stunts and breeding.

Combat: All bonuses are in addition to other combat skills, weapon proficiencies, or attribute bonuses. Applies to the rider, not the horse. The rider gains a combat advantage from the height and speed of being mounted.

- +1 on initiative when on horseback at levels 2, 5, 10 & 15.
- +2 to roll with fall or impact when knocked from a horse.
- +2 to parry, dodge and rope/ensnare/entangle while on horseback.
- Inflicts an extra +1D4 S.D.C. when on horseback, depending on the weapon; not applicable to ranged weapons like guns.
- Charge attack (running horse) with a pole-arm or spear: +2D6 S.D.C. damage. The attacker must roll under the second percentile number to avoid being dismounted. Charge attacks count as two melee actions/attacks.
- Horse attack; see details under stats for horses.

Special Related Skill: Herding: The techniques and methods of leading, directing and controlling cattle in a contained and orderly herd. Also includes keeping animals calm, basic care and feeding, how to tend cattle, recognize disease and illness, give birth to young, survive and regain control of a stampede, gather strays, best pen and corral livestock, mend fences, etc. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Special Related Skill: Roping: Knowledge and training in how to use a lariat, lasso, tie knots, expertly handle roped animals after they are snared, bring them to a stop by taking quick turns of the lariat around the saddle horn (known as "dally" or "da la vuelta"), tethering animals, and how to "hog-tie" animals (after the animal has been lassoed, the horse backs up to make the rope taut while the cowboy "tips" over the animal and ties three legs with a half shank; used in separating stubborn animals from the herd, capturing wild animals, and branding). The rope/lariat can be used for the roping and tying of animals, including cattle, horses, similar alien animals, and even some supernatural predators, though the latter is likely to charge his attacker. This skill with a lariat can be executed standing on the ground, but is designed and intended to be done from horseback.

A failed roll to tie a knot means that it is loose, sloppy and easy to untie, slip out of, or likely to unravel or snap when strained. A failed roll to lasso an animal or stationary target means it misses its mark or slips off.

Against human and intelligent opponents, roll to lasso as if it were a combat attack to strike and ensnare. The intended victim can try to dodge; parry is not applicable. A successful strike means the character is caught in the lasso. *Ensnaring* a foot, leg or hand means the victim can be tripped, knocked down and pulled/dragged by hand or horse. Ensnaring the upper body means one arm is pinned (useless). Two or more lassoes around the upper body means both arms are pinned and attacks requiring the use of one's hands are impossible, and the lassoed individual can be pulled off his feet and dragged. Multiple lassoes can also be used to snare each limb and "spread-eagle" the character. It

takes 1D4 melee actions to cut through a lasso, but it is impossible to draw a weapon and cut oneself loose if both arms are pinned or while being dragged. In this combat usage, the roping character is +1 to strike and entangle for every 20 points of skill, so a skill of 65% means +3 to strike/ensnare/entangle. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals. Basically the same as the General Horsemanship skill, except that the character is experienced in riding "tame" animals other than the horse. This can include elephants, camels, llamas, and strange beasts or giant insects from another world. Wild, untamed creatures cannot be ridden, except by those others with special animal skills or powers. **Base Skill:** 30%/20% +4% per level of experience. **Note:** Characters with the traditional "Horsemanship" skill can learn to ride alien or demonic horses and other horse-like beasts, but at a skill penalty of -12% to ride ground/running animals and -20% to ride flying or tree climbing or leaping exotic animals. Similarly, beings from other dimensions not familiar with riding the fast and sleek Earth horse are -10% to ride them.

Mechanical Skills

Aircraft Mechanics. The understanding of aerodynamics and the training to repair, rebuild, modify and redesign conventional aircraft, including single engines and twin engine airplanes, jets, helicopters and hovercraft. Body work and experimental, military vehicles are *not* included. **Base Skill:** 50% +4% per level of experience.

Automotive Mechanics. The ability to repair, rebuild, modify, and redesign conventional vehicles with internal combustion (gas) engines. It also includes body work, turbine engines, methanol, ethanol and diesel truck engines. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience.

Basic Mechanics. A general familiarity and understanding of basic mechanics. This character can fix a toaster, repair a bicycle, replace a belt on a motor, repair or replace a switch, handle or knob, replace a spark plug, change oil, assist in automobile repairs, maintain machinery, read a schematic and similar fundamental tasks. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Locksmith. The study of lock designs and the ability to repair, build, modify and open locks. The methods, techniques, and tools of lock picking include the old-style key and tumbler, combination, and modern electrical locking systems. **Time Requirements:** 1D4 melees to open an antiquated key type lock or simple tumbler/combination type, 1D4 minutes to open an elaborate tumbler type, 2D4 minutes to open a simple electronic lock (usually by patching in a bypass system) and 1D4 hours to break a complex, state-of-the-art electronic lock system such as those used in high security and restricted areas. Super high-tech systems, such as those used by the military and government, will require 3D4 hours and have a skill penalty of -20%.

If an unsuccessful skill roll is made, the lock is not opened and the process must be repeated. If an attempt to open an electronic lock fails, roll again. A second failed roll means that the lock is irreparably damaged and can not be opened! **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** At least the *Basic Electronics* skill (-5% penalty when working on complex or high-tech locks) or *Electrical Engineer* (+5% bonus).

Mechanical Engineer. Training, understanding, and knowledge of how machinery is designed, operated, built, and maintained. Characters can attempt to redesign, modify, repair, construct, or sabotage mechanical devices (includes nuclear reactor driven turbines and atomic engines). The player must first roll to see if his character can figure out how to operate, analyze and design a machine. When a successful diagnostic roll has been made, roll again to determine when the character can fix/change/build the mechanism. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Basic or Advanced Mathematics*, *Basic Electronics*, and *Literacy*. **Special Bonus:** Add a one time bonus of +5% to the *Locksmith* and *Surveillance skills* if Mechanical Engineering is also

known. There is a -30% penalty when working on alien or extremely unfamiliar mechanics. The mechanic *may* be able to puzzle out some of the basic aspects of an alien or magical device, and *may* be able to figure out how to operate the machine, but will not be able to completely fathom how it works or how to repair it.

Munitions Expert. This is a somewhat simplistic and basic version of the Weapons Engineer as it applies to weapons. The character can maintain, fix, modify, mount, reload ammunition, unjam, repair and figure out most small arms – all types of pistols and rifles – as well as make special ammunition (silver coated, dum-dums, etc.) and even repair minor damage to body armor (20 S.D.C. maximum). Things like adjusting targeting sights, the use, mounting and repair of weapon sights and optical enhancements, reloading missiles and ammo drums, and installing/mounting a machine-gun on a vehicle are all second nature to those with this skill. Can also make arrows and arrowheads, sharpen blades/weapons, make horseshoes and basic metal items (nails, spikes, and chain links), and deactivate, reset and fix *simple traps* (roll for each attempt with a -10% penalty). **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** Automatically gets the *Basic Mechanics* skill at 30% +5% per level as part of this package.

Robot Mechanics. This is the specific study of advanced mechanics as it applies to robotics. Those skilled in this discipline can repair, modify, build, and sabotage robots, including industrial robot machines, experimental cutting edge robots, and military drones and robots. There is a -30% penalty when working with advanced experimental and military robots as well as alien robots. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Mechanical Engineer* skill and related requirements.

Vehicle Armorer. A specialized skill in which the character can do more than just tinker with the mechanics of a vehicle. He can add (and often conceal) vehicle armor, modify or completely reconfigure the body/housing of a vehicle, add weapon mounts and turrets, add ram prows and shielding, soup-up with heavy-duty shock absorbers, extend and shorten wheelbases, as well as operate, repair and modify weapons for mounting and use on vehicles; typically large caliber weapons, such as vehicle-mounted flame throwers, machine-guns and mortars, etc. Various other skills may relate to this skill. **Note:** All of the above is *illegal* outside the military. This skill appeals to mercenaries, bounty hunters and criminals operating outside the law or in third world countries. Acquiring military grade weapons, ammo, parts, and vehicles can also be a challenge and may be half the adventure (see the Find Contraband skill). **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** Automatically gets the *Basic Mechanics* skill at +20% as part of this package. Taking this skill in conjunction with *Automotive Mechanics* provides a +10% bonus to the automotive skill. This skill is usually reserved for Military Engineers and Military Contractors.

Weapons Engineer. The complete understanding of military class weapon systems, cannons, recoilless rifles, launch systems, missiles and rockets, and their incorporation into military vehicles. The character can maintain, repair, modify, mount, and figure out most weapon systems, and power supplies. He can repair an assault rifle, handle heavy weapons and install a missile system into a vehicle or a suitcase launcher. The engineer can also add and repair armor and is an expert welder. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Mechanical Engineering*. **Bonus:** +1 to strike when using heavy weapons or vehicular weapon systems. **Note:** -30% when working on alien or experimental weapon systems or vehicles. This skill is usually reserved for Military Engineers and Military Contractors.

Medical Skills

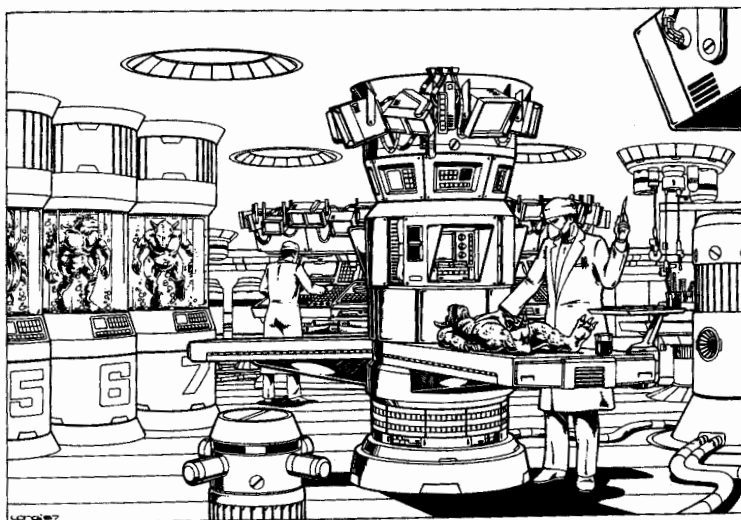
Animal Husbandry. Knowledge in the behavior, care, feeding, breeding, reproduction habits and health of domesticated animals such as cattle, sheep, goats, horses, ducks, chickens, dogs, cats, and similar livestock and pets. The percentile number indicates the degree of

knowledge and skill one has about animals and their care. Reduce the skill ability by half when caring for captive or injured wild animals. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. Also see *Veterinary Science*.

Brewing: Medicinal. This is the making of fermented alcoholic beverages from grains or fruits. This specifically includes wine, mead, ale, beer and moonshine, as well as teas, elixirs, tonics, vapors (breathed in rather than drunken) and other “brews” for medicinal purposes. Stronger types of alcohol, such as brandy, rum, and whiskey, are not included, nor are champagnes or fine wines. The first percentile number indicates the chance of success (a failed roll means an undrinkable concoction). The second indicates the quality of the brew; the higher the number, the tastier the drink. **Base Skill:** 25%/30% +5% per level of experience. Adds a +5% bonus to the *Holistic Medicine* skill.

Crime Scene Investigation. The procedures, methods, and techniques in police crime scene investigation, including protecting the integrity of a crime scene, gathering and preserving evidence, fingerprinting, recognizing and preserving DNA evidence, ballistics (matching bullets to weapons and angles of impact), and finding, processing and analyzing clues and evidence. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +1 to Perception Rolls. **Requires:** *Biology, Chemistry, Chemistry: Analytical, Advanced Mathematics, and Literacy*.

First Aid. Rudimentary medical treatment which includes how to bandage wounds, stop bleeding, splint broken limbs, administer artificial respiration (CPR), as well as use antiseptics and common anti-inflammatory drugs and painkillers. **Base Skill:** 45% +5% per level of experience.



Forensics. Forensic medicine, the proper medical procedure of performing an autopsy on a corpse, finding evidence regarding the time of death, cause of death, age and sex of the victim, identifying physical trauma, internal injury, the presence of toxins, and other details related to the condition of the body and cause of death. **Requires:** *Biology* and *Chemistry* skills. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Holistic Medicine. Training in the recognition, preparation, and application of natural medicines usually made from whole plants and/or their parts (roots, leaves, fruit). The Holistic Doctor is basically a pharmacist and naturalist who creates drugs from herbs and vegetation, as well as studies and treats common ailments. He can find and use plants to create salves, balms, ointments, and lotions to soothe burns, boils, rashes, and insect bites, and reduce swelling, as well as create local anesthetics, and salves to heal wounds faster (twice as quick as normal). Potions and tonics are created to settle upset stomachs, induce drowsiness, or hallucinations. The individual can also make alcohol and poison (hemlock and mandrake for example).

The student of herbology also has a good knowledge of plant lore and when and where to find healing plants, edible fruit, roots, and bark,

as well as how to use and/or avoid dangerous flora. The character can also preserve foods and knows how to set bones, bandage cuts, and suture cuts. **Note:** Plants are seasonal and the right root or leaf may not be readily available in certain times of the year/season, or may be found exclusively in remote regions. Game Masters should use a certain amount of common sense and drama with this skill. **Base Skill:** 30%/20% +5% per level of experience. The first percentage number is the character's ability to accurately diagnose the problem. The second percentage number is the healer's skill at successfully treating the problem with herbs and making healing teas, tonics and salves. A failed roll means the treatment or concoction did not work. **Modifiers:** -10% to treat disease, infection, and poison, -20% to treat internal injuries, -15% to cauterize, -30% to treat alien creatures; cannot perform surgery or amputation. **Bonus:** This skill provides a bonus of +10% to the Brewing and Preserve Food skills.

Paramedic. An advanced form of emergency medical treatment which includes all first-aid techniques, the setting of broken bones, suturing of wounds, use of oxygen and emergency medical equipment, administering of drugs, knowledge of how to move a critically injured person, and other life-saving techniques.

A failed roll means the patient has not responded to treatment or that the treatment has been improperly administered. **Note:** For serious injury or coma, roll three times, consecutively, on percentile dice. A roll of two successful out of three means the wound has been properly treated or that the patient's condition has been stabilized. Failure means the patient's condition is unchanged and getting worse. Another character can immediately attempt to apply medical aid or the same player can try again, but the first character must spend 1D6 minutes of reexamination and/or concentration on the problem before he can try again. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Medical Doctor. The Medical Doctor is a trained surgeon and has a doctorate in the medical sciences. Areas of training include: clinical skills, medical discipline, code of ethics, physiology (muscle, respiratory, blood, body fluids), pathology (diseases, their structure and function), rudimentary pharmacology (use, reaction, and interaction of drugs), laboratory skills, and techniques and methods of data collection. Surgery includes the precision use of knives and scalpels for medical purposes, sewing cuts closed, removing warts and growths, delivering babies (by C-section if necessary), realigning and setting broken bones, amputating limbs, cauterizing wounds, surgically removing foreign objects (i.e. bullets, shrapnel, etc.), stopping bleeding, surgically stopping internal bleeding, repairing internal injuries, and the general treatment of wounds and disease. **Base Skill:** 60%/50% +5% per level of experience. The first percentage number is the doctor's ability to accurately diagnose the problem. The second percentage number is the doctor's skill at successfully treating the problem. **Requires:** *Biology, Pathology, Chemistry, Basic or Advanced Mathematics and Literacy.*

Parapsychology. An offshoot from Psychology in which the practitioner studies claims of ESP (Extrasensory Perception), mind powers, mind over matter, and paranormal phenomena. The latter includes ghost hunting and investigating claims of the supernatural because the supernatural is so often linked with the paranormal and ESP. The skill teaches a scientific approach and methodology to investigating, testing and studying the paranormal. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Biology, Psychology and Literacy.*

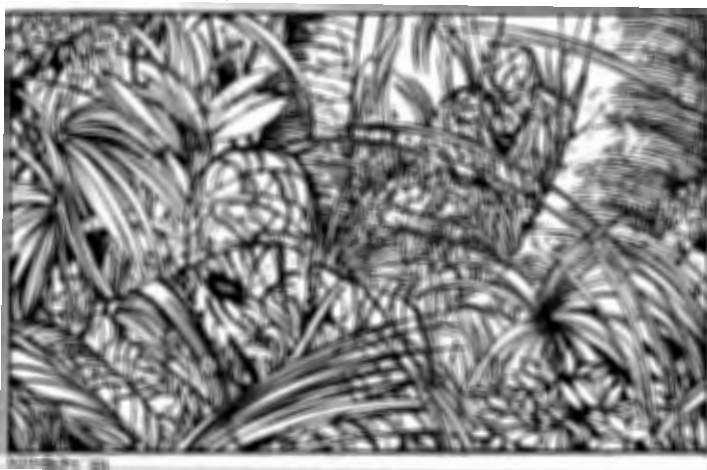
Pathology. This branch of medicine deals with the nature of diseases, their causes, and symptoms, and the functional and structural changes caused by disease. Training includes anatomy, physiology, cell biology, manifestation of disease, tissue injury and repair, abnormal cell structure, metabolism, diagnosis of human diseases, tissue culture methods and applications, analysis of drugs in biological samples and laboratory research, investigative methods, and use of instruments and equipment. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +5% to Forensics skill. **Requires:** *Biology, Chemistry, and Literacy* skills.

Psychology. The principles, theories and evaluation of human behavior as they apply to psychology and psycho-therapy. Includes analy-

sis, understanding and treatment of emotional and mental illness, motivational and perceptual disorders, personality assessment, alcoholism, drug abuse and treatment, and other aspects and studies of the mind and human behavior. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Biology, Chemistry, and Literacy.*

Toxicology. This is a specialty in medicine that deals with poisons, venoms and toxins, their manufacture, composition and antidotes. This skill is useful for both doctors and assassins. A successful skill roll will help determine if poisons have been used on somebody and even the general type of poison/toxin used (a definite answer may require an autopsy and the Forensics skill). **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Biology, Chemistry, and Literacy.*

Veterinary Science. A doctor who specializes in the medical care and treatment of wild and domestic animals. Areas of study are biology (specifically animal), reproduction, breeding, animal anatomy, physiology, pathology, toxicology, surgery, suturing wounds, setting bones, disease, medical care and other applications and techniques in the medical treatment of animals. **Base Skill:** 50% +4% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Biology and Animal Husbandry.* **Note:** A Medical Doctor can also treat an animal, but is at a -35% penalty to do so.



Military Skills

Aircraft: Combat Helicopters. The specialized skill required to fly all types of helicopters, including combat 'choppers, and their related Weapon Systems. **Base Skill:** 52% +3% per level of experience.

Aircraft: Jet Fighters. Training includes flying, maneuvering, aerial combat strategies, and typical fighter jet weapon systems. **Base Skill:** 50% +3% per level of experience.

APCs & Tanks. Military vehicles often have unconventional controls and handle differently than conventional vehicles, especially the many ton, armored combat vehicles such as tanks and armored personnel carriers (APC). Thus, special training is required to pilot them. **Base Skill:** 50% +3% per level of experience. **Note:** Those with this skill can also pilot other types of "tracked vehicles."

Armorer/Field Armorer. This is a somewhat simplistic and basic version of the Weapons Engineer as it applies to infantry weapons. A competent Armorer character can maintain, fix, modify, mount, reload ammunition, and figure out most small arms. The Armorer can repair all types of pistols and rifles, repair minor damage to body armor (20 S.D.C. maximum), adjust targeting sights, use and repair optical enhancements, reload missiles and ammo drums, install/mount a machine-guns and rocket launchers on a vehicle, as well sharpen blades, make arrows and arrowheads, make horseshoes and basic metal items (nails, spikes, and chain links). **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** Automatically gets the *Basic Mechanics* skill at 30% +5% per level as part of this package.

Camouflage. The skill of concealing a fixed base position, vehicle, equipment or individual, using natural and/or artificial materials. A fair amount of time is involved in the preparation of a larger position. Large cargo nets, cut branches or underbrush are used most often in camouflage. This skill is also used to conceal traps. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Demolitions. Demolitions provides the character with an advanced knowledge in the use and workings of explosives and detonation devices for the purpose of blowing up bridges, buildings, barriers, fortifications and sabotage. This includes all types of explosives, such as mines, dynamite, plastics, nitro, blasting caps, etc. It also includes a basic understanding of the strategic placement of mines and booby traps. This skill increases the character's awareness of suspicious rope, string, and wire. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience. A failed roll means a dud; no explosion.

Demolitions Disposal. The skill to safely defuse unexploded mines, bombs, explosive booby traps, dud artillery rounds, dud explosive charges, or any other type of explosive device. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience.

Demolitions: Underwater. Fundamentally the same basic skills and training as Demolitions, but with an emphasis on using explosives in an underwater environment, including underwater techniques, area effect, sound wave damage, different types of explosives, as well as arming, disarming and repairing torpedoes and depth charges. **Base Skill:** 56% +4% per level of experience. **Note:** Any character with the Demolitions skill can use explosives underwater, but is -10%.

Find Contraband. See the description under *Rogue Skills*.

Forced March. Practiced training in uniform marching with a full field pack and weapons. See the description under *Physical Skills*.

Military Etiquette. A clear understanding of the way the military works, including rules of behavior (when to salute, how to address superiors/subalterns, etc.), military procedures and routines, standard issue of equipment, special ordering procedures, proper display of rank and medals, advancement in rank (and the duties that come with it), proper troop formations, how to deal with military bureaucracy, the chain of command, proper channels, who to contact to get things done, and other useful information in matters of military protocol and bureaucracy. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** All soldiers have a fundamental knowledge of military etiquette (base skill 30% with no improvement), but this skill is much more complete with a strong knowledge of what is expected, correct and the formal approach (i.e. by the book knowledge).

NBC Warfare (Nuclear, Biological, & Chemical). This is the knowledge of safety precautions to protect oneself and others from the effects of nuclear, biological or chemical warfare, waste and contamination. The character is also knowledgeable in the safe handling and "clean-up" and containment of such hazardous materials. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Recognize Weapon Quality. The ability to accurately determine a weapon's durability, reliability, and quality by physically examining it. This includes knowing which manufacturers are reputed to make the best weapons, the ability to recognize damage or signs of misuse, modifications/customization or wear and tear, whether the weapon can be made as good as new with a little repair work and/or cleaning, whether it is a cheap (or quality) "knock-off" (copy/imitation), and so on. The character can also recognize if the weapon is stolen (serial numbers filed away, etc.), new, old, and if it has any other special features or properties as well as what the fair price should be. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** Reduce the skill ability by half if the item is not actually handled (seen but not touched/examined).

Trap & Mine Detection. Knowledge of the strategic placement of booby traps and mines, the telltale trademarks and indications of traps and mines, how to avoid them, and the use of mine and explosive detection equipment. The character has been trained to watch for suspicious objects, dirt mounds, trip wires and camouflaging materials that

may denote the presence of a trap. Simple snare traps and trip wires can be easily disarmed by the character, but the Demolitions Disposal skill is required to *disarm* mines, explosives or complex traps. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience on visuals alone. Add +50% when using special detection equipment to locate *mines/explosives* or +10% to locate other types of traps with detection equipment.



Paranormal Studies

Astrology. The ancient art of "reading the stars" and predicting personality traits, predispositions, physical and mental strengths and weaknesses, and fate linked to the positions of the stars. Astrologists are said to be able to predict trends, dangers, pitfalls and opportunities for an individual by analyzing a person's date and time of birth, and the positions and movement of the sun, planets and stars. Western Astrology has 12 signs of the Zodiac, but there is also Chinese and other forms of astrology. Victor Lazlo pointed out that whether one accepted astrology as an art or science, or having any validity at all (mathematical studies suggest it's all hogwash), that if nothing else, the craft might serve as a focus for psychics and Latent Psychics to get Clairvoyant and Precognitive insight about a particular person. Astrologers insist it is an ancient science, but like most paranormal arts, the signs, warnings and insight is often vague and cryptic. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Lore – A General Description. Lore is a study and knowledge of historical and contemporary beliefs, myths, legends, folk-tales, stories and unorthodox theories, regarding the supernatural or the unexplained. All lore skills will focus, in depth, on a particular area of interest and includes an historical and scientific viewpoint, as well as the less orthodox opinions. The skill percentage is used to indicate the degree of current knowledge and to recognize a subject's or item's relationship (or not) to any existing beliefs, myths or occurrences.

Lore: Aliens and UFOlogy. There are a slew of stories, myths, theories, reports, photographs and film on tens of thousands of alleged UFO sightings from around the world throughout the ages. In addition, there are numerous conspiracy theories, claims of cattle mutilation, abductions, scientific experiments, torture and even rape of human beings

by alien beings. Supposedly these beings are “aliens” from another planet or dimension. They seem to be intelligent, mortal humans of various sizes and descriptions, but most make them out to be 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) tall, with white or grey skin (greys being the most malicious), large, bald head, large, almond-shaped dark eyes, and wearing light metallic or synthetic jump suits. Where they come from and what they want from humans remains a mystery, though current popular theory seems to be leaning toward genetics; the aliens need our DNA and other genetic material to reproduce. This area of lore also includes volumes on the appearance, speed, and capabilities of flying saucers and other alien technology. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: American Indians. Characters with this skill can recognize the different tribes and nations, warriors and shamans, totems, fetishes and warnings, identify the people by their housing, clothing and weapons, and has a fundamental understanding about the Native Americans’ history, society, traditional beliefs, customs and laws (at least the most notable). They also know about Indian gods, spirits, and magic. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level. Characters of Native American descent get a +10% bonus.

Lore: Cattle and Animals. This is a general knowledge about cattle, horses, livestock, and other such animals. This knowledge includes what they eat, where they live in the wild, means of defense, the value of their meat, fur, hides and horns, and their natural predators, as well as the most notable tales about supernatural animals, spirits, gods and magic attributed to or involving animals. This skill is practiced most widely in the West of North America, but it is also known throughout parts of South America, Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australia. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Cults and Secret Societies. The study, past and present, of secret organizations, gatherings, and cults, including notorious occultists, death cults, Witches and Necromancers; how and why they started, their purpose, agendas, modus operandi, notable leaders, the groups’ ties to the occult and paranormal, and whether they are known or suspected to be operating *today*. The Knights Templar and the Illuminati are among the most famous secret societies in the West, but there are thousands of others. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Demons and Monsters. This is a study of demonic entities and monsters throughout the ages and around the world. It includes the beliefs, myths and legends of ancient and primitive cultures, religious texts, firsthand accounts, and historical and modern accounts of possession, reputed places of demonic habitation or attraction, the study of known supernatural beings, demonic predators, vampires, lesser and greater demons, and the dark gods and Demon Lords they serve, right down to their general classification (Pranksters, Supernatural Predators, Demonic Servants, Ancient Evil, Alien Intelligences), their names, appearances, habits, desires, weaknesses, strengths, powers, and abilities. The master of demon lore may be able to identify a particular type of monster by hearing its description or a description of its actions, seeing a drawing or photograph or footprint, or by how it acted, killed, or exhibited certain abilities. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Entities and Ghosts. A study of reports, myths and legends regarding supernatural spirits, Entities (all), ghosts, apparitions, hauntings, spectral lights, Astral travel and beings, mediumship/seances and other forms of communion with the dead, and near death experiences. Includes a general knowledge of spiritualism from all cultures around the world. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Faeries & Creatures of Magic. The study of Faeries, changelings, shape changers, giants, dragons, the sphinx, and creatures of magic throughout the ages, via lore, myths, legends, religious text, and first-hand accounts from around the world. This skill is effectively the same as the previous Lore skills except that the emphasis of the lore is on Faerie Folk, dragons and other magical creatures and beings – creatures that are neither demonic nor spirits/supernatural, but long-lived and attributed with magical powers. The Faeries of ancient myths include Faeries, Sprites, Pixies, Brownies, Leprechauns, Bogies, Toad

Stools, Pucks, Kelpies, Gnomes, Goblins, Tengu, Fox Faeries, and a host of other creatures of magic. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Geomancy or Lines of Power. A study of ley lines, burial mounds, places of power, megaliths, and geomancy beliefs, past and present. Geomancy and ley lines are the belief that certain places on Earth are polarized with an unknown energy or forces that can heal, cause paranormal phenomena, attract supernatural forces, open dimensional gateways, are magical or are places of evil. The character “knows” the locations of many such modern and ancient sites/places, such as Stonehenge and the Bermuda Triangle, as well as the many theories behind them and the legacy of legends, mysteries, disappearances and dangers linked to each. The skill will provide the character with insight about the areas and enable him/her to recognize specific, known, places of power, as well as recognize unknown megalithic markers of these revered or feared places. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Magic. This area of study provides general knowledge, theories and historical reference on how magic works, common magical powers and spells, their effects, who possesses such magic, creatures of magic, and the various types of practitioners of magic (Arcanist, Witch, Necromancer, etc.), places of reputed magical significance and power, and myths and legends about magic and the most famous magic items and notorious sorcerers. Although the character cannot read runes or mystic symbols, he is likely to be able to recognize whether the symbol is a real magic ward, rune, warning, part of an inscription or spell, or a fake. The following abilities come with this layman’s skill: **Base Skill (general knowledge):** 25% +5% per level of experience. **Recognize Wards, Runes and Circles:** 15% +5% per level of experience. **Recognize Enchantment:** People under the influence of magic charms, possession, curses, mind control, and similar: 10% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Magic Arcane. The study of ancient texts that speak about books of magic, scrolls, runes, rune weapons, magic items, ancient artifacts, charms, fetishes, masks, talismans, crystals, herbs, potions, magical components and formulas. Characters armed with this knowledge will know about legendary books, scrolls, and items of magic, what they were said to be capable of doing, where they might be now, or what, supposedly, happened to them (stolen, hidden, lost, destroyed, locked away, buried, kept in a church or crypt, is in the possession of a secret cult or society, on display in a museum, in a private collection, and so on), as well as if it is a key component in a magic ritual or the bringing of dark forces, capable of slaying demons, reaping destruction or evil, unleashing forbidden knowledge, bringing madness, and so on. Lastly, the character has a good idea of the relic’s value as a historical artifact or magical icon to practitioners of magic, cults and supernatural beings. **Base Skill:** 20%/40% +5% per level of experience. The first number is the accuracy and completeness of one’s knowledge about a particular book or artifact. The second number is the character’s ability to authenticate the item and assess its value on the occult market. See Appraise Antiques for assessing its value on the open market.

Lore: Mythology. Includes a general knowledge of the most well known world myths, including Greek, Roman and Egyptian, plus extensive knowledge of a particular country’s or culture’s myths relating to ghosts, spirits, demons, Goblins, Faerie Folk, monsters, dragons, immortals, undead, Elemental forces, supernatural animals, gods and magic. All countries have their share of unique myths. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. Adds a +5% bonus to Lore: Magic and +10% to Lore: Demons & Monsters.

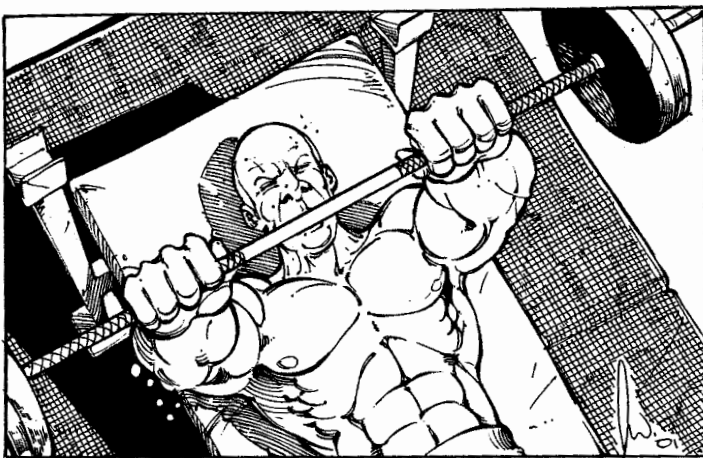
Lore: Paranormal & Psionics. Knowledge about psionic powers, how they are believed to work, how they affect people, their limitations, and who possesses them. This skill also provides a rudimentary knowledge about people and beings who possess psionic powers such as minor and major psychics, healers, mutants, and the most infamous supernatural creatures (Vampires, Possessing Entities, Mindolar,

Raksasha, etc.). The character may also have a passing knowledge about famous psychics in the region, mind control (via drugs, psychology, hypnosis, magic and psionics) and myths and legends about such places as the Astral Plane, Dreamstream, and Psyscape. The character does not have to be a psychic himself, but he should believe that psychic powers really exist. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Lore: Religion. The study of religions, gods and beliefs from around the world. This comprehensive skill provides a general knowledge of the religions of the world and a deeper knowledge of religious beliefs in a particular country or continent, such as North America, South America, Russia, Europe, Japan, etc. This knowledge includes regional beliefs, rituals, holy places, pantheons of deities, superstitions and supernatural creatures (demons, spirits, angels) and their stories of specific creation, myths and legends. The skill will help a character recognize specific rituals, their purpose, the deity(s) involved, and whether a blood sacrifice is necessary, as well as recognize religious fetishes, charms, icons, holy symbols and similar. The percentile number indicates the degree of knowledge one has about a particular religion and his ability to remember it. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. Adds a +5% bonus to Lore: Mythology and Lore: Demons & Monsters.

Lore: Superstitions. Comprehensive knowledge about superstitious beliefs (break a mirror and expect seven years of bad luck, knock on wood to keep a spoken bad thing from happening, walking under a ladder is bad luck, etc.), their origin, which ones may have a kernel of truth or a clue in dealings with the supernatural, paranormal and magic, as well as related myths, legends and historical points of reference. Also knows many *urban legends*. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Streetwise: Weird. Regional (City, State or Province) urban legends, myths, folklore, stories, rumors, prominent local superstitions, and the locations of reputed places of power, ley lines, hauntings, magic, paranormal activity, cult activity and strange happenings. Also knows about the most famous and notable places of weirdness across the country. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.



Physical Skills

Special Note: One of the unique aspects of Palladium's RPGs is that the player can build and increase his or her character's physical attributes (P.S., P.P., P.E., Spd, and S.D.C.) by selecting Physical skills that build and develop muscles and endurance. ALL attribute and skill bonuses are accumulative. However, a specific Physical skill may only be chosen *once*, including Hand to Hand Combat skills.

There are five choices for Hand to Hand Combat skills available to the character (pick one), plus three additional *fighting techniques* which can be selected to improve one's range of fighting ability: *Boxing*, *Kick Boxing* and *Wrestling* (can pick any or all).

No Hand to Hand Combat Skill. Characters without combat training get one hand to hand attack at levels 1, 3, and 9, and are +1 to dodge.

Hand to Hand: Basic. Provides elementary fighting techniques and methods of attack and self-defense as taught in military basic training or in self-defense classes. See the combat section for a listing of specific abilities.

Hand to Hand: Expert. An advanced form of self-defense and unarmed combat usually taught to commandos. It costs two of the character's skill selections to learn. See the combat section for a listing of specific abilities.

Hand to Hand: Martial Arts. This is some form of Oriental fighting skill (karate, kung-fu, etc.) that teaches advanced hand to hand combat. It costs three of the character's skill selections to learn. See the combat section for a listing of specific abilities.

Hand to Hand: Assassin. This is an advanced form of combat with an emphasis on immobilizing or killing one's opponent quickly. It costs three of the character's skill selections to learn. See the combat section for a listing of specific abilities.

Hand to Hand: Commando. This is an advanced form of military combat that includes martial arts techniques with an emphasis on immobilizing or killing one's opponent quickly. It costs three of the character's skill selections to learn. See the combat section for a listing of specific abilities.

Acrobatics. Aerial feats of agility and strength, such as walking a tightrope, high wire, trapeze, and stunts performed above ground. Other physical abilities include rolls, somersaults, leaps, and falls.

Provides all of the following:

An automatic kick attack at first level (1D8 S.D.C. damage).

Sense of balance (60% +5% per level).

Walk tightrope or high wire (60% +3% per level).

Climb rope (80% +2% per level).

Back Flip (60% +5% per level).

Basic Climb ability (40%; or adds a +15% to Climb skill).

Basic Prowl ability (30%; or adds a +5% to Prowl skill).

Bonuses: +2 bonus to roll with punch or fall, +1 to P.S., P.P., and P.E. attributes, and +1D6 to S.D.C.

Aerobic Athletics. A type of aerobic exercise to build the body, develop reflexes and grace, and learn a few very basic self-defense moves. **Bonuses:** +1 to disarm, +1 to pull punch, +2D4 S.D.C. and +2 to kicking damage. Sense of balance (30% +5% per level of experience).

Athletics (general). Training in, and enjoyment of, vigorous exertion for non-professional, competitive sports, exercises, and contests of strength, endurance, and agility. Includes sports and hobbies such as tennis, track and field, skateboarding, bicycling, golf, skiing, swimming, bowling, baseball, basketball, and similar activities. **Bonuses:** +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to roll with impact/punch/fall, +1 to P.S., +1D6 to Spd and +1D8 to S.D.C.

Body Building & Weight Lifting. The building of muscle tone and body strength through weight lifting and exercise. **Bonuses:** +2 to P.S. and +10 S.D.C.

Boxing. Classic art of fighting with fists. Training helps build the body and reflexes. Skilled boxers will automatically knockout opponents on a roll of a natural twenty. The victim of a knockout will remain unconscious for 1D6 melees. Unlike normal knockout/stun, the player does not have to announce that he is trying to knockout his opponent before making a roll to strike. **Bonuses:** +1 additional attack per melee, +2 to parry and dodge, +1 to roll with punch or fall, +2 to P.S. and +3D6 to S.D.C.

Climb. Knowledge of the tools and techniques for climbing up sheer surfaces. Players should roll once for every 20 feet (6 m) of a ver-

tical climb. If the roll fails, it means he is losing his grip, however, every "skilled" climber gets a chance to regain his grip, roll again. Two consecutive failed rolls means the character falls (takes 1D6 damage per 10 feet/3m of a fall). **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Rappelling is a specialized, rope climbing skill used in scaling walls, towers, and cliff facings. For game purposes, rappelling will include ascending and descending climbs. **Base Skill in Rappelling:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Fencing. This is the formal art of fighting with a sword and dagger. This includes not only Olympic style fencing with a foil, epee or saber, but also Kendo (the use of a samurai katana) and other blades. Swordsmanship is practiced in many places and is also all the rage, especially among the nobility, for its flashy looks and for the amount of blood it can spill. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike and parry with a sword or dagger, and +1D6 to damage with a sword. **Requires:** W.P. Sword (W.P. Knife is optional).

Forced March. Practiced training in uniform marching with a full field pack and weapons. This is done at an even pace and rhythm that enables the marchers to cover great distances on foot at a faster than normal pace. Increase the normal Physical Endurance rate as to how long an activity like marching can be maintained by five times; applicable only to forced marches/traveling. Maximum speed on a forced march is roughly 60% of one's speed attribute, which enables a large group of dozens to hundreds of soldiers to travel at the same consistent pace; suitable for everybody in the group (never less than a Speed of 8). Likewise, this skill trains soldiers to make coordinated charges and maneuvers, including spear runs, spear and shield placement, and so on. **Bonuses:** +2 to P.E., +1D4 to Speed, +2D6 to S.D.C.

Gymnastics. Learning to do falls, rolls, tumbles, cartwheels, somersaults and to work the parallel bars and rings. This sport builds great upper body strength, grace, and balance.

Provides all of the following:

An automatic kick attack at first level (2D4 damage).

Sense of balance (50% +3% per level).

Work parallel bars & rings (60% +3% per level).

Back Flip (70% +2% per level).

Basic Prowl ability (30%; or adds a +5% to Prowl skill).

Basic Climb ability (25%; or adds a +5% to Climb skill).

Climb Rope/Rappel (60% +2% per level).

Bonuses: +2 bonus to roll with punch or fall, +2 to P.S., +1 to P.P., +2 to P.E. and +2D6 to S.D.C.

Juggling. The ability to toss "up" a number of objects, such as balls, clubs, knives, lit torches, and almost any small objects, and keep them continuously in the air with fast hand movements. It is used for the entertainment of others and to develop greater hand-eye coordination; +1 on initiative roll. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Kick Boxing. Kick Boxing is a form of martial arts self-defense. The character who takes Kick Boxing has done maybe a few months or a year of casual training as a supplement to his usual Hand to Hand Combat skill. **Bonuses:** +1 to P.E., +1 to P.S. and +1D10 to S.D.C. Plus, add the following strikes to the usual list of known attacks: Roundhouse Kick (3D6 damage), Axe Kick (2D8 damage), Knee Strike (1D8) and Leap kick (3D8 damage, but counts as two melee attacks).

Outdoorsmanship. Being an avid outdoorsman and survivalist, this character has spent a significant portion of his/her life living off the land or in the wild. As a result, the character is hardened to the rigors of outdoor life. **Requires:** *Wilderness Survival*. **Bonuses:** Add +1 to P.E., +2D6 to S.D.C. and +5% to the *Dowsing*, *Fasting*, *I.D. Plants and Fruit*, and *Wilderness Survival* skills.

Physical Labor. Not all strength and conditioning comes from deliberate training or sports, some comes from old-fashioned hard work. This skill represents the strength and endurance gained from hard physical labor either due to a physical occupation (such as construction,

ditch digging, warehouse work loading and unloading boxes, etc.) or really demanding chores at home such as chopping wood, bailing hay, mending fences, etc. **Bonuses:** Add +2 to P.S., +1 to P.E. and +2D8 to S.D.C.

Prowl. This skill helps the character to move with stealth; quietly, slowly, and carefully. Techniques include balance and footing, short steps and pacing, weapon positioning, prone positions for low visibility, and crawling. A failed Prowl roll means that the character has been seen or heard. If the Prowl roll is successful, then the character is not seen or heard and may make a sneak attack. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Running. A routine of running and exercise to build speed and endurance. For game purposes, the character is considered able to run one mile (1.6 km) for every one point of P.E. without undue fatigue and two miles (3.2 km) for every one point of P.E. (minimum of 27 miles/43.2 km) before collapsing. **Bonuses:** +1 to P.E., +4D4 to Spd and +1D6 to S.D.C.

Swim. The rudimentary skill of keeping afloat, dives, swimming and lifesaving techniques. The percentile number indicates the overall quality of form as well as skill of execution. A character can swim a distance equal to 3x his P.S. in yards/meters per melee. This pace can be maintained for a total of minutes equal to his P.E. attribute number. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience.

Swim Fatigue Note: The act of swimming on the surface of the water has the same fatigue rate as running and medium to heavy exertion, especially at great speed or very long periods of time.

S.C.U.B.A.: The letters S.C.U.B.A. stand for Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus. Individuals learn the methods and equipment needed for skin diving and underwater swimming. A character can swim a distance equal to 2x his P.S. in yards/meters per melee. This pace can be maintained for a total of minutes equal to his P.E./endurance. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** The maximum safe depth one can go without getting the bends is about 120 feet (36.5 m). Deeper depths are possible with depressurization, special suits and submarines. Swimming is required for S.C.U.B.A.

S.C.U.B.A. Fatigue Note: Swimming underwater with S.C.U.B.A. equipment or other underwater equipment is considered to be light activity, unless extremely active, involved in combat or fast swimming (in which case it is considered strenuous or heavy activity). The buoyancy of water reduces the weight of most items by 30% when carried underwater. This means the fatigue rate for carrying a heavy load is reduced by 30%, meaning 30% more can be carried at the normal fatigue rate. Characters can also lift 30% heavier weights.

Wrestling: As taught in high schools and colleges, wrestling is more of a sport than a combat skill, but it does provide some useful combat moves.

Bonuses: +1 to roll with punch or fall, +2 to P.S., +1 to P.E. and +4D6 to S.D.C.

Wrestling Special Moves:

1. Body Block/Tackle does 1D4 damage (double if the wrestler is 8 to 12 feet/2.4 to 3.6 m tall, and 3D6 damage if larger). The opponent must dodge or parry (push away/deflect attacker) to avoid being knocked down. If knocked down, the opponent loses one melee attack/action and initiative for the rest of that round.

2. Pin/Incapacitate on a natural roll of 18, 19, or 20. This means that the wrestler can hold his opponent in such a way that his opponent cannot physically attack or move. However, the character who is using the "pin" hold cannot attack or move without releasing his opponent.

3. Crush/Squeeze does 1D4 S.D.C. damage per squeeze attack (double damage if 8 to 12 feet/2.4 to 3.6 m tall, and 3D6 damage if larger). Each "squeeze" counts as one melee action/attack.



Rogue Skills

Cardsharp (or Card Shark). A skill that involves the manual dexterity of hand and finger manipulation to perform tricks, palming, and other gimmicks of sleight of hand with playing cards. This includes dealing from the bottom or middle of the deck, stacking a deck (to the card shark's favor), hiding cards up the sleeve (and elsewhere), fancy and impressive methods of shuffling and dealing the cards, as well as card counting and understanding the odds. A failed roll means the character has fumbled the trick or was too obvious and is caught cheating! **Base Skill:** 24% +4% per level of experience. Add +4% if the character also has the Palming skill and add +6% if he also has the Gambling (Dirty Tricks) skill.

Computer Hacking. This is a computer skill similar to Computer Programming (see Technical skills), however, the emphasis of this skill is breaking computer access codes to gain illegal access to other computer systems and steal or sabotage its data. The character is an expert in tracing computer data, bypassing defense systems, and breaking ("hacking") codes; add a one time bonus of +5% to the *Cryptography*, *Surveillance*, and *Locksmith* (electronic and computer controlled locks only) skills if the character is a hacker. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Literacy*, *Computer Operation*, *Computer Programming*, and at least *Basic Mathematics*.

Concealment. The practiced ability to hide small items on one's body or in hand, usually by continually moving it around from hand to hand or place to place, or hide it on one's person or an innocent bystander unnoticed. Objects must be no larger than 14 inches (35.5 cm) in height/length, and six inches (15.2 cm) in width. The weight must also be 10 pounds (4.5 kg) or less. The smaller and lighter the object, such as a knife, gem, key, etc., the easier it is to conceal (add a bonus of +5%). Larger items such as a book, scroll, club, statue, or similarly large or heavy object are more difficult to conceal on one's person for obvious reasons. **Base Skill:** 20% +4% per level of experience.

Find Contraband. The character with this skill knows where to find illegal arms dealers, the Black Market, smugglers, thieves, forgers (mainly fake I.D.s), fences, pawn shops, blind pigs (illegal gambling establishments), exotic animal dealers (illegal wild animals, endangered species and the bizarre), automobile chop-shops, white slavers, prostitutes, drug dealers, illegal medical treatment, stolen antiquities, the occult (magic and strange) and others who traffic in illegal goods and services. The skill makes the character familiar with underworld hangouts, gangs, criminal operations, and the general practices, codes of conduct, pricing structures and modes of operation of the criminal underworld. Likewise, the character has a good idea of what illegal weapons, ammo, and items should cost and what these people pay for contraband items (typically only 20% of the retail market price). The character also knows the penalty for being caught with contraband. **Base Skill:** 26% +4% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +10% to I.D. Undercover Agents.

Gambling (Standard). This skill enables the character to skillfully play several different games of chance. The character knows the rules of 1D4 games, plus one additional game for every 2 points of the character's I.Q. (rounded up). In addition to rules, the character understands the theories of mathematical "odds" (+5% bonus to Basic Math skill), some basic strategies and tactics for winning consistently, when to hold them, fold them, etc. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Gambling (Dirty Tricks). This is the other side of gambling in which the character is skilled at cheating in games of chance. This includes knowledge of dirty tricks such as counting cards, how to use marked cards, using trick/loading dice, stacking the deck (in one's favor), sleight of hand tricks to hide cards up sleeves or in the palm of the hand, dealing from the bottom of the deck, and other cheats (must have the Palming skill for the latter two). **Base Skill:** 20% +4% per level of experience.

I.D. Undercover Agents. A combination skill, good eye and knack for identifying undercover agents; typically members of law enforcement, but may also include government agents, private detectives, bounty hunters and Psychic Investigators. **Base Skill:** 30% +4% per level of experience.

Imitate Voices & Sounds. The ability to imitate voices, accents and expressions of different vocal systems, dialects and languages. The first number indicates the character's ability to change his voice and imitate accents, inflections and expressions from other regions. A successful roll means he has disguised his normal/true speaking voice and accent, and convincingly sounds like he is from another region or part of the world. Attempting to accurately imitate the voice, inflections and attitude of a specific person is much more difficult, and the character will either need to know the person being imitated very well, or have spent hours studying him/her, and even then there's a penalty of -20%.

The second number indicates the ability to duplicate various calls, screams, chirps and buzzes that are found in the wilderness. Distinctive calls are often used as signals during sneak attacks, with different calls meaning to the people who know them "all is calm/quiet," "guard on watch," "move cautiously," "danger" and "attack!" **Base Skill:** 42%/36% +4% per level of experience. **Bonus:** Add +5% to the Impersonation skill.

Palming. Simply the ability to pick up and seemingly make a small object, such as a coin, key, dagger, or playing card, vanish by concealing it in one's hand. Adds a bonus of +5% to the Pick Pockets skill. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Pick Locks. See *Espionage Skills* for the complete description.

Pick Pockets. See *Espionage Skills* for the complete description.

Prowl. See *Physical Skills* for the complete description.

Roadwise. A regional skill in which the character knows the streets, alleys, back roads, shortcuts, fastest routes, construction zones, speed traps, highways, police stations and posts in his city and State (or Province) like the back of his hand. Also knows all the local junkyards, the best mechanic garages (including a few who don't ask questions), and the best places to hide a vehicle or lay low for a few hours or a few days, as well as the best place to "dump" (abandon) a vehicle where it will not be found any time soon (authorities or an enemy must conduct a serious and expansive search to find it – if so roll percentile to see how quickly it is found: 01-25%: 2D4 days, 21-50%: 3D6 days, 51-75% 3D6 weeks, 76-90% 1D4 years, 91-96% 1D4x10 years, 97-00%: Never! **Base Skill:** 26% +4% per level of experience.

Safecracking. This is a specialized skill in which the character studies the strengths, weaknesses, and construction of safes and how to open them without damaging the contents inside. The fingers of the safecracker are so sensitive that they can "feel" the subtle calibration of combination locks and other locking mechanisms. When using explosives, they can use their abilities to such precision that they can "blow" the lock off a safe, security door, safe deposit box and similar without creating a big, area effect explosion or inflicting damage to the contents (a failed Safecracking skill or Demolitions roll means the explosion

was too much and the contents are damaged). **Base Skill:** 20% +4% per level of experience. **Bonuses:** Adds +5% bonus to the Pick Locks and Demolitions skills. The character gets a +4% bonus if a Locksmith and +6% if a Mechanical Engineer. **Penalties:** Requires focus, concentration and keen hearing, so characters with an M.E. of 14 or less are -10% on this skill (but also see the Physical psionic ability Open Locks).

Seduction. This is the ability to make the opposite sex melt with desire. This skill is somewhat similar to the Interrogation skill in that the seducer knows how to ask the right questions to get information without being obvious. The seducer usually seems attentive, sympathetic, alluring and sexy. Men and women who are seduced tend to have loose lips and will spill secrets. They also lose track of time, spend big money to impress and please their seducer, and lavish her or him with their affection, time and attention while oblivious to everything else around them.

Anyone who has been successfully seduced is distracted, skill performance is half and takes twice as long to perform, the character doesn't notice people and events around him/her, and is easily caught off guard (no initiative and all bonuses are at half when attacked by a character other than the seducer). Worse, the victim(s) of seduction is completely vulnerable to the seducer. The seducer always gets the first attack/strike/action, and the victim has no chance at self-defense against that first attack, plus the victim loses one attack/action from surprise or horror. **Base Skill:** 20% +3% per level of experience. **Skill Bonuses:** +1% for every one M.A. attribute point over 20, and every two P.B. points over 17 (round up). So a character with a P.B. of 23 (+3) and M.A. of 24 (+4) would be +7% to successfully seduce. The seducer can influence more than one person at a time; one additional victim per every three levels of experience. In addition, the seducer is +5% to pick the pockets of, palm, or plant things on his/her victim of seduction, as well as adding +5% to the Cardsharp, Sing, and Dance skills. Also, Seduction victims who are intoxicated or drugged are easier to seduce (+5%).

Streetwise. An understanding of the darker side of life and the scoundrels who roam the streets. The streetwise character will be able to recognize gang members by their actions and philosophies, gang colors (emblems and clothing that denote membership to a particular organization), gang symbols and mannerisms, and dangerous locations and gangland haunts. The individual will also recognize a potential brawl situation, assess a gang member's rank/power in the organization, and know some of the hangouts, modes of operation, rituals, ethics, and perhaps even notorious gang leaders of the more infamous street gangs. It also includes knowing the "street names" of common drugs, their symptoms, their cost and recognizing the drug when he sees it, and the danger it represents. **Base Skill:** 20% +4% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +10% to I.D. Undercover Agents.

Tailing. The practiced ability to follow someone without their knowledge. Includes basic stake-out procedures. A failed Tailing roll indicates that the character being "tailed" has noticed that he is being followed and may take evasive action to lose the "tail," or confront or attack the person (unless he makes a run for it). Either way, the subject of the "tail" is likely to escape being followed any further. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +5% to the Tailing skill if the character also has Prowl. **Note:** Tailing is also part of the Surveillance skill.

Science Skills

Anthropology. This is the behavioral study of man and other intelligent life-forms and their environments. Studies include societies, customs and beliefs, religions, and political structure, as well as rudimentary history and archaeological background. It is important to note that anthropology is more concerned with the study of *modern*

races and societies than it is with ancient ones. This is especially important when dealing with alien races and cultures in order to avoid accidentally breaking taboos or codes of behavior. It also tells the anthropologist whether he may be dealing with a dangerous people (hate humans, fear technology or magic, are cannibals, worship demons, etc.).

The skill can also be used to examine artifacts and ancient or alien ruins to identify the probable people/race, purpose, culture and technological level. The character can identify the period of time the item was used (contemporary or ancient), and whether it is human or alien, but is not skilled enough to tell whether an artifact is authentic or a forgery. **Note:** The anthropological student is one of the few who is well versed in the myths and legends of the past, and may know a few things about ancient gods, the spirit world, Faerie Folk, dragons, demons and other creatures once thought to have been flights of fancy conjured by the imaginations of primitive people. On the good side, those with a background in anthropology may know things that can help humans communicate with and fight these mythological beings. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Bonuses:** +5% to all Lore Skills and History.

Archaeology. This is the scientific study of relics from ancient civilizations by excavation and other means. The skill teaches proper excavation (dig) techniques, analysis, preservation, restoration, and dating methods (including carbon dating), as well as a rudimentary history and anthropology background.

Like the anthropological student, the archaeologist is one of the few who is well versed in the legends and facts of ancient humans, giving him a clue about demons and monsters seemingly spawned from ancient books and legend. The character can ascertain whether the item is an ancient artifact or of recent construction, and therefore, if an item is an authentic artifact or a forgery. He is also more likely to recognize genuine magic items, artifacts and articles that are important to certain cults, religions, cultures and peoples. **Base Skill:** 40%/20% +5% per level of experience. The first percentage number applies to the character's historical and archaeological capabilities, the second is his ability to recognize magic items and alien weapons and items of significance, as well as his ability to figure out the purpose of the item through examination alone (i.e., without seeing it used in action). **Bonuses:** +2% to all Lore skills and +10% to History.

Artificial Intelligence. Advanced A.I.s range from simple thinking computers and devices with problem solving capabilities, the ability to learn and think independent of an operator, to devices modeled on the neural network of the human mind that can think, learn, solve problems, use subjective logic, create and even imagine.

A character with this science skill understands the many principles and theories behind advanced artificial intelligence, how it works, how the A.I. "thinks" and "understands" the world around it, how to communicate with the machines and how to reprogram them, either directly or by argument. **Requires:** *Advanced Math, Computer Operation and Computer Programming.* **Bonuses:** +5% to all other computer skills, including Programming and Hacking. **Base Skill:** 30% +3% per level of experience.

Astronomy & Navigation. The study of the stars and other celestial bodies, their movements, positions, cycles, alignments, and interrelations with the planets and each other. This knowledge can also be used to determine direction, approximate distances, identify the seasons, and tell the time of day. Training includes reading maps and star charts, course computation, following landmarks, and the use of navigational equipment. Includes land, air, and water navigation as well as piloting by the stars and instruments alone. This ability is ideal for sailors and those characters who can fly. A failed roll means the navigator is off course. To determine how many miles off course, roll 2D6 miles when traveling on foot, 1D6x10 miles when traveling by horse or car, and 2D4x10 miles when flying or using a boat/ship. Roll once for every hour that one travels in unknown territory or seas. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience; +10% bonus if the character has Ad-

vanced Mathematics. **Requires:** *Basic Mathematics* and *Literacy* to use instruments, read maps and to chart a course by the stars. Also see *Land Navigation* described under the Wilderness skills.

Astrophysics. Knowledge of stellar astronomy and how it relates to nuclear physics, quantum mechanics, relativity and other explanations for the creation of deep space phenomena, like quasars and black holes.

Requires: *Basic* and *Advanced Mathematics*. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Biology. Basic understanding of cells, anatomy, physiology, evolution, and genetics. The character will know how to use a microscope, cultivate bacteria, and how to dissect, study, evaluate and classify new organisms. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Botany. Plants, their categories and functions, are studied extensively. Characters will know the basics of cross-fertilization and germinating, as well as growing experimental plants. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Chemistry. The basic understanding of chemical principles and formulae. Characters know enough chemical laboratory procedures for analyzing and synthesizing chemical compounds to act as competent assistants. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience.

Chemistry: Analytical. Training in chemical engineering theories useful in the analysis of compounds and their practical applications. Characters will be highly skilled in the use of laboratory equipment and can analyze and synthesize chemicals. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Chemistry*, *Advanced Mathematics*, and *Literacy*. Computer Operation is strongly suggested but not required.

Chemistry: Pharmaceutical. This is the study of drugs and their interaction with the human body. Knowledge includes a familiarity with common medical drugs, drug interactions, prescribed dosages, the use/distribution of drugs, their effects on the human body, and other biological applications. The character can recognize and prescribe common drugs, knows their effects and side effects, recognizes poisons/toxins, and can safely administer painkillers, hallucinogens, stimulants, relaxants, antibiotics, antidepressants, anti-psychotics, sodium pentothal/truth serum, tranquilizers, sedatives, and so on. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. A failed roll means the drug is improperly administered or prepared, and has no effect.

Genetics. With exhaustive study in the theory of genetics, as well as the use of gene therapy, the character has gained a good understanding of how DNA and RNA function, the basics of bio-technology and how to analyze and predict the behavior of genes and chromosomes in various living organisms. Given access to a life form's genetic database (after blood has been scanned and analyzed), characters with the Genetics skill can make predictions about the creature's anatomy, biology, character and appearance, as well as whether or not the creature is sterile. **Requires:** *Advanced Math*, *Chemistry* and *Biology*. **Base Skill:** 30% +3% per level of experience.

Mathematics (Basic). Knowledge of basic math, including the ability to count, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and fractions. **Base Skill:** 72% +3% per level of experience.

Mathematics (Advanced). Knowledge of all basic and advanced mathematics, including algebra, geometry, trigonometry, calculus, and techniques for using advanced mathematical formulae. In this highly educated and literate society, the base skill is considerable. **Base Skill:** 64% +2% per level of experience.

Parapsychology. See the skill description under *Medical Skills*.

Psychology. See the skill description under *Medical Skills*.

Zoology. An academic knowledge of wildlife, nature and habits, including domesticated and wild animals indigenous to the planet, and known alien animal species. This includes knowledge of animal habits, behavior, instincts, mating, hunting, food or favored prey, breeding, physiology and biology, flight/fight responses, natural weapons and defenses, the best way to handle the animals, and so on. This skill may be specialized by taking the skill twice. When specialized, the

character receives a one time bonus of +20% to the skill when dealing with that one specific type/species of animal (e.g., apes, snakes, bovine, etc.). **Bonuses:** +5% to the *Herding* and *Track & Trap Animals* skills, and +10% to *Veterinary Science*. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.



Technical Skills

Appraise Antiques. A trained eye able to assess the quality and true market value of collectibles, including clothing, furniture, jewelry, gems, works of art, antiques, and books, but *not* weapons, electronics and technology items. The character can also estimate the item's age within 1D10 years and confirm its authenticity (or whether it is an old but valuable "copy," expurgated edition, etc.). **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. **Note:** *Practitioners of magic*, *Professional Historians*, *Parapsychologists*, *Professional Psychics* and *Professional Psychic Investigators* who take this skill can also tell if the item is an authentic magic item, spell book or item with occult, magical or paranormal significance, but do so at 20% +5% per level of experience.

Art. The ability to draw, paint and/or sculpt or do craft work. Selection as an occupation related skill indicates a professional quality, while selection as a Secondary Skill indicates a talented amateur. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Breed Dogs. The first percentile number indicates the art of raising, mating/breeding, taming and training domestic and wild canines, as well as a knowledge about canines in general.

The second percentile number is used to attempt to tame a wild canine, teach a dog tricks, or to train the animal for a specific task like tracking, retrieving, pointing, herding animals, attacking on command, and so on. A failed roll means that the animal refuses to learn that particular trick or specialty. **Note:** These are trained work animals or pets, not familiars. **Base Skill:** 40%/20% +5% per level of experience.

Business and Finance. This skill represents a basic understanding of business, management, banking and the financial world. The character can set up a business, prepare mission statements, business proposals, and stockholder reports, manage and supervise others, handle all aspects of a small business, or get work as a stockbroker or advisor. **Requires:** *Literacy* and *Basic Mathematics*. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Computer Operation. A knowledge of how computers work, along with the skills to operate peripherals like keyboards, printers, and modems. The character can follow computer directions, enter and retrieve information, install programs, games and software, use the web/internet and similar basic computer operations. Does *not* include Repair, Programming or Hacking. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Literacy*.

Computer Programming. Advanced computer knowledge that includes designing, programming, debugging, and testing computer programs and software. Hacking is possible, but at a penalty of -40% unless the character also has the Computer Hacking skill (see *Rogue Skills*). **Base Skill:** 50% +3% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Computer Operation* and *Literacy*.

Excavation. A mixed bag of abilities that includes finding one's direction underground, estimating one's approximate depth, "digging out" and identifying relics and evidence from debris, collapsed tunnels and the earth, as well as digging out and fording up/repairing collapsed tunnels, underground chambers and caves. The skill gives the character a good understanding of how to best perform an excavation without any major setbacks, where to dig, what is the best type of soil, how deep to go, how to pack and secure tunnel walls and ceilings, where to place support beams and what building materials to use in underground construction. **Note:** Tunnels and excavation sites that are made quickly are not permanent, and can be collapsed by gunfire, earthquakes, traffic vibrations, etc. Trying excavations without this skill is just asking for trouble and is performed on pure luck. **Bonus:** +5% to the *Dowsing* skill when looking for an underground river or spring and +5% to *Spelunking* skill. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Firefighting. A basic understanding of fire and how it works, breathes, and travels, as well as firefighting methods and techniques, rescue procedures, and the practiced use of firefighting tools, equipment and gear. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Gemology. Skill in identifying and appraising the value of precious metals (silver, gold, etc.) and stones (jade, emerald, ruby, sapphire, diamond, etc.). This ability also enables the person to identify fakes, but at a penalty of -10%. A failed roll means the character cannot tell whether or not the item is fake or real, or its value is grossly under or overestimated. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

General Repair & Maintenance. Not everyone can be a mechanic, blacksmith or carpenter, but many are good with their hands and capable of doing satisfactory repairs on simple mechanisms, gears, pulleys, wheels, rope, and so on. The General Repair/Maintenance skill includes: sharpening blades, minor repairs on weapons, packing their own S.D.C. bullets, sewing tears in clothes (it may not look pretty, but does the job), changing a tire, shoeing a horse, repairing furniture, painting, varnishing, nailing and assisting in basic woodworking, and even doing minor patchwork on armor (restores 1D8 S.D.C.). Roll once to see whether the character can figure out what is broken, what must be done to fix it, and whether it is beyond his meager abilities to repair. Roll again to determine success or failure in making the actual repair. If failure, the player may try again, but only twice. **Base Skill:** 45% +5% per level of experience. Reduce skill proficiency by half if the item is extremely damaged, complex, high-tech or alien.

History. The first percentile number represents a very general historical knowledge of the world and the most famous myths, legends, people and events.

The second percentile number indicates a more in-depth knowledge of a particular subject or region in the world (pick by nation or continent). For example: History of North America is a deep knowledge about the United States, Canada and Mexico, their origin, leaders, key figures in history and science, lore, religions, traditions, famous people, and so on, as well as the myths and legends of the indigenous people (i.e., Native American Indians, Inuit, Aztec, etc.). Narrowing the focus to just one of those countries (i.e., Mexico or the US or Canada) gives the character less knowledge of the continent as a whole, but deeper historical knowledge of that one particular country.

An example of a historical "subject" might include Military History (or a more narrow but deeper subject might be the American Civil War, or Napoleonic War or World War II), industry, science, music, art, and so on. This skill may be taken repeatedly to cover multiple regions of the world or various subjects. Thus, a character who takes this skill three times might apply it to North America, Western Europe, and Rus-

sia. The base skill percentage indicates the approximate degree of information the character has learned or can remember accurately. **Base Skill:** 60%/40% +4% per level of experience.

Jury-Rig. A character with this skill can repair almost anything, and even build something out of scrap components. There is no guarantee that the jury-rig will hold for very long (4D6 hours or 2D4 days, whichever is most appropriate), or will even work in the way intended (roll again, a failed roll means the system is only 50% functional), but it may well save a character's life until they can acquire the proper parts, buy a new unit or get a skilled mechanic to do the job right. **Requirements:** At least *Basic Mechanics* and *Basic Electronics*, Engineering skills are even better. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience (add an extra +10% bonus if the character is an Electrical or Mechanical Engineer or Field Armorer).

Law (General). The character knows what constitutes a criminal act, the typical punishment and many legal precedents, procedures and decisions common throughout a particular nation, country or region. This can be an invaluable skill when trying to determine if someone is breaking the law, how grave or petty the criminal act is, and in determining the level of action to take against it. The skill is also important for making a criminal charge stick, setting bail, using legal protocol, and defending those unjustly accused. The character also knows the legal protocol and proper conduct for conducting searches, police investigations and other aspects of law enforcement. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level.

Leather Working. Skilled at tanning, preserving and working with animal hides, fur and leather to make leather goods such as clothing, capes, caps, bags, purses, boots, shoes, belts, and even S.D.C. leather armor (the character can repair leather armor too). A failed roll indicates that the hide is ruined and the leather is wasted. **Base Skill:** 45% +5% per level of experience.

Masonry. A rudimentary understanding of the principles of brick-laying and stone construction. The percentile number indicates the success ratio of recognizing deterioration, improper construction, the intended purpose of construction, styles of masonry, approximate age or period of construction, and general data about mason guilds. The character can also mend masonry and assist in construction and demolition. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Meditation. The skill of meditation teaches techniques and methods for relaxation, clearing the mind and spiritual focus. Similar to the psychic ability the Meditation skill enables the character to recover *Base I.S.P.* at a rate of two points per hour of meditation and increase normal healing by 30%. **Note:** +1 to save vs psionic attack or possession while in a meditative state. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Mining. Methods and practices used in prospecting, panning for gold, identifying minerals, digging mine shafts and finding and pumping water from underground sources. Includes the use of mining equipment, refining gear, and explosives. The use of explosives is a very basic use for the purpose of blasting (same as Demolitions but with a -20% penalty). A character with the Mining skill can also tell the quality of refined mineral products, and will know about many of the current mining operations in the area. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Navigation: Training in map reading, star charts, course computation, following landmarks, and use of navigational equipment. Includes land, air, and water navigation, as well as piloting by instruments alone. A failed roll means the pilot is off course. Roll 2D6x100 for most aircraft, 4D6x100 for jets, and 2D6x10 for ground vehicles to determine how many miles/kilometers they are off course. Roll for every hour that one is off course. This skill enables characters to pilot ships and other water vessels that ride on the surface of the water by charting the stars and landmarks and using instruments. Likewise, the character can navigate submersibles using instruments and other data. Navigating marine vessels is an aspect of the standard Navigation skill. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience. **Requires:** *Basic Mathematics*, *Sensory Equipment*, and *Literacy*.

Philosophy: The principles of philosophy, ethics and morals, methods for effective debating and examining a subject from a wide perspective, and touch upon aspects of sociology and social consciousness. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

Photography. Training in the art of still photography using the traditional 35 mm camera and digital cameras. Also teaches the use of lighting, camera tricks, lenses, filters, and other camera equipment, as well as storage, development/printing, enlargement, duplication of film/photos, computer scanning and computer enhancements, alterations, and printing. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Prospecting. The character can recognize and evaluate precious and semi-precious metals (gold, fool's gold, silver, bronze, copper) in their natural ore appearance and as refined and polished jewelry. In addition, the character has a good idea where to look for such mineral deposits, and the fundamentals of "panning" for gold and the general knowledge of mining and how to use various types of simple mining equipment. Furthermore, the character can identify and appraise the value of precious metals (silver, gold, etc.) and stones (diamonds, rubies, etc.), and identify fakes, but at a penalty of -10%. A failed roll means the character cannot tell whether or not the item is fake or real, or he grossly under or overestimates its value. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Recycling. Recycling covers everything, but typically includes paper, lumber, plastic, glass, scrap metal, electrical wiring and components, circuit boards and machine parts. This is not like the Jury-Rig skill; a character with Recycle cannot make something out of odd components but, given some time and equipment, he can strip down a damaged machine to its *basic component parts* or gather useful materials to repair an existing machine or build something new. Has a very rudimentary understanding of metallurgy. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Research. Training in the use of methods, techniques, and means of finding information, including public records, libraries, interviews, surveys, demographics, trade journals, the Internet and legal searches. This skill is helpful in locating information about people, places and things. The G.M. should ultimately regulate the availability of accessible, known information regarding a particular subject. Any character can do research and ask questions, but the Research skill will reduce the amount of time needed by half and the character is trained to notice relevant information that an untrained character is liable to overlook. Thus, for truly secret or difficult information, you must have the character with the Research skill try to uncover it. Only roll to determine success on researching these difficult or hushed up bits of information. **Base Skill:** 40% +5% per level of experience.

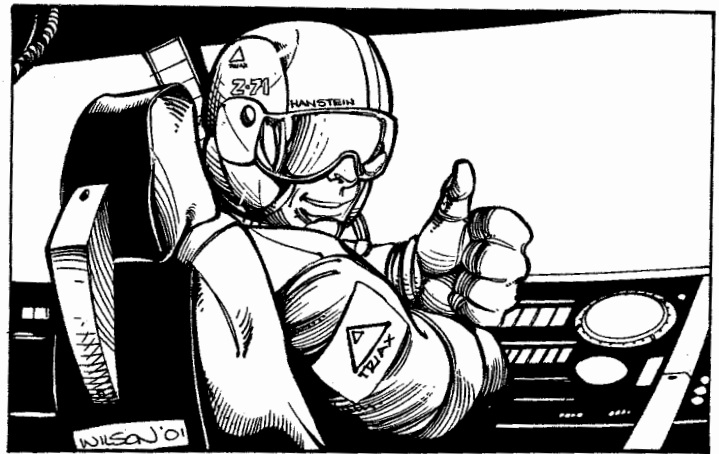
Rope Works. This is a skill that takes into account the various needs and uses of rope. The character knows a variety of ways to tie knots, the advantages to various types of ropes and cords, their tensile strength and how to weave/make rope. A failed roll to tie a knot means that it is loose and sloppy and easy to untie, slip out of, or likely to unravel or snap when strained. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience. Characters bound/tied by this character are -10% to escape/slip knots.

Salvage. This skill allows characters to find, identify, pick up, strip down, evaluate and possibly sell, any debris, wreckage and junk that they can locate. They can also strip a piece of wrecked machinery for spare parts and may even be able to make something work again, given time, enough parts and the right skills. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience.

Technical Writing. Training in writing and presenting outlines, documentation, instructions, procedures, studies, and proposals. The writing tends to be dry and reads like a manual, which is exactly what it is. Also applicable to scientific, medical, military, engineering, and computer papers written in technical terms for fellow professionals and scientific journals. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Ventriloquism. The practiced ability to throw one's voice. This can be used to create the illusion of not speaking while making a voice or verbal noise appear to be coming from someone or something else, such as a puppet, a tree, box, chair, etc. Maximum range is 10 feet (3 m) away. A failed roll means the voice is not well thrown or the ventriloquist's mouth is seen moving, so the trick does not work. **Base Skill:** 16% +4% per level of experience.

Whittling & Sculpting. The art of carving wood, bone and horn into three dimensional figures/statues/toys, designs, and simple objects like wooden stakes, arrows, fishing hooks, walking sticks, staves, bowls, a simple flute or whistle, and similar. Many characters with this skill simply use it to pass time and don't necessarily make anything from their whittling. The percentile number indicates the quality of technique and the quality of the work/appearance. Taking the skill twice indicates a professional quality and gets a bonus of +10%. Selecting it once indicates a talented amateur. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.



Transportation Skills

Aircraft: Helicopter. The specialized skill required to fly all types of commercial helicopters. **Base Skill:** 52% +3% per level of experience.

Aircraft: Jet. Includes large and small commercial transport jets. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience.

Airplane. Includes old propeller, single and twin engine types. **Base Skill:** 50% +4% per level of experience.

Automobile. Manual and automatic transmission; includes dune buggies, jeeps, and small trucks. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience.

Bicycling. Means the character can ride over rough terrain, reach two times normal running speed and travel cross-country at normal running speed, and perform tricks and jumps (roll skill level; failed roll means a crash). Maximum speed can be maintained for a time equal to the P.E.x5 in minutes. Skill also includes basic maintenance/repairs. **Base Skill:** 60% +3% per level of experience.

Boats: Motor, Race & Hydrofoil Types. These include all types of small motor driven boats, racing craft and yachts. **Base Skill:** 55% +5% per level of experience.

Boats: Sail Types. Small sailing and medium-sized sailing yachts, and fishing boats. **Base Skill:** 60% +5% per level of experience.

Boats: Ships/Seamanship. An in-depth knowledge about *sailing vessels*, large and small, as well as the terms and principles of sailing. The character knows how to sail, whether it be in belaying, hauling, dropping or trimming sail, which means he also knows the difference between a crossjack, a mizzenmast, a fore lower topgallant and a hundred other names for specific sails, ropes, masts and cross-masts. The

skill also includes being able to judge, evaluate and repair sails, ropes and rigging (every sailor has to be handy with a needle and thread), and operate the pumps needed to remove the water that collects in the bilge, as well as knowing how to braid rope, and the basics of cleaning and maintaining a vessel. **Base Skill:** 35%/20% +5% per level of experience. The first number is for small sailing vessels and general sailing knowledge, the second number is for piloting large ships on the open seas. **Requires:** Must also have the *Sewing* and *Rope Works* skills.

Combat Driving. This skill supplements other driving skills by helping to make the character a master of the roads when driving automobiles, jeeps, trucks, motorcycles and other ground vehicles. It helps to turn the character into an aggressive road-hog and cool-headed "chicken" player. In fact, tricks, dangerous maneuvers and highspeed car chases are challenging and fun for this daredevil, although his passengers are likely to fear for their lives.

In game mechanics, skill penalties for tricks, vehicular attacks (ram, sideswipe, etc.), and evasive maneuvers are reduced by half, plus the character is +2 to dodge when driving, +2 to survive a crash/impact, can fire a weapon from a moving vehicle at only a -2 penalty, and can even make an aimed or "called shot" (at -2 to strike) while on a moving vehicle (or talk, or engage in some other activity while driving without penalty). This is a supplemental piloting skill applicable only to ground vehicles and does not have a base skill or level of progression other than reducing penalties an additional one point per level of the driver's experience.

Kayaking & Canoes. Allows the use of most paddled boats and canoes, rowboats and knee boards, as well as the Kayak. Speed in still water is usually equal to the character's P.S. attribute (treated for all purposes as Spd) and can be maintained for P.E. x5 in minutes without pause. The skill also includes basic principles behind using currents, maintenance, and even "tricks" like sculling and right-siding a flipped canoe, etc. **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level.

Motorcycles & Snowmobiles. This skill includes the piloting of all two- and three-wheeled vehicles such as motorcycles of all types, dirt bikes, and mopeds as well as snowmobiles, jet sleds, miniature ATVs and other scaled-down vehicles. **Base Skill:** 60% +4% per level of experience.

Tracked Vehicles. Includes landcrawlers, half-tracks, light tanks, tractors, and heavy construction vehicles (bulldozers, steam shovels, etc.). **Base Skill:** 54% +4% per level of experience. Can pilot tanks and APCs but at a -15% penalty and -1 attack per melee round.

Truck. Specifically applies to driving large cargo and transport vehicles like eight- to sixteen-wheeled commercial trucks and multi-ton transports. **Base Skill:** 56% +4% per level of experience.

Water Scooters. The knowledge and skill of piloting all types of one- and two-man water sleds (underwater) and jet skis (surface sleds). **Base Skill:** 50% +5% per level of experience.

Water Skiing & Surfing. All water skiing techniques, methods and use of most types of recreational forms of "riding the waves," including skis, water jet scooters, water boards, surfboards and sail boards. **Base Skill:** 40% +4% per level of experience.

Weapon Proficiencies

Note: Each W.P. provides combat training with a particular type of weapon. The result is hand to hand combat bonuses to strike and parry whenever that particular weapon is used. All bonuses are cumulative. Each W.P. counts as one skill. The character may select several W.P.s or a few. Characters can use *any* weapon without a W.P., but without benefit of the W.P. bonuses.

There are two categories of Weapon Proficiencies, *Ancient* and *Modern*. These are somewhat misleading, since what they really refer to is unpowered melee type weapons (swords, spears, etc.) and modern, powered weapons (guns of every stripe).

W.P. Ancient Weapons

A note about Weapon Proficiencies (W.P.): Each W.P. provides combat training with a particular type of weapon. The result is hand to hand combat bonuses to strike and parry whenever that particular weapon is used. Bonuses that increase for that particular weapon are accumulative and are combined with the character's P.P. attribute, P.C.C., and Hand to Hand Combat skill bonuses. The *Damage* stat indicates the number of damage dice rolled to inflict the appropriate amount of damage for that type of weapon. Damage starts as S.D.C. and when S.D.C. are gone, damage comes off the Hit Points (H.P.). As a rule, the larger or better quality the weapon, the greater the damage.

W.P. Archery. An expertise with bow weapons of all kinds. The character can use all manner of bows and arrows, including short bows, long bows, all types of modern compound bows, harpoon guns and crossbow pistols, and repeating, light and heavy crossbows. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12 and 14. +1 to parry with a bow weapon (effective at level one), and +1 to disarm at levels 2, 5, 10 and 15. **Rate of Fire:** Two shots per melee round at level one and an extra shot per melee round is added at levels 2, 4, 5, 8, 10, 12 and 14. **Range:** See list below, and a trained archer may try a shot at 50% greater distance but does so without benefit of any bonus to strike or disarm. **Note:** The character loses all bonuses and reduce the rate of fire by half when running and shooting, flying, riding on horseback or when shooting from a moving vehicle or while otherwise unbalanced.

Average Ranges & S.D.C. Damage per Arrow:

Short Bow – 340 feet (104 m) – 1D6 damage.

Long Bow – 640 feet (195 m) – 2D6 damage.

Compound Bow – 700 feet (213 m) – 2D6+1 damage.

Harpoon Gun – 120 feet (36.5 m) – 1D10 damage.

Light Crossbow – 340 feet (104 m) – 2D4 damage.

Heavy Crossbow (large) – 600 feet (182 m) – 2D8 damage.

Pistol Crossbow (small) – 120 feet (36.5 m) – 1D6 damage.

W.P. Axe. Training with all types of large axe weapons, including single blade and double-headed axes and picks. **Damage:** 2D6 or 2D8 damage depending on the size and style of the battle axe (small axes and hatchets do 1D6 damage). **Bonuses:** +1 to strike and parry at levels 2, 5, 8, 12, and 15. +1 to strike when thrown or to parry at levels 5, 8, and 12; not designed for throwing.

W.P. Blunt. Training with all types of blunt weapons, including maces, hammers, cudgels, pipes, staves, and clubs. **Damage:** Typically 1D6 and 2D4, with only the largest and spiked weapons doing 2D6 damage. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike and parry at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 5, 10, and 15; not designed for throwing.

W.P. Chain. Training with all types of chain weapons, including ordinary lengths of chain, the flail, ball or mace and chain, nunchaku, and similar. While chain weapons can be used one-handed, it's only possible to parry while the weapon is being wielded in two hands. **Damage:** Typically 2D6 damage, though the largest and Goupillon Flails (three spiked balls) do 3D6 damage. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 7, 10, and 13. +1 to parry at levels 4, 8, and 12. This weapon cannot be used to entangle and cannot be thrown with any accuracy; -3 to strike when thrown.

W.P. Forked. Includes small weapons such as the sai and tiger fork, to large weapons such as the pitchfork, military fork and trident, as well as other weapons with tines. When wielded two-handed (large weapons) or with one in each hand (small weapons, with W.P. Paired Weapons), it's possible to catch enemy swords with a successful entangle. **Damage:** Small forked weapons (like the sai or tiger fork) do 1D8 damage, while most large forked (spear-like) weapons do 2D6 damage, but the trident does 2D8. **Bonuses:** Starts with +1 to strike or entangle at levels 1, 3, 5, 8, 11, and 13. +1 to parry at levels 1, 3, 6, 10, and 13. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 4, 10, and 15; not really designed for throwing.

W.P. Grappling Hook. Trained use of a grappling hook for climbing (adds +5% to that skill when a grappling hook is used), scaling walls, boarding vessels, or snagging objects. Tripping an opponent is done by hooking the foot, ankle or leg. It does little damage, but successfully knocking an opponent to the ground causes the victim to lose their initiative and one melee attack. **Damage:** When used in hand to hand the most damage a Grappling Hook does is 1D4 damage, but when swung and then pulled back into a victim, the impaling damage is 1D6. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike or entangle when thrown/swung at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. This weapon *cannot* be used to parry!

W.P. Knife. Training with all types of daggers and knives. **Damage:** Very small 1D4 damage, and typical 1D6. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 2, 4, 7, 10, and 13. +1 to parry at levels 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12. +1 to strike when thrown, at levels 1, 3, 6, 8, 10, and 13.

W.P. Paired Weapons. A tactic in which a one-handed weapon is held in each hand to be used in any combination of combat moves simultaneously. For example, two short swords, or a short sword and broadsword, sword and knife, mace and shield, and so on. Two-handed weapons cannot be used as a Paired Weapon. Users of Paired Weapons can:

1. *Strike and parry simultaneously.* In other words, those skilled in W.P. Paired Weapons can often perform two actions for every one melee action/attack.

2. *Twin, simultaneous strikes* against the same target. Both weapons hit at once, but it is considered ONE melee attack/action (roll only once to strike). The defender under attack can only try to parry one of the two weapons coming at him for his defensive parry. The other will strike unless he too is using two weapons, or a weapon and a shield, and has the W.P. Paired Weapons skill to try and block both simultaneous attacks.

3. *Strike two different targets* (or strike one and parry another incoming attack), simultaneously; both must be within reach.

4. Parry two different attackers, one with each hand.

W.P. Pole Arm. Training with all types of large, bladed spear-like weapons, including the glaive, sabre halberd, runka, scythe and voulge, among others. **Damage:** Typically 2D8, with the largest doing 3D6; only the Voulge does 4D6 damage. **Bonuses:** +2 damage at levels 2 and 8. +1 to strike and parry at levels 1, 3, 6, 9 and 12. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 3, 8, and 12; not designed for throwing.

W.P. Quick Draw. A practiced move in which the character gets an initiative bonus to draw and fire or throw his weapons much faster at the first sign of danger. Note that characters with a high P.P. benefit most from this skill. **Bonuses:** +1 on initiative for characters with a P.P. of 17 or less, +2 on initiative for those with a P.P. of 18 to 23, +3 on initiative for those with a P.P. of 24 to 30 and +4 to initiative for characters with a P.P. of 31 or above.

W.P. Shield. Combat skills with large and small shields used primarily for parrying and self defense. **Damage:** 1D6 as a blunt weapon. **Bonuses:** +1 to parry at levels 1, 3, 7, 10 and 13. A shield can be used in one hand and a weapon in the other. +1 to strike with a shield (1D4 damage) at levels 4, 8, and 12. No bonus to strike when thrown. A shield cannot be used to block bullets or energy blasts, at least not easily. Any such attempt is done without any bonuses (straight die roll), with a penalty of -8 to parry! Blocking thrown knives, spears, arrows and other weapons is basically the same but is only -3 to parry on an unmodified die roll. The shield has limited S.D.C. and only really takes damage when used to block energy blasts or explosions, or is specifically targeted by an opponent with the intention of destroying or chopping through the shield.

Damage to shields (optional): Subtract 10% of the damage that would normally be inflicted by a weapon when blocked/parried by a shield. When all S.D.C. is gone, the shield has too many holes, cracks and weaknesses to offer protection. The next strike will punch right through or shatter it and hit the user at full force and full damage.

W.P. Spear. Combat skill with large and small spears and javelins (the use of a rifle equipped with a bayonet also falls into this category). **Damage:** Short spear or javelin 1D6 damage. Long Spear 2D6 damage. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike and parry at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, and 12. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 3, 6, 10 and 14. Maximum Throwing Range: 150 feet (45.7 m).

W.P. Staff. Combat skill with large and small staffs. **Damage:** Short Staff 1D6, Long Staff 2D4, and Bo Staff or Quarter Staff 2D6 damage. Typically made of wood. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 7, 10 and 13. +1 to parry at 2, 5, 8, 11 and 14. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 5, 10, and 15; not designed for throwing.

W.P. Sword. Combat skills with large and small swords, including fencing type training, includes rapiers, sabers, broadswords, large swords and short swords. **Damage:** Short Sword or Saber: 2D4, Falchion or Scimitar: 2D6, Broadsword: 1D8+1, Long Sword and other large swords: 2D6, Claymore, Flamberge and other extremely large swords: 3D6 damage. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. +1 to parry at levels 2, 4, 7, 10 and 13. +1 to strike when thrown at levels 4, 8, and 12; swords are not designed for being thrown.

W.P. Targeting. Expertise with thrown and projectile weapons (but not bows and arrows, crossbows, or guns), such as the sling, slingshot, boomerangs, shurikens, throwing knives, throwing sticks, axes (small) and spears, even siege weapons. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 7 and 10. Characters who select both W.P. Targeting and another W.P. for a missile weapon (but not thrown swords, large axes, staves, etc.) get the usual bonuses for that W.P., plus the bonus from W.P. Targeting. Can also throw two small items, like knives, shurikens or throwing sticks, simultaneously at the same target. **Requires:** Any one W.P. for a missile weapon such as a spear. **Note:** The character loses all bonuses and the rate of fire is half, when running and shooting or throwing, flying, when riding on horseback or from a moving vehicle, or otherwise unbalanced.

Typical Effective Range & Damage per Weapon Type:

Bolas: 30 feet (9 m) – 2D4 damage.

Blowgun: 30 feet (9 m) – 1D4 damage.

Boomerangs: 60 feet (18 m) – 1D6 damage.

Brick or stone, thrown: 50 feet (15.2 m) – 1D6 damage.

Dart: 30 feet (9 m) – 1D4 damage.

Javelin: 300 feet (91.5 m) – 1D6 damage.

Net: 30 feet (9 m) – No damage.

Sling or Slingshot: 80 feet (24 m) – 1D6 damage.

Spear, thrown: 100 feet (30.5 m) – 1D6 or 2D6 damage.

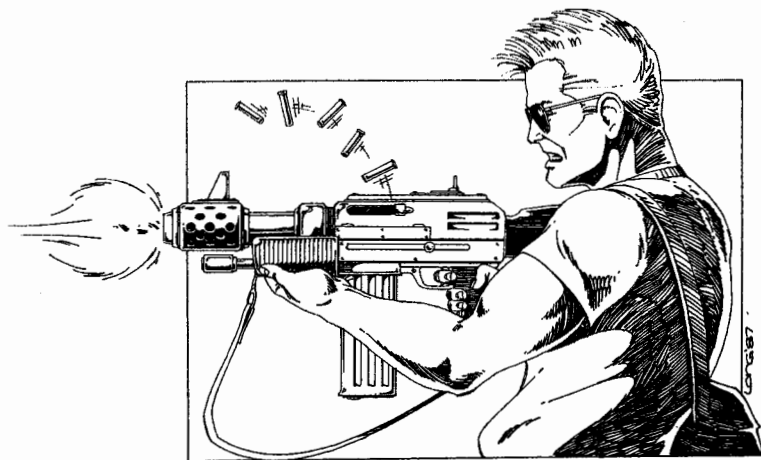
Throwing Sticks and Knives: 40 feet (12.2 m) – 1D6 damage.

Throwing Axes: 40 feet (12.2 m) – 2D4 damage.

Trident: 50 feet (15.2 m) – 2D8 damage.

Note: W.P. Targeting does a Critical Strike (double damage) on a Natural 19 or 20 (unmodified die roll to strike). Swords, large axes, chairs, frying pans, hammers, clubs, maces, pole arms and most other handheld weapons are *not* designed to be thrown. Consequently, the average throwing range is a mere 20 feet (6 m) and the character is -1 to strike. An attacker can try to throw such weapons farther, but is -3 to strike for every additional 10 feet (3 m) beyond 20 (6 m). Spears, javelins, slings, throwing knives/sticks/axes can be thrown/fired by anybody without penalty at the typical effective range listed above.

W.P. Whip. Skill at “whipping” or snapping with long, lightweight, flexible weapons, typically made of leather or reeds. **Damage:** Light Whip 1D6, or Heavy Whip, Bull Whip or Cat-O-Nine-Tails 2D6. **Bonuses:** +1 to strike, disarm or entangle at levels 2, 4, 7, 10, and 13. +1 to damage at levels 2, 4, 8, and 12. This weapon cannot be used to parry and cannot be thrown.



W.P. Modern Weapons

No Weapon Proficiency (W.P.). Anybody who does not have a W.P. in a particular weapon type *CAN* pick up a gun and use it, but does so without benefit of any bonuses. The bonuses that follow do not apply to this unskilled character, but a weapon can still be deadly in his hands. P.P. attribute bonuses and Hand to Hand Combat bonuses do *NOT* apply to modern weapons. Furthermore, the untrained shooter does *not* know how to reload or clean the weapon or anything about ammunition, the gun's kick, how to use a gun sight to aim accurately, or anything about guns or gun safety – all he can do is pick it up, aim as best he can and pull the trigger. **Note:** A character with no gun proficiency rolls 1D20 with *no* bonuses to strike, can *NOT* make an *aimed shot* or a *Called Shot* and suffers a penalty of -3 to strike with burst attacks, -5 to strike when shooting a machine-gun or other heavy weapon, and -6 when shooting wild.

W.P. Handguns: A familiarity with all types of handguns including revolvers and pistols. Revolvers are the classic cylinder-based “six shooter.” Pistols are “automatic” weapons which means the gun keeps firing while the trigger is depressed and doesn't stop until the trigger is released or the ammunition is spent.

Damage: Light caliber guns: 2D6 to 3D6 S.D.C. Medium caliber guns: 3D6 to 4D6 S.D.C. Heavy/large caliber handguns: 4D6 (.45 automatic) to 6D6 S.D.C. (Magnum revolvers). *Double damage* for a standard *short burst* (three rounds/bullets fired), but only pistols (not revolvers) can fire in bursts.

Average Range: 140 feet (42.7 m).

Typical Payload: Revolver: Six bullets. Automatic Pistol: 8-16 rounds.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

W.P. Rifles: A familiarity with the very accurate, single shot, bolt-action style of rifles used for hunting and sniping, and automatic and semi-automatic, military assault rifles like the M-16 and AK-47.

Damage: Light caliber rifles: 5D6 per single round. Medium caliber rifles: 6D6 S.D.C. per single bullet. Heavy/large caliber rifles: 7D6 to 1D6x10+3 S.D.C. per single round. *Double damage* for a standard *short burst* (three rounds/bullets fired). *Triple damage* for a *long burst* (six rounds/bullets fired) but counts as two melee attacks. **Note:** Only semi-automatic and automatic rifles can fire a three round burst. Only bolt-action and semi-automatic rifles can be used for sniping and firing a *single bullet*.

Average Range: 1300 feet (396 m), +500 feet (152 m; that's 1800 feet/548.6 m total) for precision bolt-action rifles.

Typical Payload: Bolt-Action Rifles, Semi-Automatic, and Light to Heavy Caliber Rifles: 5-20 rounds loaded by hand or by one box magazine/ammo clip. Automatic Assault Rifles: 20-50 round magazines, with some capable of taking a 100 round drum.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11 and 13.

W.P. Shotgun: A familiarity with the classic double-barrel shotgun and police and military versions of shotguns with ammo drums.

Damage: Buckshot: 2D6 S.D.C. (half damage for rock salt) to a 10 foot (3 m) radius; two S.D.C. (stings like the dickens) for riot control rubber bullets. Light Shot: 3D6 S.D.C. Medium Shot: 4D6 to 5D6, Heavy Shot/Large Bore: 6D6 S.D.C. **Note:** In all examples listed above damage is for a single round, double the damage if both barrels are fired simultaneously.

Average Range: Sawed-Off: 60 feet (18.3 m), Hunting: 200 feet (61 m), and Police/Military Shotgun: 300 feet (91.5 m).

Typical Payload: 2-6 in common shotguns, 20, 50 and 100 round ammo drums for police and military style (each single blast counts as one melee attack; can't fire two simultaneous blasts but has rapid-fire and larger payload).

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 10, and 14.

W.P. Submachine-Gun: A familiarity with small arms automatic weapons like the Uzi.

Damage: 4D6 S.D.C. per single round or 1D4x10 S.D.C. per three round burst.

Average Range: 500-600 feet (152 to 183 m; an Uzi is the latter range).

Typical Payload: Fires pistol rounds. A single bullet does 3D6+1 S.D.C., 6D6+3 for a three round burst, 1D6x10+4 for a *long burst* (six rounds/bullets fired) but counts as two melee attacks. **Note:** Can only fire in bursts.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15.

W.P. Heavy Military Weapons: Familiarity with military hardware, including grenade launchers, mortars, machine-guns, and mini-guns.

Damage: *Light or Medium Caliber Machine-Gun:* 5D6 S.D.C. per single round or 1D6x10 per short burst (12 rounds/bullets fired; counts as one melee attack) or 2D6x10+20 S.D.C. per long burst (36 rounds fired), but counts as three melee attacks. **Note:** Can only fire bursts.

Heavy Caliber Machine-Guns and Mini-Guns: 7D6 S.D.C. per single bullet, or 1D8x10 S.D.C. per short burst (10 rounds/bullets fired; counts as one melee attack) or 2D8x10+20 S.D.C. per long burst (30 rounds fired), but counts as three melee attacks. **Note:** Can only fire bursts and is so large, bulky and heavy that it must be mounted on a tripod, vehicle or supported on a stone or other strong support to use.

Grenade Launcher Rifle: 1D6x10 S.D.C. per grenade to everything in a 10 foot (3 m) radius. Can only fire one at time, each shot counts as one melee attack/action. A grenade launcher may also be mounted on an assault rifle, but has a reduced range and ammo capacity; pump action.

Portable Mortar/Rocket Launcher: 2D4x10 S.D.C. per explosive round to everything in a 15 foot (4.6 m) radius, but each shot counts as two melee attacks.

Average Range: Light Machine-Guns: 3000 feet (914 m) and Heavy Machine-Guns: 5000 feet (1524 m). Grenade Launcher: 1200 feet (366 m), only 800 (244 m) when part of an over and under assault rifle. Mortar or Rocket Launcher: 4000 feet (1219 m).

Typical Payload: Machine-Guns: 100 short bursts (3000-3600 round belts). Grenade Launcher Rifles: 2 hand loaded or 24 grenade drum or six shot, pump-action on a rifle. Mortar: One hand-loaded round at a time.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 1, 3, 6, 10, and 14.

W.P. Military Flamethrowers: Familiarity with different types of flame casting weapons used by the military and mercenaries.

Damage: 5D6 S.D.C. per burst of flame (counts as one melee attack) with a 01-75% likelihood of anything flammable catching fire.

Average Range: 60 feet (18.3 m).

Typical Payload: 20 fire blasts per single canister of fuel, 40 per double canisters.

W.P. Bonuses: +1 to strike at levels 2, 5, 10 and 15.

W.P. Trick Shooting: A character whose occupation is Military, Law Enforcement/Police, Bounty Hunting, Detective/P.I., or Security, can pick *one* trick when the *W.P. Trick Shooting* skill is selected, SWAT gets two tricks with one W.P. Trick Shooting selection. Does not apply to Psychic Investigators.

The *Fire Walker P.C.C.* may also select the W.P. Trick Shooting skill and get *one* trick, but the *Physical Psychic P.C.C.* and *Ghost Hunter P.C.C.* get *two* tricks for ONE W.P. Trick Shooting skill. In all cases, W.P. Trick Shooting may be selected as an Elective or Secondary Skill to acquire it, but only by the occupations and P.C.C.s listed above.

1. Can fire a traditional two-handed weapon, like a rifle, one-handed without penalty (normally the shooter loses all strike bonuses).

2. Can shoot over his shoulder by holding up a mirror and using the reflection to aim. Reduce the bonus to strike by half.

3. Accurately shoot while riding a horse or a moving vehicle (normally a wild shot), but strike bonuses are half and a "Called Shot" is impossible.

4. Shoot accurately while standing on head or hanging upside down; all bonuses applicable at full.

5. Dodge, roll or somersault and come up shooting (normally a wild shot), no bonuses or penalties to strike; straight roll of the dice.

6. Ricochet shot! The shooter can bounce bullets, arrows, slings, and other fired projectiles (depending on the specific W.P.) off of one surface and angle the shot in such a way that the projectile ricochets/bounces off and hits a different/second target! Inflicts only one point of damage to the first surface and full damage to the second. Reduce bonuses to strike by half.

This can also be done with advanced or experimental energy weapons but the ricocheting surface must be mirrored or highly polished. Heavy weapons cannot be used.

Wilderness Skills

Boat Building: This skill enables the character to build a variety of rafts, small rowboats, large flatbed boats, and canoes. A small raft (two men) can be made within 1D6+1 hours if the lumber or other suitable materials and tools are readily available. A large raft will take about 4D6 hours, a canoe, 2D6 days, rowboat, 4D4 days, large flatbed, 1D4x10 days. Time is doubled or tripled if trees must be cut down and wood prepared. Of course, the time can be reduced if several knowledgeable people are working on the construction. A failed skill roll means the boat has leaks. Trying to patch it will require 4D4 hours. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Carpentry. A fundamental knowledge of working with wood. The character knows how to prepare, treat, preserve and cut wood, recognize quality craftsmanship, repair damaged wood and wood items, and build furniture and articles (chests, boxes, chairs, tables, cabinets, houses, fences, frames, staves, utensils, etc.). **Bonus:** Adds +5% bonus to Trap Construction and +10% to Boat Building. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Dowsing. The ability to locate fresh water whether it be with a divining rod or by more scientific and logical means. This is done through deductive analysis and knowledge of nature. The percentage number indicates the success ratio of locating fresh water. A person can roll once every melee to sense water, but must roll two consecutive successful rolls to locate the water. **Base Skill:** 20% +5% per level of experience.

Fasting. The ability to go for long periods of time without food. So long as the character has sufficient water, he can easily survive having no food for two weeks without physical penalty. Every day after that, the character must roll under the Fasting skill to avoid becoming weakened or sick. A failed roll means the following attribute penalties: -1 to

I.Q., P.S. and P.P., -2 to P.E., -3 to Spd and -3 to S.D.C.; all are *temporary* and will return at the same rate they were lost with rest and proper food and water on a daily basis. The character can also go for two days without water and not show any serious effects from dehydration. **Base Skill:** 40% +3% per level of experience.

Herdng. The techniques and methods of leading, directing and controlling cattle, sheep or other herd animals in a contained and relatively orderly group/formation/herd. Also includes keeping animals calm, basic care and feeding, how to tend the animals, recognize disease and illness, birthing and caring for young, gathering strays, pens and corralling livestock, and how to survive a stampede and regain control of the panicked animals. **Requires:** Horsemanship. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Hunting. The skill of killing and preparing animals for food. Includes a fair knowledge of animal habits and patterns, hunting techniques for baiting, trapping, and the construction of blinds and tree stands that conceal his presence and increase the chance of getting prey. **Bonuses:** +2% to Prowl, +5% to Track & Trap Animals, +5% to Skin & Prepare Animal Hides, +4% to Imitate Voices & Sounds and +10% to Cook game animals (rabbit, raccoon, pheasant, deer, etc.) only.

Identify Plants & Fruit. Training in the recognition of the many different types of wild plants and vegetation, and where they grow. The emphasis is on finding and identifying *edible* berries, fruit, vegetables, mushrooms, roots, bark and plants, as well as plants that have herbal and medicinal qualities (and staying away from poisonous ones). Roll for every 15 minutes of searching to see if the character has located enough edible food for a decent meal. Roll for every 30 minutes to see if the character has located a plant that could be used as a medicine, disinfectant, or herb. **Base Skill:** 25% +5% per level of experience.

Land Navigation. This skill enables the character to stay on course while traveling over land by means of observation and memorization. It includes mentally marking/recognizing geographic landmarks, estimating distance and movement, recognizing sounds, night travel, marking a trail and other navigation tricks. The player should roll once for approximately every three miles (4.8 km) traveled. A failed roll means the character is drifting off course by 2D10x100 yards/meters. Consecutive failed rolls means the individual does not realize that he's off course and continues in the wrong direction. **Base Skill:** 36% +4% per level of experience. **Note:** A group of average men can cover about five miles (8 km) an hour at a brisk, but relaxed pace through grassland, along dirt roads or pavement. Travel through dense forest, thicket or jungle at a cautious pace is about one mile (1.6 km) an hour. Heavy rain or snow, dense fog, swamps, and other environmental conditions will also reduce speed to a mile or less an hour. Map reading is done by looking at symbols (not words) and is -20%. The use of navigational instruments is not possible. Literacy and Math are *not* required for this skill.

Preserve Food. Knowledge in the preparation of foods for storage and later consumption. Includes canning fresh fruit and vegetables, making jams and honey, drying fruit, vegetables, and herbs, drying meat and fish, plus various smoking, salting, and pickling methods. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Skin & Prepare Animal Hides. Training in the methods and techniques of skinning, tanning, stretching, and preserving animal hides as fur or leather. Adds a +5% bonus to the Sewing and Leather Working skills. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Spelunking. The art and practice of exploring underground caves. Spelunking is the knowledge of caves and cave types and their individual characteristics. This skill enables the character to navigate a cave or underground cave network, retain a sense of direction (including up and down), have a sense of the cave's depth, know how to make subtle markings and note formations to find his way out and to better navigate the cave(s) at a later date, as well as rock climbing. The Spelunker can answer questions about a cave system, such as what it is called (if it is a



named landmark), where it may lead, how deep it continues, what type of rock it leads through and so on. This skill also lends familiarity with the correct equipment needed to go spelunking, and how to apply it. It is also the lore to recognize and identify various dangers, identifying the flora and fauna of cave systems and finding and climbing the best routes and direction. Unskilled characters wandering about in a large series of natural caverns have about the same chance of survival as unskilled climbers attempting to scale a major mountain without guidance or equipment. **Base Skill:** 35% +5% per level of experience. **Bonus:** +5% to this skill if the character also has Climb.

Track & Trap Animals. This skill enables the character to identify an animal by its tracks, scent, spore, and habits. The individual can also follow the animal's tracks and other signs. This means he can estimate how fresh the tracks are, what direction they are heading, whether the animal is lame, hurt or sick, guess at its age, and knows animal behavior and the basic habits and habitats of animals. *The first percentile number* indicates the character's tracking abilities and the above knowledge. *The second percentile number* indicates the character's ability at trapping animals by using and setting snares, clamp traps (like the iron bear trap), pits, nets and cage traps. **Base Skill:** 20%/30% +5% per level of experience. Tracking humans with this skill is also possible, but the skill is reduced by half. Disarming any traps meant for use against humans is done at half the character's normal skill ability for using animal traps.

Wilderness Survival: Techniques for living off the land, getting water, food, shelter, and help when stranded in wild forests, deserts, or mountains. Characters without this skill will not be able to stay healthy for more than a few days in the wilderness once their supplies run out. **Base Skill:** 30% +5% per level of experience.

Beyond the SupernaturalTM

Age: _____ Height: _____ Weight: _____ Hair: _____
Eyes: _____ Birth Order: _____ Money: _____
General Appearance: _____

Disposition: _____

Family Origin: _____

Environment: _____

Sentiments toward Mages & Psychics: _____

Sentiments toward Non-Humans: _____

Goals in Life: _____

Insanity: _____

Pionics

Base I.S.P.: _____

Current I.S.P.: _____

Multipliers: Scrutiny: x___ Investigating: x___ Lesser: x___ Greater: x___ Ancient: x___
Pionic I.S.P. Pionic I.S.P. I.S.P.

I.S.P. Psionic I.S.P.

Psionic

I.S.P.

Miscellaneous

Leaping Distance: Up: _____ ft Across: _____ ft

Run: _____ mph (max) _____ mc/sec _____ ft/mc/sec _____ ft/attack

Swim: _____ mph (max) _____ m/c/sec _____ ft/m/c/sec _____ ft/attack _____

Invoke Trust/Intimidate: _____ % Charm/Impress: _____ %

Name: _____ Occupation: _____ Notes: _____

Name: _____ Occupation: _____ Notes: _____

Name: _____ Occupation: _____ Notes: _____

Name:	Type:	Description:
_____	_____	_____

Abilities: _____

Name: _____ Type: _____ Description: _____

Abilities: _____

Name:	Type:	Description:
_____	_____	_____

Abilities: _____

Name:	Type:	Description:
_____	_____	_____

Abilities: _____

Name:	Type:	Description:

Abilities:

Notes

Lazlo Society

Shining the light of truth on the darkness

Lazlo Society – www.lazlosociety.org

The *Lazlo Society* is the public face of the *Lazlo Agency*. A place online where people interested in the paranormal and strange phenomena can go to read about the latest reports, theories and news bites on the subject. It is also where laymen, enthusiasts, amateur investigators, psychics and the curious can share their own personal experiences and observations, report strange happenings and things they find suspicious, and to chat with other like-minded individuals. Discussions may center around new evidence, new theories or new conjecture on the old, as well as *claims* of first-hand experiences with psychic abilities or encounters with the supernatural.

The majority of people who visit the website are just curious onlookers with no personal experience or expertise in the paranormal. Others are true psychics, researchers, scientists, debunkers and victims of the supernatural who want to share their knowledge, experience, ideas and fears, but who don't want to become directly involved in outright research or field investigation.

Anyone can join the Lazlo Society or visit and chat on the website. The casual visitor can read about cases involving psychic phenomena and true life accounts, theories and suppositions on allegedly "real" events and cases. They can also talk to others online who share an interest in the paranormal. Like most websites, the majority of people believe in the subject and promote it, but there are always a handful with opposing opinions who argue alternate views, oddball theories, conspiracy and "rational explanations." Some are debunkers and skeptics, others are just rabble-rousers looking to stir up controversy or think they'll be recognized and respected if they buck the norm (or act the fool).

The Lazlo Society website is also used by professionals and serious devotees of the subject to share and exchange ideas, advice, suggestions, experiences, observations, and, most importantly, *reports* of strange and *suspicious incidents*. These reports may be based on things only the person reporting knows about or accidentally stumbled upon, but, more often than not, are things the enthusiast or professional has read in the newspaper, a magazine, saw elsewhere online or on television, or caught wind of through some other means (other media, the rumor mill, a friend of a friend, or psychic vision). Incidents that seem suspicious or may involve the supernatural are hotly discussed and

odd coincidences, unexplained happenings, and events that might otherwise *seem unrelated* or insignificant, *may* all be elements for conjecture. Locals in, at or near the "trouble spot" or "hot zone" may do more research or even volunteer to personally investigate, going to the location looking for clues, interviewing eyewitnesses and/or reaching out to contacts they may have in the psychic community, and/or in the media (reporters) or the authorities.

A Game Master's Dream

Game Masters, use the Lazlo Society as the fabulous and unique *resource* that it is. In the game setting, it is a place and a means (a plot device) where you can plant clues, suggestions, ideas and information to launch a new adventure or to advance a stalled one. ("Hey, John, listen to this . . . we should it check out." or "Look at what Ghostman Mike heard about . . ." and so on). Clues, info and positive feedback or suggestions from *Lazlo Society online buddies* may keep the characters on the right path ("This article confirms it! It supports what Rob was saying, and if that's true, we should talk to this guy ourselves.") as well as offer encouragement ("Don't be fooled by what the police told you," "I think you're absolutely right, don't give up now."), support ("Go to the link I've e-mailed you privately, I think you'll find it of great help/interest."), and new avenues ("Have you looked at X?").

Likewise, news reports, newspaper articles, eyewitness accounts, announcements of psychic fairs, special speakers at universities, scientific demonstrations, museum exhibitions, archeological discoveries, corporate misconduct, crimes, astronomical events, and even offhand remarks could be all be the impetus for an adventure, offer a clue, confirm a suspicion or create controversy or conflict.

A player character may also be able to find all kinds of helpful background information, rumors, news reports, and data on a particular person, place or thing, as well as other people's comments, advice and warnings, or leads to other people who might be able to help (online and in the real world).

A more sinister use of the Lazlo Society website is for G.M.s to remember that in many cases the players don't actually know who they are communicating with or getting information from. That means the very supernatural being (if intelligent) or one of its human minions or cultists could be setting them up, luring them into a trap, sending them on a wild goose chase, trying to find out what they know, spying on them, tricking them into be-

ing their friend, or just jerking their chain. Similarly, the enigmatic online personality could be a government agent, scientist, a member of a professional or amateur psychic investigation agency, freelance investigator/researcher, professional psychic, enthusiast or victim who is sincere, reliable, honest, and helpful, or someone who has his own agenda, a liar, jerk, quack, lunatic, reporter, cultist, or worse. The website may also be a way to communicate with a villain or supernatural being (with or without their actual knowledge that it is their opponent), or a means of contacting one or more members of the *Lazlo Agency*, or get the Agency involved if it sounds like they are onto something big or in over their heads. **Note:** Having the ability to have a team of Lazlo Agents (or even one Agent) appear at a critical moment, like the proverbial cavalry, could be a nice option to save our heroes' lives from time to time, but don't abuse this avenue. The Lazlo Agency can't send its operatives everywhere nor investigate every alleged disturbance. Besides, the players should get used to taking care of business, and if their characters do something stupid or reckless, there should be a price to pay.

Undoubtedly, at least a few government agencies, cults, secret societies and other special interest groups monitor the website and keep an eye on the postings and the people who make them. Such organizations may simply be gathering information, but might also be looking for people who might represent a danger to them (and should be eliminated or discredited), targets for recruitment, pawns that can be manipulated to create a diversion, to frame, or to hire, and so on.

And all of this is without going to the actual website (www.lazlosociety.org) filled with ideas for adventures taken from today's headlines (and twisted, of course) as well as *fictional* posts and communications with Palladium creators *disguised* as Robert Mach, Thomas Sheridan and other fictional characters, and other BTS-2 gamers sharing their role-playing game adventures and ideas as if they really experienced them as victims, psychics and paranormal investigators. Cool idea, eh? I can't take credit for it. The *Lazlo Society* website is the brainchild of Palladium Editor, *Wayne Smith*. Use it and enjoy.

Conspiracy Theory, Myth or Reality?

One of the boards on the website deals with the question of *Conspiracy Theory, Myth or Reality*, and is a place where posters can debate rumors and claims of conspiracies, cover-ups and secret government activities (foreign and domestic). The following is a recent post offered by *Robert Joseph Mach* under his online pseudonym of "RJM-84" (the "84" referring to the year Victor Lazlo vanished, and Mach started the Lazlo Agency).

Police "Dark Rooms"

This report is FYI. It is not intended to spark controversy, government conspiracy theories or paranoia about our hard-working police departments. Police across the United States of America put their lives on the line each and every day, and should be respected for that. However, I have recently received a disturbing bit of conjecture. Truth be told, when I first got this e-mail I found it rather unbelievable. I would have dismissed it as one of the hundreds of paranoid, crank e-mails we get every month. I post it here, on our website, because it comes from a reliable and long-time friend of the Lazlo Agency. A police offi-

cer with 18 years experience. To punctuate the matter, three days after receiving this message, our friend disappeared. I am told the authorities found him wandering the streets a few days later, suffering from paranoid delusions and subsequently hospitalized for observation and treatment, where he remains.

Only family are allowed to see him at this time, so I leave it to you to decide whether this is the ranting of a crazy man or a cover-up of the truth. My own experience with this man (whose identity I leave out in sympathy for his family) has been that he is eminently sane and reliable. That said, I think we all know that circumstance and the sudden onset of mental illness can change a person overnight.

— RJM-84

I know it's a popular belief that the authorities are in cahoots to disregard and ignore anything unexplained or paranormal. It's true that the general level of disbelief is high on the job, but I never knew about any conspiracy. That being said, I knew even the strangest stuff needs to be written up, documented and filed away. Our government's not so blind or that entrenched in denial to turn a complete blind eye to the inexplicable. That means reports of UFOs, vampires, monsters, magic and you name it usually gets written up by the officer who takes the report. That's no big deal, even if there are dozens of alleged eyewitnesses. What is a big deal is when a police officer has an encounter with the unexplained.

I only know about this because I recently had an incident involving a creature my debriefers referred to as the Woodcarver and a Wooden Man. Do a little checking of your own, the Woodcarver is covered in Lazlo Agency files, though there's not a lot of data on this thing: A homicidal maniac, possibly a demon or some type of unknown Tectonic Entity. It appears in human form and commands 1-6 human-sized puppets with blades for fingers. It first appeared on the scene in 1957, and its main range of activity seems to be Maine to Minnesota and southern Canada. No one knows why, but the thing seems to disappear for several years at a time, the last sighting being Mississauga, Ontario, 2001, and prior to that, Michigan and Ohio in 1984. But this is all after the fact research. At the time, I thought I was dealing with a serial killer, until I caught one of the Wooden Men eviscerating a victim with the Woodcarver watching a few feet away. He's one ugly S.O.B., too. I'm told I may be the only person to ever get a good look at the Woodcarver. I guess that's why the FBI was all over me for debriefing. Thing is, I've worked with Federal Agents, and these guys struck me as spooks; CIA or NSA, maybe. Not that it really matters.

*What bothered me is my report went on a form I'd never seen or heard of before, a **DR-1313 Form**. I also heard it referred to as a Dark Room file. I did a little digging and this what I found out.*

Word is the FBI, maybe even the CIA or NSA, wants to know about weird and unexplained incidents, especially those involving creatures and law enforcement. I suspect this is because law enforcement is trained to take note of details and report what they saw clearly, concisely and without bias. The officer involved in said incident is told to write it up in as much detail as possible, no matter how strange and outlandish it may sound. Leave nothing out. You write it up on this DR-1313 incident report, and you don't talk about it again. Not ever. If it really

shook you up, they'll send you to tell someone and he writes the report based on your verbal account. And when an officer gets killed under really weird circumstances, someone still writes a report. One report that talks about "died under unusual circumstances" or with some plausible cover story, and a separate DR-1313 report with all the actual weird stuff and monsters. The document is then given to the station captain who makes a copy for the Feds, marks it restricted, and files it in what is called the "Dark Room." Once it is secured in the Dark Room, no one outside of the station can ask to see it, regular civilians, media, politicians and police included. Once it enters the Dark Room, it is sealed and unavailable except to, I don't know who. Federal Agents? When I asked about it, I was told to forget I ever made the report, ever saw them, and to keep my nose out of affairs that didn't concern me.

I've learned the Dark Room is usually an old, out of the way, supply closet without a doorknob and secured by a deadbolt lock. Who has the key, I don't know. The captain and the Feds I assume. The door is usually blocked/concealed by a large piece of furniture, like a file cabinet or shelves, but easy enough to get to when it is needed. If the files outgrow this storage area, they're relocated to a larger room.

The reports themselves look pretty average: a plain folder with a case number and date on the outside. Some are thin, most are about ten or so pages, but others can be 40 or more. There are always multiple sets of initials on the inside front cover. The strange part is the pages of all of the reports have unusual markings on them. Sometimes a series of letters or numbers or both, or even strange words. The smaller reports usually have pages with notations like "nut case," "known drunk," "unreliable," "not confirmed," "refer to G," or some other letter, or a short letter and number combination.

The politicians and media are never told about these reports, the Dark Rooms, or the involvement of the Feds. If somebody does come snooping around, the captain has a private talk with him and he is then shown out.

Well, you know me Bob, that's begging me to do a little snooping. From what I can tell, only a handful of people in charge know about the Dark Room, where it is located and what it contains. Only the head honchos and guys like me who learn about it by happenstance. I get the impression every precinct or precinct headquarters has one. My debriefers told me not to think about it, much less talk about it or the Woodcarver. After my incident report, I had to sign a piece of paper that shuts you up thereafter. I was also told I did an admirable job, that strange stuff has no place in the mind of the average police officer, to forget about all of this like it never happened, and to continue to do my job. They'd take matters from here.

I hope I'm not putting myself at risk, but I thought the secret files of the Dark Room and the spooks involved are something the Lazlo Agency should know about. There's a rumor about a few officers who went snooping into strange cases and asked too many questions about the Dark Room. Word is two ended up dead on the street and one disappeared after a nervous breakdown, but you know how rumors are. I could not verify any of this. Technically, even my knowledge of the Dark Room is hearsay. I've never seen it and don't really know if it's real or not. I plan on doing a little, careful snooping around the station house. Finding a door with no knob can't be that difficult.

I'll keep you posted on what I find out. Please let me know if you have heard anything like this in the past. I didn't see anything in the Lazlo data files.

21st Century Astral Cop

The Lazlo Agency

The Lazlo Agency, itself, is the smaller, sponsoring branch of the public and informal *Lazlo Society*. Ironically, the Agency came first, but it is known only to insiders, and is an outgrowth of Doctor Victor Lazlo's own investigations into the paranormal.

The *Lazlo Agency* was born by accident, not design. During Victor Lazlo's many travels and expeditions around the globe, he met many different people in many walks of life. A likeable fellow, many of his contacts and subjects of interviews stayed in touch with Doctor Lazlo and continued to offer their observations, input and advice on various subjects related to the supernatural. Before he knew it, he had created a network of people who continually fed him information, ideas, and insight that gave him the inside track to the supernatural.

Over time, he met numerous individuals, some fellow professionals with formal scientific training like himself, and others who claimed (and appeared) to be genuine psychics, as well as intelligent people who had experienced paranormal incidents. All had experienced the paranormal in one form or another that instilled a keen interest to investigate and learn more about the subject. It seemed like a way to supplement his own research on a dramatic level using the reports and findings of others willing to take a methodical, scientific approach to the subject (guidelines established by the esteemed Victor Lazlo), as well as perform preliminary legwork on matters he intended to investigate personally. Legwork included background research on the person, place, incident(s) and ghost, monster, cult or phenomenon alleged to be responsible, interviewing alleged victims and eyewitnesses, taking statements, listing evidence, taking photographs as appropriate, collating the data into an organized format and offering their own suppositions on the subject and the people involved. Cases Doctor Lazlo did not want to investigate himself, or which he felt did not merit his personal attention, he'd assign to one of his associates or volunteers, using their findings as anecdotal testimony.

In a way, Doctor Lazlo became a lightning rod for the paranormal. His positive and constructive approach to the unexplained and supernatural, and his loud voice demanding scientific investigation by the scientific community to address these issues, may have made him a pariah in the halls of science, but a hero in the underground community of psychics, paranormal investigators, spiritualists, magicians, and true believers. Moreover, he was gathering a previously ignored and invisible group larger than all of the others put together: the suffering victims of the supernatural. And not just the specific person victimized, but the extended family members and friends who suffered along with their loved one. As a rule, most victims have people who care about them – spouse, siblings, children, parents, friends – and those people suffer along with the victim afflicted by supernatural forces, because they care about the victim and want to help, or because the loss of that person cuts deeply and

they want to understand what happened and why. This is a powerful motivation, and those deeply moved or angry over the loss or experience are the ones who often dedicate themselves to investigating the paranormal and combating supernatural evil.

Victor Lazlo was the first to offer the victims and their families an outlet in which they could ask questions, get answers and learn about the paranormal. Doctor Lazlo and his team were people they could talk openly and honestly to about things that anyone else would scoff at or elicit fears they were crazy. Victor Lazlo, and soon an entire agency of people, listened, sympathized, never condemned or ridiculed, and asked the right questions. Most importantly, they understood. Understood their pain, their terror and their frustration. Understood and *offered help*.

Victor Lazlo was more than a parapsychologist, scholar, and researcher, he was a humanitarian. A man of compassion and conviction people found accessible and incredibly empathetic, kind and caring. When a person was going through a conflict with demonic forces, he was compelled to reach out to help. At first, he simply offered advice, but soon he found himself going into the field to personally investigate and see what he could do. Members of his crack research team would often join him and help in whatever way they could. When Doctor Lazlo and his team couldn't figure out a solution, they turned to his growing network of psychics, shamans, fellow investigators of the unexplained, and even victims of similar attacks or harassment. When someone was troubled by supernatural forces, it was inevitable that, sooner or later, they'd be told to contact Doctor Victor Lazlo.

It all happened so subtly and of its own accord that nobody, not even Victor Lazlo, realized they were building the foundation of what would later become the Lazlo Agency and Lazlo Society. In fact, until the esteemed Doctor Lazlo *disappeared*, there was no formal organization. There was no Lazlo Agency, only the man and his team of researchers, investigators, contacts and friends.

The disappearance of Victor Lazlo ran in the back pages of dozens of local newspapers, and a few national papers and magazines as well. The story aired for three weeks on local television news programs throughout Ohio, Michigan and Indiana, but the story was quickly pushed out of people's consciousness by more provocative stories. Even the paranormal community seemed to barely take notice, of course, this was an age before personal computers, satellite television and hundreds of cable channels.

Without any clues or any sign of foul play, the police investigation quickly went cold. The prevailing theory offered by the local authorities was that Lazlo had simply walked away from his life to go underground, or assume a new identity for himself. It happens more often than one might think, they told Lazlo's associates, and that he was likely to resurface in a few months or a year; only he never did. Although the case remains officially unsolved and open, the active investigation stopped shortly after it began.

With Victor Lazlo gone – just gone – his research came to a screeching halt and his team was suddenly without a leader or jobs, but the cries for help from people troubled by supernatural forces continued to pour into the office. Victor Lazlo was a man of considerable wisdom and foresight, to the point of foreseeing his own death or disappearance. Consequently, he had estab-

lished a business that left his research, documents, book rights and royalties to the person he trusted most, *Robert Joseph Mach*. Without a body, Victor Lazlo's personal assets would be frozen for seven years, but with all the proper business papers in place, and a bank account with over 1.4 million dollars available to continue his life's mission left in the capable hands of Robert Mach, Victor Lazlo's legacy was only beginning to take shape.

Robert Mach closed down the current operation, and three months later resurfaced as the head of the paranormal research organization he named the *Lazlo Agency*. The Lazlo Agency was created by Mach as part tribute to his friend and mentor, and as a means to expand upon the foundation that Doctor Lazlo had already established. Young and inventive, Mach could see the potential of the Lazlo Agency as an international clearing house for the paranormal. Victor Lazlo's plan was to stay small, do investigative work, and when necessary, actually do battle with supernatural beings. The good Doctor had always tried to take a scientific and professional approach to his work. Though he spoke out at conferences and in his books, the man actually kept a very low public profile, which played a part in why nobody noticed his disappearance when it happened, and few outside the circle of paranormal research and New Age publications even knew his name. Robert Mach and the Lazlo Agency have changed all that. Twenty years after his disappearance, Victor Lazlo had achieved folk hero status, his hypotheses the groundwork of many modern theories on the paranormal, and his disappearance an urban legend and subject of five books, three cable television programs, and at least a dozen conspiracy theories.

As for the Lazlo Agency, it is a network of concerned professionals, gifted individuals, and victims the likes of which the world has never seen, and which, despite its 40,000+ active members, worldwide, remains pretty much a secret. The creation of the *Lazlo Society* website in 1996 has expanded the Lazlo Agency's information channels ten fold, with more than 420,000 hits a month and growing (roughly 30% percent a year). However, it is the Lazlo Agency that does the serious research, victim counseling and monster hunting.

Lazlo Agency Memberships Breakdown

Note: The Lazlo Society website has similar demographics, though the male/female ratio there is 52% female and 48% male.

Gender:

40% Female 60% Male

Age:

20% 18-27 10% 61-75
40% 28-40 5% Other; older or younger.
25% 41-60

Background:

30% Are Professional Psychics or Psychic Investigators.
32% Professionals (engineers, scientists, parapsychologists, doctors, scholars, and similar).
26% Labor force (skilled and unskilled workers, sales people, etc.); people from ordinary walks of life.

10% Have a background in law, law enforcement, security, detective work or are ex-military.

2% Other; Arcanists and individuals outside the workforce.

Note: Approximately half joined the Lazlo Agency after a personal encounter with supernatural forces.

Geographic Location:

50% North America (54% USA, 22% Canada and 24% Mexico)

18% South & Central America

23% Europe & Russia

9% Other (Africa, Asia, Australia, India, Indonesia)

Miscellaneous:

90% Have good to excellent computer skills.

62% Have advanced technical skills in one or more areas of expertise.

64% Possess psychic abilities.

8% Skeptics.

3% Dabble in magic and the arcane.

41% Have had two or more years of college.

Membership in the Agency has been increasing by 10-12% annually over the last 10 years.

Player Characters & the Lazlo Agency

Anyone can join or participate in the Lazlo Society without being a registered member, but the Lazlo Agency is a different story. Its members are *invited* to join. That having been said, one or more player characters, the entire group even, could be members of the Lazlo Agency. If so, the character(s) may be a long-standing member or recent addition. In the alternative, one or more of the player characters may have one or a few contacts with a member of the Lazlo Agency, or know an NPC friend or associate who is a member or knows a member. Each Lazlo Agent has a wide net of friends, colleagues, associates, contacts, acquaintances, and online correspondents – any of whom could be one or more of the player characters or know the characters.

The advantage to being a member of the Lazlo Agency:

Unparalleled resources when it comes to the paranormal and the supernatural. Vast amounts of reports, documented cases, findings, unexplained incidents, videotape, photographs, sketches, associated documents, etc., all organized, filed and cross referenced in the Lazlo Agency database. The Agency database (not available to Society members) also includes reports, sightings, media stories, etc., of incidents *not* investigated by the Lazlo Agency, but worthy of note.

The creatures file base includes the names, known behavior and powers of demons and monsters, their known weaknesses and suggested strategies, tactics and weapons to use against them. Moreover, it is a virtual compendium of supernatural monstrosities, demons, gods and forces.

More than 7200 books and historical texts dealing with the supernatural, demons, magic and the occult have been OCR'd and made part of the permanent Lazlo Agency database, plus members have access to (or own) thousands of books and texts (as well as some super-rare and secret tomes) that have yet to be scanned and added to the database.

Other data files include the subjects of magic, magic rituals, known cults throughout history to present, places of power, known ley line locations, psychic studies, and a complete list of Lazlo Agency Investigators (names, contact info, area of specialty, etc.), plus known associates and reliable layman investigators and contacts from around the world (more than 61,000 contacts in addition to the 40,000 active agents, and may include one or more of the player characters, especially if a Professional Psychic or Psychic Investigator that has had positive interactions with members of the Lazlo Agency).

The Agency also has a small number of items (a few hundred) donated by members that may be *loaned* to members to help them in their battle against inhuman fiends and warped human minions. These include special weapons, magic items, protective talismans, books, scrolls, ancient weapons, rings, amulets, and similar items. In fact, when an agent or member retires, he often donates a large portion of his private collection to the Lazlo Agency, others leave parts or all of it to the Agency in their wills. Specific items are placed in scattered but secure locations around the world, kept by trusted Agents and Associates.

Lastly, is the advantage of having a contact/friend in the Lazlo Agency. A person or people who can offer advice, reference material, and actual support by coming to help in person, or put the character in contact with one or more other members or an investigation or extermination team ready and able to join his battle. Not to mention the camaraderie of being around other people with the same goals and agendas, helping each other out, as well as a sense of purpose and destiny.

Agents are members involved in the active field investigation of paranormal phenomena and combating the supernatural. They come from all walks of life and have varying areas of expertise and ability, but all are committed to helping people troubled by supernatural forces, and all have experience dealing with such matters. If the powers, tools and devices at their disposal cannot do the job, they can call on other agents, members, and contacts for help.

Agency Associates are specialists in just about every area imaginable, from computers and surveillance, to archaeology and ancient languages, to psychics and mages. They are *not* active Field Agents, but are available for special missions/assignments and consultation. Such specialists may be consulted when strange clues are found or when their special area of expertise is critical. Robert Mach and his network of managers are the ones who usually act as go-betweens and arrange for such special help. Agency Associates may also volunteer for assignments in their regions or missions that interest them for whatever reason.

Agency Contacts are pretty much volunteers and trusted individuals who help the Lazlo Agency at an arm's length. They include people in law enforcement, military, government, the media, healthcare, the scientific community, and private industry with a special skill or interest the Agency may call upon. Most keep a vigilant eye and ear open for the strange, unusual and supernatural, offering their observations, input and help on an "as needed" or "as available" basis. Most of these people do not know all the ins and outs, field agents, and secrets of the Lazlo Agency, and don't care. They are believers and sympathizers to the cause who want to contribute and help whenever they can. Many are as valuable as Agency Associates. On rare occasion, an Agency Contact may join a field investigator on an

assignment, but that usually indicates a personal stake in the events going down.

Non-Agency Contacts are helpers and extra eyes and ears around the country and around the world whose work may put them in direct or indirect contact with the supernatural, the paranormal, the magical arcane and the unexplained. These people are cultivated by Field Agents and Associates who know them or have worked with them on an investigation and believe they can be trusted and an asset. They can be anyone who firmly believes that supernatural beings exist and that something should be done about those that prey on humankind. These individuals are contacted and asked to volunteer information and to help with grunt work and little things, like putting an Agent up in their home, picking him up from the airport, showing him around town, and generally keeping an eye out for suspicious events, trouble and strangeness. The rules for their involvement are simple: report what they saw or heard, do not interfere with or make contact with individuals who may appear on the scene or may be dangerous (or inhuman), and take no other action unless their own life, or the lives of others, are in immediate danger. They do not know much more than that the Lazlo Agency exists to help people and investigate the unknown, and probably believe it is a tiny fraction of its true size. They are just glad to help.

The Vanishing of Victor Lazlo

Ironically, because Victor Lazlo's books have remained in print for going on three generations, many of his theories are now widely accepted, and he has become something of a popular cult-figure well known to the New Age community, millions of people around the world know the name "Victor Lazlo" but don't realize he vanished in December, 1984. Some even call the Lazlo Agency or e-mail the Lazlo Society asking to speak with Doctor Lazlo.

The following is an excerpt from Victor Lazlo's 1986, published diary entitled, **The Final Words of Victor Lazlo**.

Modern man. What a proud peacock, so smug in his high-tech world. Safely nestled behind the sturdy walls of science.

How we mock and sneer at the so-called "primitive man" with his simple ways and foolish superstitions. We smile and suppress a laugh when the Australian aborigine explains that the drought has ended, because "evil ones" have been driven away by the Shaman. We cringe when we read about the blood sacrifices of the ancient Aztec Indians and other elder cultures. In our arrogance, we mutter under our breath, "How pointless, how sad, how ridiculous. Just another of ancient civilization's obvious failings!"

Snugly locked in our artificial world of concrete, steel, polymers, fiber optics, microwaves and dancing atoms, we look down at our past and try to forget foolish beliefs in magic and demons, luck and supernatural forces.

Knowledge, scientific "truth" is our ticket to salvation. An elitist attitude that blinds us to the ancient truths that scream not to be ignored. Especially one fundamental truth: "We are not alone." We have never been alone. And the "others" are not our friends.

Can it be that the Aztec's blood sacrifices, as cruel and, perhaps, wicked as they may have been, were used to draw on an enemy's mystic energy? An energy used to smite their enemy or build great stone pyra-

mids. Not pointless, not foolish, not some archaic superstition, but a shrewd, merciless means of attaining very real power. Is it possible that the aborigine shaman really has chased away evil elemental spirits or a malevolent demon - an alien invader who can control our weather?

I continue to believe the answer is yes.

Man may dominate this planet, but he is not yet its master. There are other beings who share our world. Alien beings from other worlds. Creatures that feed on humankind like invisible, malignant parasites drinking our life's blood, stealing our energy and feeding on our fears and emotions. Our forefathers had many names for them - demons, devils, evil spirits, vampires, werewolves, zombies, goblins, faeries, trolls, dragons, and on and on. Some are predators who simply hunt and feed on easy human prey. Others are cunning maleficent beings who delight in tormenting and abusing us humans or using us like pawns in some twisted, macabre game. Others are lost travelers, while still others are abominations of nature destroying all they encounter. But they are all real and exist today! Now!

It seems I have written these words to this effect a thousand times, and a sense of futility begins to weigh heavy on my bones. I have given countless lectures and presented what I felt was conclusive evidence, but I seem to be waging an endless campaign against a willful ignorance. The men of science, my colleagues, refute all evidence and brand me a charlatan or madman. For every question, they devise an answer, regardless of how foolish or contrived. They cling tenaciously to their laws of nature and manmade theories that they revere as a godsend. To the public they inspire trust, and they ridicule, ever so cleverly, the existence of magic or the supernatural. They have created an environment where the mere concept of the paranormal and supernatural forces is instantly relegated to the realm of fantasy.

It makes me so angry. Not that they besmirch my reputation, but that civilized man can be so blind and arrogant.

How can I make people believe me? I have seen horrific creatures and fought monsters that I dare not write about in published venues for fear of convincing everyone I am, indeed, insane. Yet I bear their scars and could call upon a thousand eyewitnesses.

And if I, who seem to have the ear of some people, cannot get through to the powers that be, what then will be the fate of humanity, or at least modern civilization? How many hundreds of thousands (millions?) must perish at the hands of an invisible foe in an invisible war? It makes me want to cry when I ponder the subject for too long a period, and I try to convince myself that I'm making a difference.

With each passing year I see the denizens of evil creeping into our cities and growing in numbers. Creatures that once hid in wild, desolate places far from the reach of man are returning. They have realized that mankind no longer sees or hears them. They know they have become shadows that can slip past us unobserved. They have stayed so quiet for so long that mankind doesn't recognize them for what they are, even when they stand revealed. And so they laugh, bold-faced before the eyes of science, and remain unseen. It makes them bold and aggressive, especially as they begin to realize that the old technology, "their" technology, the ways of magic, are lost and forgotten and can no longer harm them. Armed with psychic abilities, magic and evil intent, and aided by the blind apathy of man, the demons have returned unopposed and hungry to make mankind suffer.

I listen to myself and wonder. What will become of me and those handful of others who have unearthed some of the lost secrets, and do oppose these otherworldly invaders? Are we a threat or an occasional nuisance? Do we really make a difference? And if we do, and our numbers grow and our voices begin to reach the masses, what then? Will any one of these demonic obscenities take notice and try to destroy us?

I don't know why, but that question has preyed on my mind a great deal lately. Perhaps it is just old age creeping up on me. Slowing me down. Making me paranoid. Still, I'd feel more secure if there were more of us. Otherwise, we'd be so easy to hunt down, one by one, and be terminated. I fear few would even notice our disappearance. In fact, if I disappeared tomorrow, I doubt there are many people who would notice my passing, and I'm certain there would be a large number who would be happy my voice was silenced.

— A diary excerpt written three months before the unsolved disappearance of Victor Lazlo in December, 1984.

Professor Victor Lazlo was a dedicated purveyor of truth. The eternal optimist, he was undaunted in his research, heedless of the personal dangers and public ridicule. During his three decades as a psychic investigator, Doctor Lazlo made many keen observations and developed very astute theories regarding the paranormal. Theories that ruined his career as a parapsychologist. Officially branded a fraud and nut-case by much of the scientific community, Lazlo carried his crusade to the public, where he became a popular cult hero among the science fiction and New Age audience. However, he soon broke into the mainstream market with his famous book, **Worlds within Worlds**, which dominated the best-sellers' list for a year, and the number one spot for 13 weeks. Three subsequent best-selling books had made Lazlo the Carl Sagan of the paranormal.

His career as a popular author rocketing to new heights and with contracts signed for a PBS television series, Lazlo vanished. Like a page out of one of his books, the disappearance of Victor Lazlo is wrapped in mystery. It was the eve of the winter solstice at the famous *Serpent Mound of Adam's County, Ohio*.

Lazlo had returned to the Indian mound which had so often intrigued him. It was just a stop on the way to visit a colleague at the University of Michigan. His assistant, Jawaharlal Kishwar, would report that Professor Lazlo elected to stay the night at the mound, while he accompanied their car, in tow, to a local gas station to get a fuel pump replaced. Armed with a sleeping bag, lantern, canteen, camera, folding chair, his "bag" and diary, Lazlo settled in for his overnight stay. His assistant says that he pleaded with the Professor to return to town with him. That he had felt the stir of restless spirits, and feared for his friend. Unconvinced, Victor Lazlo dismissed his pupil and took out his diary to record his thoughts. The last passage in his journal indicates no fears on his part:

It is an unseasonably warm afternoon for an Ohio December. There's no snow on the ground and a gentle breeze that must be the last warm fingers of autumn stirs the air. I'm drawn again to the Serpent Mound. All my usual questions and speculations are doing a warpath in my head. I don't know why I find this place so alluring. I guess, for me it's the North American Stonehenge.

Jawaharlal has warned me that he feels restless spirits afoot. I hope so. I'd like to experience something extraordinary at my favorite megalithic site and consult with a shaman from an ancient time. But I don't feel a thing. Jay has learned to master his Psychic Sensitive abilities quite well over the past few months. (I only wish he'd master the English language as quickly. Hal) This time, however, I think it's his paternal instincts coming forth and not psychic intuition. It's getting dark and I still have to light my lantern and set up camp before I can continue my musings. More later.

Those were the last words from Victor Lazlo. The rest of the page is blank, his uncapped pen was found marking its place. The lantern and all equipment were found the next morning, but Professor Lazlo was gone. There was no sign of foul play or anything unusual. Yet nobody has seen or heard from the man since that December afternoon in 1984.

Monsters

It's time to change how you, especially Game Masters, think about monsters. The creatures in **Beyond the Supernatural™** are intended to be *more* than just big, ugly brutes to kill and be killed.

Oh, there are its share of slobbering beasties to fear and battle, but most are insidious and terrible creatures that often work behind the scenes, manipulating and terrorizing their human victims. In fact, you'll find that many of the monstrous beings in **Beyond the Supernatural™**, including predators, delight in tormenting and terrorizing their victims before making a kill. And that, dear readers, is the essence of horror and suspense.

Any creature can look nasty and tear a character's head off, but these creatures, big and small, powerful and puny, enjoy terrifying and tormenting their victims, and in turn, that's what makes them so horrifying.

A chainsaw or axe wielding, coed-slaying psycho inspired by any number of splatter-style horror movies is acceptable inspiration for inhuman fiends, but even the best of those movies are the ones filled with suspense, anxiety and uncertainty. They make you worry about when the fiend will strike again, who will be its next victim, and maybe even how will it strike (what weapon or method of attack). In **BTS-2**, this is more than just a gimmick for good storytelling and suspense, it is the *very essence* of supernatural evil.

With few exceptions, like simple-minded Entities, these creatures are supremely and innately wicked beings. Natural born terrors, tormentors and killers who delight – no, not just delight – who live to inflict fear and suffering. Think about the level of power these demonic fiends possess, especially creatures of myth and legend, let alone characters from modern films. A solitary vampire or lesser demon (let alone a powerful demon lord or dark god) could waltz into an office building and just go room to room, killing every single person they encounter. A hundred, even a thousand people could be slaughtered in a short time, and *no one* would be able to stop it. So why don't the monsters do so? Why don't these supremely powerful, evil beings just do as they please and kill whomever they desire, whenever they feel like it? The answer is simple: It is not in their nature, and their nature is pure evil.

You see, true evil, utter evil, does not just thump its chest, scream to the heavens and kill – that's the *human* way.

Physical torture has its place, but it is delectable mental torment, terror and emotional pain that the depraved monsters enjoy most of all. The longer the thing can extend the misery (as in days and weeks), the better it likes it. True evil is positively giddy with delight when people go screaming into the night, even if they escape (for the moment) the physical pain and tor-

turous death it had in store for them. Supernatural beings *want* people to fear them. They want their victims to wet themselves in terror, crawl on their bellies and plead for mercy, curl up into a whimpering ball, or weep and pray to God for deliverance from evil's embrace. They laugh when a human mind snaps like a twig without them having to lay a claw on him. They love it, because that's real power, and they thrive on power.

Fear, power and inflicting protracted agony upon others are the nectars of life, and the monsters' only true joy and fulfillment. Like sadistic psychopaths, these heartless beings get pleasure watching others squirm, suffer and die, slowly. The longer their victims suffer, the more fun and rewarding the experience is for the monsters. Emotions related to fear and suffering are such a vital part of some supernatural beings that they draw nourishment and power from the raw emotions like honey dripping from the air. Creatures of darkness find the aura of fear and agony exuded by their victims to be an intoxicating drug. It sends a warm, luscious tingle coursing through their hideous bodies, and makes them feel the same kind of wonderful sensation that we humans might enjoy from sex, an adrenaline rush, or a chemical high. Inflicting pain, madness and teeth-chattering terror also makes these beasts feel good about themselves: powerful, superior, supremely confident, and god-like. Feelings the monsters cherish and crave.

Insidious evil. Demons and other forms of supernatural evil are *insidious* beings in the true sense of the word: They insinuate themselves quietly, secretly, into our communities and lives. Like a festering disease they hurt everyone with whom they come in contact. Those whom they infest with their evil may be remade and granted special gifts of power and/or terrible inspiration to inflict more suffering in the name of wickedness. Yet it is a power that corrupts, sickens, and transforms the person given its "gifts," and ultimately works to destroy that same individual, though he or she may never realize it. Again, this is the very nature of evil, to invade, corrupt and destroy that which it seems to nurture and embrace, for nothing is sacred to these monsters. And though they may know the words and use them well, they have no friends, no honor, no loyalty or compassion; they serve only themselves and are committed to the spreading of fear, suffering, and death, for that is who and what they are.

Creatures of darkness. Most evil supernatural beings enjoy lurking in the shadows, staying out of sight and playing cat and mouse games while keeping their true nature or very presence a secret. The longer they remain unnoticed or unrecognized, the more harm and terror they can inflict. The creatures take pleasure in knowing that those who do recognize them or their handiwork are often impotent with fear or hamstrung by authorities who believe the individuals to be insane, and they enjoy watching as the person twists in the wind, helpless or thwarted by the very people they want to help.

There is another reason these fiends cling to the shadows and hide. A reason the malignant creatures are loath to admit even with their last dying breath. Darkness, you see, gives them shelter and keeps them safe. And that's *darkness* in every sense of the word. The darkness of ignorance and ego. The darkness of fear and regret. The darkness of jealous and envy. The darkness of hatred and anger. The darkness of obsessive love or any emotion that knows no limit, and the darkness of feeling alone, as well as the absence of light. All of it keeps the creatures hidden

and safe. Safe from those with the knowledge, weapons and special *gifts* that can flush them from their hiding places and hurt them. Safe from people, like those presented in this book, who choke back their fears and find the courage and camaraderie to enter the dark hiding holes and destroy the *monsters* lurking within. For no matter how powerful, cunning and malevolent the supernatural beings may be, they are all tragically *flawed* on many levels.

Vulnerabilities of the supernatural: All supernatural beings have odd vulnerabilities or weaknesses such as the light of day, fire, the symbols of God (in all its forms), and lightning/electricity, to inane items for which there is no logical or natural reason it should have any capability to harm or kill any living creature, and yet it may be like acid, poison or a hand grenade to a supernatural being. Such life threatening weapons may include a piece of wood or bone, a peach pit, a particular flower blossom, root, or herb, a clove of garlic, salt, silver, water that has been blessed by clergy, or even the cry of a bird, cat, dog or other animal. Other supernatural beings can only appear during a specific time of the day, month, year or century, the latter rather like a demonic seven-year locust. Still others may only appear during storms or other celestial or magical events. Others are only empowered when they possess a human/mortal host or take some other physical body made from the natural world of human beings (a doll, rags, garbage, wooden constructs, a corpse, animal parts, insects, etc.), and even then, may only be able to walk among men at night or a particular time of day, or at a particular location (place of power, ley line, place of death, place of terror, etc.). Since all are, indeed, creatures of darkness, most come out mainly at night, like nocturnal predatory animals, and many a supernatural being is physically, psionically or magically weakened by the light of day or in the presence of love or positive emotions. In short, the darkness, fear and suffering are the elements in which supernatural evil thrives, thus, locations that are remote, dark, scary looking and generally shunned by humans are the natural havens of evil forces. But there is more.

Supernatural evil is also flawed as intelligent beings, because they are not whole. They are depraved and incomplete abominations composed of vileness and villainy, but devoid of goodness or any sense of true balance. Even the most intelligent and powerful of demons may have a basic understanding of the *concepts* about love, compassion, kindness, goodness and self-sacrifice, enough even to use it against others and to manipulate people using them, but such things are never truly felt by the monstrosities. Thus, the creatures are incomplete and doomed to their own foul, smoldering emotions. It is also why, more often than not, the vile tempters, Demonic Servants and Ancient Evil use the weapons they understand intimately, inflaming base and unhealthy emotions such as lust, envy, hatred, greed, revenge, prejudice, gluttony, intolerance, fear and other dark emotions and desires to tempt and corrupt humans. It is also what drives them to hurt, corrupt and torment humans: they are envious of our full range of emotions and completeness. And envy turns into resentment, and resentment into hatred and loathing humanity, and thus, the creatures of darkness seek to corrupt and extinguish the light of humankind, and torment and punish those who resist being corrupted.

One of life's ironies is that the knowledge about these monsters makes them less frightening, at least to the men and women who have dedicated their lives to combating supernatu-

ral evil. In fact, many a paranormal investigator is surprised to discover that some of the most malevolent and cruellest creatures of darkness are actually minuscule in stature – pathetic creatures easy to dispatch once they have been revealed. Which brings us back to why so many hide in darkness and choose to manipulate humans to do their evil from a distance: In the dark, all things seem scarier, ominous and dangerous. Thus, like the Wizard of Oz, a little man hiding behind a curtain, evil beings of tiny stature seem larger than life and too terrible to defy, at least until the curtain is pulled back to reveal the truth.

That having been said, supernatural beings are never to be underestimated. There exist creatures of incredible size and power, some even wield the power of a god and command legions of lesser evil beings and wicked humans, though they tend to be the most insidious and elusive of them all. Every supernatural monster is like a cornered animal when its life is on the line, and even those that are small and seemingly harmless, and even cute or funny looking, are capable of amazing cunning and carnage. Most are clever at manipulating people and circumstance to their advantage, and all kill without conscience or regret.

The Many Faces of Evil

Strange and terrible supernatural creatures come in all shapes and sizes, but most fall into one of six basic categories or classifications of beings.

Haunters, including the Banshee and some entities. (x4 threat level.)

Pranksters, like Gremlins and Imps. (x4 threat level.)

Predators, such as Hell Hounds and Nightblood. (x4 threat level.)

Demonic Servants, a host of Lesser (x4) and Greater Demons (x6) and beings like the Mindolar, Sowki, and Goqua (all x6 threat level).

Ancient Evil, including Demon Lords and Dark Gods. (x10 threat level.)

Alien Intelligences, abominations that fit the description of evil incarnate and which have no semblance to the natural world. (x10 threat level.)

Note: See *The Supernatural Enemy*, pages 15-17, for a complete description of each classification (including human pawns).

A reminder. Most supernatural beings must link themselves to our plane of existence, for they are alien to our reality, even if they are frequent visitors. This means the supernatural being must bind itself to the physical world in order to remain in it. Destroy its physical body, and its link to the human world is broken and the creature vanishes as if it never existed at all. However, destroying the body can be more difficult than one might imagine, and enemies of the supernatural should make certain the creature is truly dead before celebrating. Also note that the I.S.P. of supernatural beings does *not* change or increase in the presence of greater supernatural creatures, unless noted otherwise. The I.S.P. boost enjoyed by humans in the face of supernatural danger is unique to humans.

In the pages that follow are some notable *Haunters*, *Pranksters* and *Supernatural Predators*, along with a few *Demonic*

Servants that have plagued and preyed upon humans for millions of years. They are just a hint of what is yet to come. They are the terrible but lesser faces of evil to whet your appetites. The **Tome Grotesque** is where you will find the most hideous, gruesome and powerful demons and horrors loose in the world, along with their special brand of magic and abilities. Consider yourself warned.

Supernatural Beings

Banshee (H.F. 14; Haunter)

Bogeyman/Raven's Tears (H.F. 10 to adults, 15 to children; Predator)

Boschala (H.F. 18; Predator)

Brain Burrower (H.F. 12; Predator)

Dar'ota (H.F. 15; Demonic Servant; Greater Demon)

Devil Ghost (H.F. 15; Demonic Servant; Lesser Demon)

Dimensional Ghoul (H.F. 12; Demonic Servant; Lesser Demon)

Dybbuk (H.F. 14; Demonic Servant; Lesser Demon)

Entity: Poltergeist (H.F. 10; Haunter)

Entity: Haunting (H.F. 14; Haunter)

Entity: Syphon (H.F. 10; Haunter)

Entity: Tectonic (H.F. 14; Haunter)

Entity: Possessing (H.F. 11; Haunter)

Grave Ghoul (H.F. 12; Predator)

Gremlin (H.F. 10; Prankster)

Hell Hounds (H.F. 15; Predator)



Banshee Harbinger of Death

The Banshee of legend is a sort of Entity that can sense death and rushes to greet it. The creature is more scavenger than predator or ghost, and might be considered the *vulture* of the supernatural world.

When any living being dies, its P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) is doubled and drifts away. The Banshee feeds on the am-

plified P.P.E. released at the moment of death. It can only feed on energy released at death and cannot draw upon the P.P.E. of ley lines, magic spells, mages or magic items. Nor can it use P.P.E. as anything other than food, and nothing else provides it with sustenance.

This means, like a scavenging vulture, the Banshee uses its psychic abilities to sense impending disaster and death, and goes there to wait for tragedy to occur. The impatient and gluttonous Banshee may wail when the selfish creature grows hungry and death does not come quick enough for it, as well as when it becomes giddy with anticipation, howling like a happy animal.

Although legends sometime attribute the mournful wail of the Banshee with the power to paralyze or kill, the Banshee is not that powerful nor aggressive. A Banshee is *never* the instrument of death, but is a harbinger of it in the sense that its *Clairvoyant* and *Precognitive* abilities tip it off to impending tragedy and the likelihood of death. Thus, the presence of one or more Banshees indicates that something terrible may soon happen at whatever location or vehicle (airplane, bus, etc.) has attracted the ghoulish creature. And Banshees are heartless ghouls. They care nothing about the people who die and see humans only as cattle to feed them. If disaster is averted, the disappointed Banshee flies off in an angry huff for search of other tragedy and death. No matter how hungry a Banshee becomes, however, it *never* does the dirty work of killing; that is always left to someone else or circumstance.

Ultimately, the Banshee can be a helpful, if ominous *omen* to psychics who can see them, and a nuisance to supernatural masterminds whose evil scheme may be flagged by the presence of one or more lingering and wailing Banshees – and the greater the number of Banshees, the greater the potential loss of life. A Banshee may also hang around the lairs of Supernatural Predators and demons who take prisoners and slay them in their domicile, as well as places where ritual killings take place, and may even follow aggressive hunter-killers so it may feast on the spent P.P.E. of the killer's victims at their moment of death. Again, this can be an important sign/tip to psychics who can see invisible spirits like the Banshee. **Note:** As helpful a clue as the appearance of a Banshee can be, its presence has a chilling effect on mortals who can see it, hear it, or even just know it is present. The Banshee exudes an aura of doom, creating an omnipresent distraction and sense of gloom on all within 1000 feet (305 m); line of sight or earshot (-2 on Perception Rolls, -1 on all combat maneuvers, -2 to save vs Horror Factor, and -10% on skill performance; *double* those penalties for the Psychic Medium and Sensitive and anyone else who can actually see or hear, and/or feel the Banshee's presence).

As a rule, Supernatural Predators don't care if a Banshee follows them, because the creature feeds on energy while the predators feed on the physical body of their prey. Likewise, most intelligent demonic beings tend to ignore the Banshee or try to capitalize on its presence for dramatic effect and to debilitate potential intruders and enemies. The only time a Banshee becomes a real problem is during ritual sacrifices where one or more victims are slain for their P.P.E. for magical effect. A Banshee could ruin such plans by gorging itself on energy needed to execute the magic in the ritual. Chasing a Banshee away is impossible unless one can perform an Exorcism or has powers that can attack ghosts and spirits.

The presence of a Banshee does not automatically mean that there will be death or tragedy, but it does mean that the bizarre creature has sensed a very real possibility of death. If there is going to be a deadly event, it will usually occur within 72 hours of the Banshee's arrival. However, the Banshee is an impatient and eternally hungry creature. If a death doesn't occur within 10 hours, it will automatically exude a sensation of despair or sorrow. This powerful, undirected empathic transfer will affect everybody within 60 feet (18.3 m) of it. Note that the sorrow is not born from sympathy, but in that the foul being is, itself, feeling sad because nobody has died, and they are supposed to, and it is getting so hungry.

As it grows even more hungry and frustrated, the Banshee begins to moan like a dog left out in the rain. The wail is a long, deep, mournful howl that can make a person's blood turn cold. Its frightful moaning will make everybody nervous and jumpy, especially if they know what it is.

A Banshee will leave when the person(s) dies or it senses that death is not going to come this time. However, a Banshee may wait as long as six weeks, especially if it senses a great deal of potential psychic energy. It can be driven away by exorcism, intensely strong emotions of love, or psychic combat. The Banshee is a spirit-like being invisible except to psychics and arcanists who can see the invisible. They are vulnerable to Telepathy, Empathic transmission, Bio-Manipulation, Astral Beings and Ectoplasm. Magically, they are vulnerable to Exorcism, Banishment, Constrain Being, Commune with Spirits, and Summon Lesser Being.

The Banshee –

Haunter and Lesser Demon – Harbinger of Death.

Also known as the *Harbinger of Death* and *Deadman's Specter*.

Alignment: Anarchist or Miscreant; self-serving.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+5, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, Supernatural P.S. 1D6+6, P.P. 1D6+9, P.E. 1D6, P.B. 1D4, Spd 2D6+12 (floating).

Armor Rating (A.R.): Not applicable.

Hit Points: 50

S.D.C.: 50

Discorporation: When slain, the Banshee's body turns into mist and fades away within one melee round.

Threat Level: x4; Hunter, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 14

Size: 6-10 feet (1.8 to 3 m) tall.

Weight: Not applicable; spirit.

Armor Rating: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute plus 2D6.

Natural Abilities: Natural state is invisible and it cannot make itself visible. Only those who can see the invisible can see a Banshee and only Psychic Mediums, Sensitives and others "open" to the supernatural can see or hear the creature (the Diviner may, however, see signs or omens that suggest its presence). A Banshee may appear day or night and is not adversely affected by the light of day. Repulsed by love, goodness, joy and kindness, and will avoid places where such

emotions are strong. Bio-regenerates 2D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points per hour.

Aura of Doom (special): Although seeing a Banshee tips a character off to potential impending death and disaster, its presence has a chilling effect on mortals, creating an omnipresent distraction and sense of doom to all made aware of its presence and who are within 1000 feet (305 m) of the cursed creature. *Penalties on the victims:* -2 on Perception Rolls, -1 on all combat maneuvers, -2 to save vs Horror Factor, and -10% on skill performance; double those penalties for the *Psychic Medium*, *Psychic Sensitive* and anyone else who can actually see, hear and/or feel the Banshee's presence. Likewise, people who suffer from depression will feel sad, down and are more likely to run away or give up/surrender. There is no saving throw against the powerful malaise generated by the Banshee.

Empathic (special): A natural empath, the Banshee automatically feels emotions (costs no I.S.P.) and enjoys emotions that involve despair, giving up, suicide, and sorrow.

Ethereal Entity (special): The Banshee appears as a ghostly, white wraith with vaguely female features. Its body is always thin and pale, like a victim from a concentration camp or a skeleton. It may appear naked, but more often than not, appears in a hooded shroud or robe, giving it the classic appearance of the "specter of death."

Being ethereal by nature means it can walk through solid matter, like walls, and cannot be hurt or touched by physical attacks or weapons like bullets and fire (no damage). It hovers and floats up to 100 feet (30.5 m) above the ground and its feet and legs are seldom seen under its robes.

Hear Death Rattle (special): Same as the *Psychic Medium*, only the Banshee can hear the death rattle 20 minutes before death and may begin to wail in anticipation or joy.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 90%, but cannot read and seldom speaks except to those with the power to commune with ghosts/spirits. However, the conversation usually pertains exclusively to the coming of death and doom, eating and seeking more death.

Limited Invulnerability (special): The Banshee is impervious to heat, cold, poison, disease and most physical attacks. Only weapons made of alabaster, pearl and white jade may hurt the spirit. It is also vulnerable to psionic attacks and influences and any attack that can hurt spirits.

Teleport Self (special): Can instantly teleport up to 2000 miles (3200 km), but only to known feeding grounds (i.e., the site of past disaster, a hospital or nursing home, etc.).

Also see Psionics.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Vulnerable to weapons made of alabaster, pearl and white jade.

2. Most psionic attacks, magic and other attacks that can affect/hurt spirits are effective against Banshees.

3. Vulnerable to Exorcism; sends them away.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents: None, per se. Very much creatures of instinct consumed with finding food and eating. Also see Natural Abilities, above and Psionics, below.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4

Attacks Per Melee: Three hand to hand attacks against other

ethereal beings and Astral Travelers. Otherwise, it can only attack physical beings with a Mind Bolt once per melee round and then only in self-defense. **Note:** Attacks only if it feels threatened.

Damage: None to living beings, except from Mind Bolt as a defense, otherwise it inflicts 2D6 damage from clawed fingers, bites and punches against other spirits, but only attacks when threatened first.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +1 to strike in combat with other ethereal beings, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, is not scared by death or the agony of mortals, and is impervious to possession and mind control.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Major Psychic requiring a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. **I.S.P.:** 50. **Powers:** Clairvoyance (6), Commune with Spirits (6), Empathy (4; feel/receive only), Mind Bolt (the only way the Banshee may attack the living), Precognition (10), Psychic Diagnosis (4), See the Invisible (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), and Sense Time (2).

Enemies: None per se, other than humans who chase the frightful thing away whenever it makes an obvious appearance. Humans are regarded as nothing more than food.

Allies: None. Tend to be independent and solitary creatures, though they may gather in flocks and haunt battlefields, hospitals, nursing homes and anywhere death may occur. As noted in the description, this may include shadowing other supernatural beings and waiting for them to kill. Most of the more intelligent demons and monsters find the Banshee to be an annoying pest like rats or buzzards. Note that magic ceremonies involving human sacrifice may be ruined if one or more Banshees steal P.P.E. vital to the ritual.

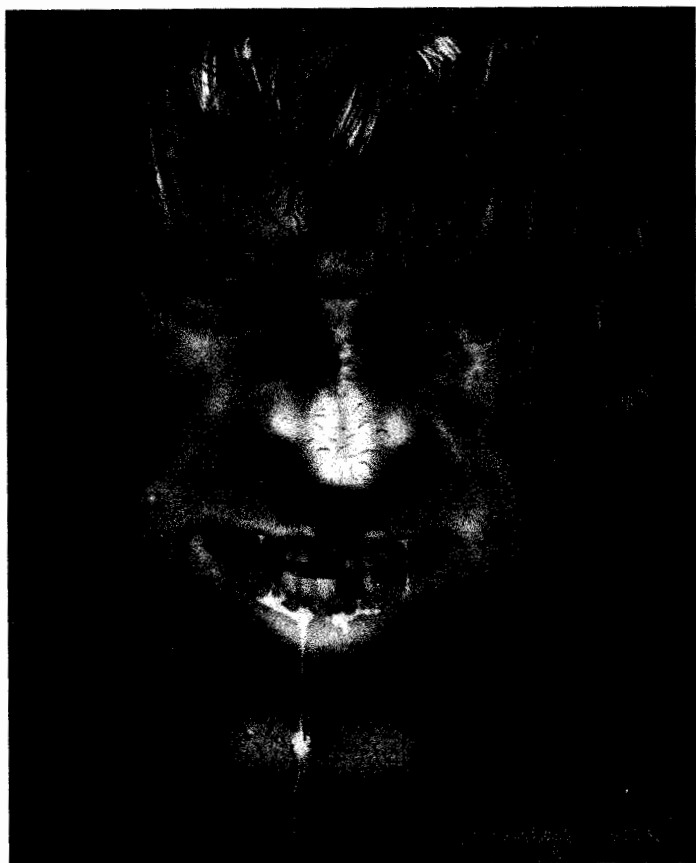
Habitat: Anywhere the creature can sense death is imminent.

Bogey Man

Also known as the Raven's Tears

Ancient Native Americans knew this monster as "the Raven's Tears." So named, because any ravens within a two mile (3.2 km) radius will sense when the Bogey Man is on the prowl and will gather, en masse, where he is about to strike, to scream a warning to the heavens and anyone who recognizes their warning – "Where the Raven's tears fall, so will a child." Of course, it is a warning that falls on deaf ears to most modern people who have never heard of the Raven's Tears monster and think of the Bogey Man as a pure myth. The name, "Bogey Man" may even seem antiquated and silly. An amusing name from a simpler time made up as a fairy tale to frighten children and make sure they behave, but the Bogey Man is real, and terrible. The creature preys upon defenseless children, targeting those who wander off on their own or stay out too late, when the fiend can strike from the shadows.

The Bogey Man is typically a nocturnal predator who stalks the streets, back alleys, schoolyards, parks and playgrounds after sunset or in the early morning hours before the sun has risen. Bus stations, shopping malls, and other places where children congregate, such as parking lots and garages where kids may



come to skateboard or hang out away from adult eyes after hours, are also common hunting grounds for the Bogey Man. They are found exclusively in urban settings, living in rat infested abandoned buildings, basements, cellars, dilapidated houses, junkyards, warehouses, and sewers, ideally near one or more schools, playgrounds, or places where children gather or walk past on a regular basis.

The creature captures and eats children and rats. Its favorite prey is children ages 2-10, but they may also steal infants and attack children up to 15 years old. A Bogey Man eats his prey, devouring the entire person, bones and all, though they often save the skull and/or a toy from their victim as a souvenir.

Secrets & Habits: (known to characters with Lore: Demons and Monsters, Lore: American Indian, and Streetwise: Weird): The Bogey Man is a solitary hunter who never gathers with others of their own kind nor associates with, or serves any other supernatural beings, unless forced to do so. Entities and other animalistic predators may inhabit the same building or area, but they go about their own business.

Hunts in a confined area, a five mile (8 km) radius of its dwelling place/lair. Seeks a child to eat every 14+2D6 days, snatching one or two at a time. Eats rats and the occasional cat or raven between meals. The monster amuses itself by laying around, getting drunk, scaring children (and adults), beating up homeless people, and killing ravens and cats (often leaving dead cats on their owner's doorstep or hanging from a tree).

Bogey Men attract cats as well as ravens. Cats instinctively hate Bogey Men, and as a result, 4D6+10 cats will be found hanging around the place inhabited by one, wailing and crying at dawn and dusk when the Bogey Man is most likely to be on the prowl looking for children on their way to school or coming home to supper. ("Be home before the streetlights come on" is a

warning children should heed.) The cats also chase and eat rats in the hope that the Bogey Man will leave for a place with more rodents to eat.

If there is good news, it is that a Bogey Man never kills outright, and always *captures* his victims *alive*, gagging and binding them in strong twine, torn rags or duct tape, and taking them to his lair. All Bogey Men like to play with their food, teasing, frightening and pushing around their victim for 4D4+18 hours before actually slaying and eating the poor child. This gives would-be rescuers a small window of opportunity to find and rescue the most recent victim before it is too late.

The appearance of the Bogey Man is that of an unkempt, husky, olive or brown skinned male with a bald head or a tangle of jet black or stark white and disheveled hair. Teeth are yellow and crooked, with several missing teeth. The eyes are small and beady, the ears large, fingernails cracked and dirty. The brute is always dressed in tattered, filthy clothing, and looks like a homeless person. A Bogey Man may even push a shopping cart or a wagon covered with a box or a heap of rags or newspapers (to cover his young victims bound inside). Most Bogey Men also enjoy alcohol and their breath often stinks of whiskey, though the fiend is never so drunk as to be physically incapacitated.

Bogey Man – Supernatural Predator

Also known as the *Raven's Tears* and *Cat's Cry*.

Alignment: Always Diabolic. Cruel, vindictive and abusive.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+7, M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6+2, Supernatural P.S. 2D6+22, P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D4+2, Spd 1D6+14 (physical attributes are half in sunlight or daytime).

Armor Rating (A.R.): 10; any attack less than 11 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: P.E. number +5D10.

S.D.C.: 1D6x10+40; reduce by 50% during the day or in sunlight.

Discorporation: When slain, the body turns into 1D4x100 squealing rats that scatter and vanish within one melee round.

Threat Level: x4; Predator and a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 10 to adults, 15 to children.

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m), but usually stands and walks hunched over, making itself seem smaller/shorter. Likewise, until a character engages it in combat, the bulk and barreled chest of the Bogey Man may, at first, be mistaken as bulky clothes or multiple layers of clothing.

Weight: 220-300 pounds (99 to 135 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute plus 1D8.

Natural Abilities: Cold-blooded killer who enjoys capturing, tormenting and eating children (and rats), bones and all. Is not afraid of adults and will fight if threatened; enjoys brawls, fights to the death and killing in general, but the fiend *never* eats adults. Has good speed, can leap 10 feet (3 m) high and across (50% farther when running near full speed), and can take a considerable amount of physical damage. Nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), dimensional teleport 5% (+15% at a ley line nexus) and bio-regenerates 1D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points once every melee round.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 90%, but cannot read. Speaks in a deep, guttural voice, and grunts and groans like an animal.

Limited Invulnerability (special): The demon is resistant to heat, cold and drugs (half damage and duration), impervious to poison and disease.

Supernatural Strength & Endurance: Inflicts tremendous damage from physical attacks and fatigues at a fraction of the rate of a normal human.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Reduce all physical attributes and skills by half during the daytime and in sunlight.

2. Man-made weapons inflict full damage, as do magic, psionics and physical attacks.

3. Attracts ravens and crows who caw and scream a warning of the Bogey Man's presence before he attacks and when he is on the prowl. They will also attack a Bogey Man out in the open when the fiend has less than 8 Hit Points, pecking and ripping him to death.

4. The Bogey Man is lazy and solitary, always hunting alone; even avoids its own kind. Never uses modern weapons (guns), but may use a knife and blunt weapons like a chair or club.

5. Disgusted by kindness, love, goodness, and beauty, and will avoid places that represent them and hurt people who exhibit them.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents: Basic Math 80%, Brewing 80%, Climb 80%/75%, Land Navigation 80%, Prowl 65%, Street-wise 90%, Swim 95%, Tailing 80% (likes to watch adults engaged in vice and wrongdoing, but also follows and observes its prey/child victim, before snatching the poor kid when nobody else appears to be around or looking), Track Humans 60%, W.P. Blunt, and W.P. Knife. Also see Natural Abilities, above and Psionics, below.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Bite: 1D8 damage. Punch or kick, as per Supernatural P.S., typically 2D6 damage on a restrained punch, 4D6 damage a full strength punch or kick, 1D4x10 on a power punch (counts as two attacks), or may use a weapon. When a weapon is used, combine the Supernatural P.S. damage with that of the weapon.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +3 to parry, +2 to dodge, +3 to pull punch, +3 to disarm, +3 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs magic, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, is resistant to cold and heat (half damage), and is impervious to poison, disease, spoiled meat, and possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Minor Psychic requiring a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. **I.S.P.:** M.E. attribute number x2 +13. **Powers:** Alter Aura (2), Deadened Senses (4), Death Trance (1), Levitation (self only; 10), Open Lock (6), Psychic Repair (20) and Resist Pain (6).

Enemies: Cats and ravens/crows are a Bogey Man's natural enemies; they hate each other. Thus, a Bogey Man may be seen drowning cats and kittens, and throwing rocks at cats and ravens to chase them away, sometimes catching and eating them as well.

Envious of humans which is one reason they stalk and kill their children. Kids are seen as food, playthings and the object of revenge against adult humans (i.e. a way to lash out at hated humans and hurt them the most).

Ignores other Supernatural Predators, tries to avoid Hunters and Pranksters (hates the latter), and dislikes greater supernatural beings who may press them into their service. However, a Bogey Man may be a willing henchman of mortal evildoers and supernatural forces who let them kidnap, terrorize and eat children.

Allies: Tend to be independent and solitary creatures, even avoiding their own kind, but will obediently serve supernatural beings more powerful than they. May also ally itself to and assist evil mortals who let the Bogey Man do terrible things and sate its hunger. Fearful of raw power and respectful of cunning and treachery, the Bogey Man may also serve other powerful supernatural beings, usually in the capacity of a guard, enforcer, or kidnapper.

Habitat: Can be found almost anywhere throughout the world, usually in urban settings. Large, old cities with plenty of abandoned buildings and places to hide are favorite hunting grounds.

Boschala, the Nightmare

By Randy McCall and Kevin Siembieda

Whether they look like it or not, most supernatural beings defy the laws of nature and science as we know them, and the Boschala (pronounced "bow shal lah") is one of the most dramatic examples. A nightmare creature from another world, the monstrosity is some sort of a shape-changer that tries to make itself look like animals from our world, except that it is so alien to our reality that it has no perception of how life-forms function or what they are supposed to look like in our dimension. Consequently, the Boschala appears as a tangled mass of animal parts and human features. It may, for example, have the head of a human, the body of a worm, bat wings, eight spider legs, and a crab claw or tentacles, and any number or combination of fused and unrelated parts. Mythical creatures such as the Chimera, with the head of a lion, body of a goat and tail of a dragon, may very well have been a Boschala.

Each Boschala that enters our world will assume a different form, each an amalgam based on the creatures they first encounter. The only time two or more Boschala are discovered with the same or very similar appearance is when the creatures have all entered our world at the same time and copy each other. Ironically, the monster does this to blend in.

When summoned via a special magic ritual and/or circle (Summon Lesser Beings), the Boschala brought through respond to the mortal that summoned them like obedient, misshapen puppies. This makes them appealing as monstrous watchdogs and a means to dispose of victims by letting the creatures devour them, but also as a bizarre resource for P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy). The Boschala possesses high reserves of P.P.E. and when two or more are summoned and allowed to merge together, that combined energy can be tapped by intelligent beings such as human practitioners of magic, demon worshippers and Demonic Servants. Two or more of the hideous

things can physically merge together to become one. It is this strange morphing and union that enables other beings to link with them by touch for the purpose of mental communication or to draw upon their combined P.P.E. to use in any way the person may desire.

There is only one danger in summoning the Boschala, and that's summoning too many. Whenever eight or more are together, they are compelled to mate. It is a repulsive, horrific scene in which all the Boschala merge and flow together in one twisting mass of undulating flesh and limbs. The entire process takes a mere 30 minutes and when they withdraw, becoming separate beings again, there will be one additional, full-grown Boschala. This process can be repeated once every 24 hours. The danger is not that a swarm of Boschala can be created in a matter of hours, but that no mortal can control more than 12 at a time, which means with the birth of the thirteenth, *all* of the monsters become independent and uncontrollable. They will not attack the character(s) who summoned them (unless he attacks one of them first), but they will no longer follow his commands, and once the Boschala experience freedom, they cannot be brought back under control even should their numbers be reduced below 12 again. The parenting creatures, themselves, may also change their appearance in the mating process, usually becoming more freakish and horrible than before. **Note:** The birthing or duplication process also depletes them all of P.P.E. for 72 hours after they stop replicating, and once the replication process begins, they usually continue for 3D8+8 hours (that's 48 new Boschala created in 24 hours, and should the newly created

ones begin to replicate once there are 12 or 13 . . . well the results can be horrific).

Boschala are carnivorous predators of horrible visage and aggressive temperament, but are, thankfully, dumb animals with no other goal than to wander, hunt, and eat. They feed on all mortal life forms, from insects, birds and mice to humans. Humans simply represent large, easy to catch prey that can fill the belly of the beast for 1D6+4 days.

Aggressive, powerful and fierce, the creature's awkward selection of body parts and large size often limits their effectiveness, impairs their speed, and makes them easy to identify.

The following tables are provided to make the Boschala's appearance quick and easy for the Game Master to compose. **Natural form** is that of an undulating blob.

Main Body Appearance

01-08% Humanoid.	51-57% Rhinoceros or Elephant-like.
09-15% Canine.	58-64% Rodent (giant).
16-22% Worm.	65-71% Reptilian/Lizard.
23-29% Feline.	72-78% Spider or Insect.
30-36% Slug.	79-85% Amphibian or Fish-like.
37-43% Horse.	86-93% Bird.
44-50% Bovine (Bull/Deer).	94-00% Snake.

The Number of Heads

01-20% Four.	41-60% Two.	81-00% Five.
21-40% One.	61-80% Three.	



The Appearance of Each Head

01-10% Goat/Sheep; complete with horns.

11-20% Canine.

21-30% Lizard/Snake.

61-70% Monkey/Apish.

31-40% Insect/Spider.

71-80% Fish or Amphibian.

41-50% Human.

81-90% Rodent/Rat.

51-60% Feline.

91-00% Bull/Cow/Cattle.

Mouth & Teeth

01-20% Corresponds to the type of head.

21-40% Predator teeth; Canine or Feline.

41-60% Long, spike-like or icicles.

61-80% Large and flat like a grazing animal.

81-90% Spider or snake-like fangs.

91-00% Small and pointed like tiny daggers/fish-like teeth.

Number of Legs

01-20% Two or none, has a serpentine (snake) body.

21-40% Three.

41-60% Four.

61-80% Six.

81-00% Eight.

Type of Legs (roll for each pair)

01-12% Human.

13-24% Feline.

25-36% Horse/Hoofed.

37-50% Insect or Spider.

51-62% Canine.

63-75% Reptilian/Lizard.

76-87% Rhino/Elephant-like.

88-00% Large, thick tentacles or fish fins.

Number of Arms

01-20% Two.

61-80% Six.

21-40% Four.

81-00% Eight.

41-60% Five.

Note: Bonus of one extra attack, +1 to strike, parry and entangle per each additional *pair* of limbs.

Type of Appendage for Each Arm

01-20% Human-like or apish hand.

21-40% Feline retractable claw.

41-60% Canine-like/bear claw.

61-75% Bird-like talon.

76-90% Crab claw/insect pincer or insect-like hand/claw.

91-00% Tentacle, like an octopus or tentacles for fingers.

Tail, if Any

01-25% One, short.

26-50% One, long like a tiger or monkey.

51-75% One large and thick like an alligator's or lizard's.

76-00% None.

The Boschala –

Supernatural Predator and Lesser Demon

Also known as the *Demon Chimera*.

Horror Factor: 18

Alignment: Anarchist, Miscreant or Diabolic evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+4 (average predatory animal I.Q.), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6+3, Supernatural P.S. 1D8+29, P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 1D6+17, P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D8+8.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 8, any roll to strike less than nine may hit but does no damage.

Hit Points: 1D6x10+50

S.D.C.: 100 +P.E. attribute number.

Discorporation: When slain, the Boschala's body turns into slime that dries to dust and blows away within 1D6 minutes. Analysis of the slime or dust shows it is a simple organic material similar to the composition of a snail.

Threat Level: x4; a Predator, Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 18

Size: 8-15 feet (2.4 to 4.6 m) long or tall if bipedal.

Weight: 500-2000 pounds (225 to 900 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute plus 3D6.

Natural Abilities: Feeds on humans and all living animals. Supernatural Strength and Endurance, doesn't breathe air, sees the invisible, nightvision 300 feet (91.5 m), normal day vision, track by smell 70%, resistant to fire and cold (half damage), and bio-regenerates 6D6 S.D.C. and Hit Points every hour.

Animal Traits: The Boschala possesses the basic animal abilities represented by the conglomeration of its piecemeal body. So if it has amphibian or fish aspects, it can swim at 6x its running speed and breathe underwater; if it has lizard, insect or monkey aspects it will be an astute climber (base skill of 90/85%); insect limbs will also enable it to climb on walls and ceilings, though at half its usual running speed; canine, horse or bovine legs will increase running speed by 50%; the teeth of a predator (canine, feline) will inflict an extra 1D6 damage, claws will do 2D6 damage in addition to its formidable Supernatural P.S. damage, and similar. Use common sense and don't go hog wild.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands the language of the person who summoned it and those who communicate with it by *touch* or Telepathy; the creature cannot speak or read. Growls, howls, moans, whimpers, hisses and makes other animal sounds to express its feelings.

Limited Invulnerability (special): A.R. 8, and the demon is resistant to heat and cold (half damage), and is impervious to spoiled food, poison, disease, and gases. The light of day and holy symbols have no adverse effect on the Boschala, though they are typically nocturnal hunters and like remote places for their lair (sewers, abandoned buildings, caves, etc.).

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

2. Dogs, cats and other natural predators instinctively fear and hate the Boschala and will howl and cry when they sense

or smell its presence nearby (within 1200 feet/366 m). If let loose against a Boschala, the animals will attack the beast, using hit and run tactics and coordinated, wolf-pack style attacks. Felines attack one on one, but canines may gather into a large pack to hunt one down and rip it to shreds, if they can (the Boschala is more likely to slay and eat its canine attackers, bones and all).

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Basic Math 65%, Camouflage 50%, Climb 80%/70%, Imitate Voice & Sounds 45%, Land Navigation 70%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 60%, Prowl 60%, Swim 70%, and Track (people)50%. Also see Natural Abilities.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4

Attacks per Melee: Four +1 for each *additional pair* of limbs beyond two. It may use handheld weapons and guns if it has a human hand and arm, but is -1 to strike with ancient, melee weapons (swords and such) and -5 to strike with guns; cannot use explosives or machinery. **Note:** The Boschala is more animal and functions with the cunning and instincts of a predator, not the intelligence of a human.

Damage: Bite: 2D6 damage (+1D6 if the fangs or teeth of a predator). Physical attacks are per Supernatural P.S. damage, typically 2D6 damage on a restrained punch or kick, 5D6 on a full strength punch or kick or 1D6x10 for a power punch (counts as two attacks), and +2D6 damage from claw attacks. Rarely uses handheld weaponry.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +3 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +6 to pull punch/bite, +2 to disarm, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs psionic attack, +3 to save vs magic, +10 to save vs Horror Factor, resistant to cold and heat (half damage), and is impervious to poison, disease, gases, spoiled food, and possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Humans are considered prey and a potential enemy, but so are dogs and other predatory animals. Dislikes Hell Hounds and Malignous, both seen as rivals. Few, other than that.

Allies: Left on their own, a Boschala hunts alone or in small groups of two or three fellow Boschala. Dull-witted animal like predators, the Boschala will loyally serve any human or supernatural being who summons it, to the best its ability. In short, it is a big, ugly, attack dog used by evil sorcerers, Demonic Servants and Ancient Evil. Boschala instinctively know the difference between humans and mortal animals and inhuman creatures, and do not attack supernatural beings unless provoked, attacked first, or when in hyper-aggressive mode because they exist in large numbers (13 or more).

Habitat: Anywhere; typically wherever they've been summoned, as well as caves and dark places near ley lines, places of power and dimensional disturbances (the Bermuda Triangle, for example), and other hot zones of supernatural activity.



Brain Burrower

By Randy McCall and Kevin Siembieda

The Brain Burrower is a horrible, parasitic little monster that feeds on human brain tissue and P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy). The creature is an eel-like thing with scores of thin, delicate tentacles that resemble long hair, at least from a distance. The hair-like tentacles are used to move and grab/hold of objects as well as its victims. The creature's body measures about 6-8 inches long (15 to 20.3 cm), with the tentacles of an equal length.

A Burrower has no natural defenses or powers, thus it usually attacks sleeping, drunk or helpless victims. What it does is climb up to the head, then wraps its hundreds of tough hairs around the person's head and hair, and begins to secrete an acid from its mouth to burn a hole into the skull. The process is quite painful, but takes only about two minutes (8 melees) to complete. The Burrower then releases the head and slithers into the hole. Inside the skull it secretes another substance that plugs the hole and anesthetizes the brain. At this point its victim is beyond help. The Burrower will completely devour 20-25% of the brain within one hour, and that is when things get really strange. The Burrower can temporarily control its victim's body, making it walk, run, climb, talk, see, use simple tools and devices, drive a car and perform basic skills. The creature is somehow, temporarily linked to the brain and can control the body. Its odd telepathic nature enables it to absorb the character's skills and fragments of memory. All skills are limited to what that particular person knew and are performed at -30%. Memory is limited to tiny bits and fragments, like a 10,000 piece jig-saw puzzle that is missing 9000 pieces. The Burrower and body can sustain this condition for 96 hours before the telepathic link breaks and the monster loses its hold on the person. However, that is usually its cue to finish eating the brain over the next 12 hours, its victim lapsing into a coma, and exit when finished gorging itself. It will want to feed again in six or seven days, but can go 30 days at a time without ill effect. Fortunately, Burrowers are extremely rare in

our world – they only appear when summoned by a evil practitioner of magic or an Ancient Evil – and are easy to kill.

Brain Burrower – Supernatural Predator

Also known as the *Burrower, Brain Worm and Brain Eater.*

Alignment: Considered to be Diabolic evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+3 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+3, M.A. 1D4, Supernatural P.S. 1D6+3 (mortal P.S. in sunlight or daytime), P.P. 1D6+3, P.E. 1D6+3, P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D6.

Armor Rating (A.R.): None; any attack that is higher than a four hits and does damage.

Hit Points: 1D6+2

S.D.C.: 1D10

Discorporation: When slain, its body turns into a puddle of black goo and evaporates into nothing within two melee rounds (30 seconds).

Threat Level: x4; Supernatural Predator, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 12 just seeing one, 18 knowing one is about to chew into your skull.

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute number.

Size: 6 to 8 inches (15-20.3 cm) long.

Weight: 8 ounces (226 grams).

Natural Abilities: High animal intelligence, nightvision and day vision are both about 60 feet (18.3 m), breathes without air, regenerates lost tentacles in 24 hours, bio-regenerates Hit Points or S.D.C. at a rate of 2D6 per every eight hours.

Telepathic Mind Control (special): As noted, once inside the brain and after eating around 20% of it, the worm takes complete control of the mind and body. Everything that happens while the creature is in control is remembered as a vague, but terrifying nightmare by the victim (assuming he somehow survives the experience). There is no I.S.P. involved and the Brain Burrower is in complete control.

Also see Psionics.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Vulnerable to all weapons and physical attacks, as well as psionic attacks and magic. However, once inside its victim's body, most attacks will hit the host body, not the creature within. 2. *Exorcism* (psychic, magic or religious) will paralyze the creature the moment the process begins, and a successful Exorcism will force it from its victim's body before it can do any more damage. Likewise, *Psychic Diagnosis* will indicate the creature's presence and the level of progress and damage it has done to the brain, and a *Psychic Purification* will force it from the victim's body same as an Exorcism, but at double the usual I.S.P. cost (16 points). *Psychic Surgery* can also remove the fiend without serious damage to the victim's brain, but the Brain Burrower is *not* incapacitated and may try to burrow deeper, deliberately do more damage to the victim and/or bite the Psychic Healer trying to remove it.

Note on the Victim's Recovery: If caught before the Burrower can eat its initial hour's worth of brain matter, the character is likely to have no or little permanent brain damage (-10% to the performance of *all* skills and reduce I.Q. and M.E. attributes by one point). However, after the Burrower has eaten for an hour and has seized control of the vic-

tim's mind and body, a successful removal of the creature will prevent any further damage or death, but the victim suffers permanent and irreparable brain damage. All skills are performed with a penalty of -30%, -1 on Perception Rolls, reduce I.Q. by two points, and the M.E. and M.A. attributes by 1D4 points (roll for each). Also roll once on the *Random Insanity Table* (or for one Phobia; probably worms) and the character may suffer from "holes" in his memory. If a third to half of the brain has been eaten, double the above penalties and modifiers, and the character *may* be too severely brain damaged to remain a playable character, or dies from his injuries. Losing more than half of one's brain is fatal.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents: Climb 80%/75%, Land Navigation 70%, Prowl 75%, Swim 90%, Tailing 70% and Track Humans 60%. Also see Natural Abilities, above and Psionics, below.

Equivalent Level of Experience: Not applicable.

Attacks Per Melee: Two; acid bite does 1D4 damage.

R.C.C. Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to dodge, +1 to save vs magic, impervious to heat and cold, possession and mind control.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Considered a Minor Psychic requiring a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. I.S.P.: M.E. attribute number x2 plus those of its victim/host body and/or 2 I.S.P. for every one P.P.E. of the host body. Powers: Applicable to the Burrower itself and to the human host under its control. Alter Aura (2), Death Trance (1), Ectoplasm (6+), Mask P.P.E. (4), Mask I.S.P. & Psionics (5), Mind Bond (10), Mind Block (4), Resist Fatigue (4), and Telepathy (4).

Enemies: Those of its masters. Humans are regarded as food and pawns, nothing more.

Allies: Most (98%) Brain Burrowers serve a greater power, be it an evil human able to summon and command lesser supernatural beings, or a greater supernatural force (Demonic Servant, Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence). Independent Brain Burrowers care only about themselves, feeding on and tormenting humans (including the friends and associates of the host and strangers as well as the victim).

Habitat: Wherever it has been summoned. Rare.

Dar'ota

Succubus and Incubus

Many cultures have myths about the Succubus (female) and Incubus (male), shape-changing demons sent into the world to charm and seduce unsuspecting humans for the purpose of gathering information, extortion, manipulation, assassination, torment, and murder. The older name for these Demonic Servants is "Dar'ota" (dar oh tah), but whatever they are called, the legendary Succubus and Incubus are, in reality, a hulking, hunch-backed, reptilian monster that resembles a cross between a human and monstrous lizard or dinosaur covered in slime. The head is a huge, misshapen bag of flesh with small yellow eyes, and a gaping mouth loaded with dagger-like teeth and a pair of massive fangs set in the lower jaw. Though the Dar'ota is physically powerful and a talented killer, what makes these creatures

so dangerous is their ability to shape-change into an attractive human, seduce their victim, and pry information out of him or her, before ripping out their throat with teeth or claws, and drinking their blood. Dar'ota are cruel, ruthless beings who enjoy tricking, using, abusing and hurting humans in every possible way. Though cunning and resourceful in their own right, they prefer to work for wicked practitioners of magic and other powerful supernatural beings.

In human form, the Dar'ota have the beauty and appeal of a movie star. Only the person's inhuman strength will hint that there is something unnatural about them. The Dar'ota can remain in human form for days, but must revert to its monstrous shape to feed on blood every two days. Prolonged combat that lasts for more than two minutes (8 melee rounds) also causes the shape-changer to lose its composure and revert to his ghastly true form. They are lethal combatants in either form, but devastating as a lizard-thing.

All Dar'ota are the incarnation of jealousy and homicidal rage. Sadistic and psychotic killers who love to torture, terrorize, hurt, belittle and murder those who strive to be better than they. Humans are a favorite target because the demonic killers are jealous of their physical form and the human capacity for goodness and love. The more generous, kind, compassionate, virtuous and beloved the human, the more despicable that person is in the eyes of the Dar'ota and the more deserving of the beast's inner rage and lasting hatred. Base and heartless creatures themselves, the demonic seducers like to use lust, sex and other base desires to lure humans to their doom, or into compromising positions that will enable their masters to blackmail and manipulate the humans.

Dar'ota, the Seducer and Assassin

– Demonic Servant and Lesser Demon

Also known as the Succubus, Incubus and Demon Lover.

Alignment: Always Miscreant or Diabolic evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+14, M.E. 1D6+13, M.A. 2D6+18, Supernatural P.S. 2D6+18, P.P. 1D6+18, P.E. 1D6+14, P.B. 1D6 in their true, monstrous form, but 1D6+18 in seductive, human guise, and Spd 2D6+18.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 12; tough scaly skin. Any attacks less than 13 do no damage even if they hit.

Hit Points: P.E. attribute number x5.

S.D.C.: 1D6x10+44

Discorporation: When slain, its body turns into thousands of mosquitoes that disperse in every direction, and vanish completely within two melee rounds as if they never existed.

Threat Level: x4; Demonic Servant, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: None in human form (beautiful), 18 when the transformation from human to monster is witnessed, and 15 in reptilian form.

Size: 5-6 feet tall (1.5 to 1.8 m).

Weight: 300 to 600 lbs (135 to 270 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: 1D6x10 +1D10 per level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Feeds on the blood of its victims, human or animal, but prefers human. Supernatural Strength and Endurance, tough hide, doesn't breathe air, sees the invisible,

nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), dimensional teleport 10% (+25% at a ley line nexus) and bio-regenerates 1D10 S.D.C. or Hit Points once every melee round.

Shape-change into Attractive Human (special): The Dar'ota can transform into an attractive adult human at will. This is done to infiltrate and walk among humans as one of them. Their high level of beauty (P.B.) and charm (M.A.) helps them to win favor, seduce unsuspecting humans, gather intelligence and engage in covert activities and set victims up for murder, theft, betrayal, blackmail, and being framed for crimes they did not commit.

Understand Human Vice and Frailty (special): The Dar'ota has a keen sense of how to seduce, manipulate and appeal to humans, as well as human failings, weaknesses, desires and fears, and uses them with sadistic pleasure to get what they want. Base Skill: 86% +1% per level of experience.

Blood Scent (special): The Dar'ota has a keen sense of smell that is keyed to the scent of blood, is +10% to track when following a blood scent, and can smell blood even from a pinprick or small cut that is less than an hour old and within 600 feet (183 m).

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 90% and can read at 60%.

Limited Invulnerability (special): Dar'ota are resistant to heat, cold, and poison/drugs (half damage, half the penalties, half the duration), and impervious to disease. The light of day and holy symbols have no adverse effect.

Also see Psionics.



Vulnerabilities: 1. Lightning momentarily reveals the Dar'ota's true nature, showing its face and skin to be scaly, reptilian and greyish green. Not applicable indoors unless by a window that does not have its shade drawn.

2. Vulnerable to all weapons, but heals quickly.

3. Vulnerable to psionic attacks.

4. Tends to underestimate human opponents.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Acrobatics (all at 80%), Basic Math 95%, Climb 95%/90%, Dance 80%, Detect Ambush 80%, Detect Concealment 80%, Escape Artist 80%, Imitate Voice & Sounds 80%, Impersonation 72%/44%, Intelligence 80%, Land Navigation 80%, Law (General) 55%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 90%, Palming 75%, Performance 80%, Pick Pockets 70%, Prowl 80%, Seduction 86%, Streetwise 74%, and Tailing 85%. Also see Natural Abilities, above and Magic, below.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D10

Attacks per Melee: Six!

Damage: Bite: 3D6+4 damage. Claw Strike: 2D6 damage plus the usual Supernatural P.S. damage, punch damage as per Supernatural P.S., typically 2D4 damage on a restrained punch, 3D6 on a full strength punch, and 6D6x10 for a power punch (counts as two attacks). Cannot do kick attacks, but may use handheld melee weapons (knives, clubs, etc.) in either form, but guns only in human form (and without benefit of W.P. bonuses).

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 on Perception Rolls, +4 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +6 to pull punch/bite, +3 to roll with impact, +5 to save vs mind control, magic charm attacks, and illusions, +1 to save vs all other types of magic, +8 to save vs Horror Factor, is resistant to heat, cold, poison, alcohol and drugs, and is impervious to disease and possession.

Magic: Limited to spells only, all Dar'ota know Befuddle, Calling, Charm, and Charismatic Aura, plus one additional spell selected from levels 1-5 per each additional level of experience starting at the creature's second level of experience. Spell selections usually involve spying, stealth, concealment and manipulation of others. P.P.E.: 1D6x10 +1D10 per level of experience.

Psionics: None and needs a 15 or higher to save vs psionic attack, but has bonuses to save vs mind control and illusions.

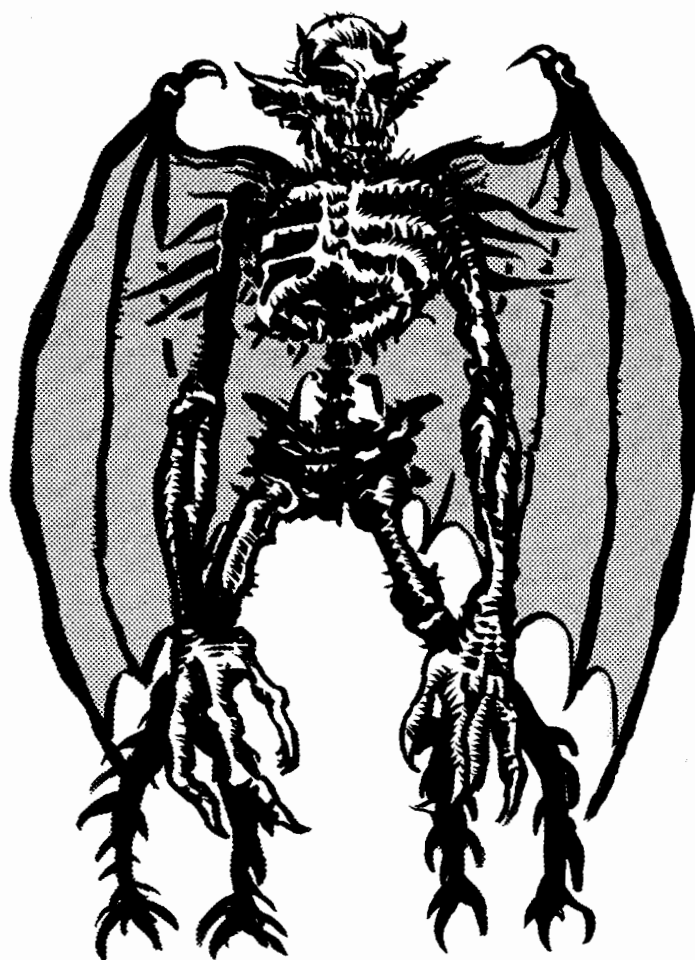
Enemies: Humans are hated above all others and are regarded as fools, pawns, playthings and prey.

Dislikes supernatural beings who lack finesse and cunning, as well as those who treat them without regard for their abilities. Dar'ota need to feel appreciated to keep their undying loyalty and get their top performance. Shape-changers who are not fellow Dar'ota may be considered to be inferiors and rivals.

Allies: Other Succubus and Incubus, and the demon enjoys working for the Sowki and other masterful deceivers, tempters, and masterminds (sometimes that includes brilliant or maniacal humans).

Habitat: Can be found anywhere throughout the world, but in urban settings they are part of the "nightlife" – party animals, if you would. This is an ideal setting for demonic seducers because most humans let their guard down in party environ-

ments and the use of drugs and alcohol makes them that much easier to seduce, trick and lead to slaughter.



Devil Ghost

The Devil Ghost is a terrible, winged monstrosity with glowing red eyes, massive bat wings covered in a fine fur on the outer side, and walks on a pair of "V" shaped legs that resemble those of an insect. Its body is a hulking skeleton with red-black or dark brown skin pulled tight over its body. The arms are disproportionately long and the three-fingered hands, tipped with talon-like claws, are also oversized and gnarled. Crooked spikes and spines of varying sizes bristle from the shoulders and cover the lower legs; smaller, thorn-like spines also sprout from the body, giving it a hairy appearance reminiscent of a tarantula. The face conveys the menace of this evil being, and looks like a rotting skull with long, sharp teeth, fangs, a pair of small horns protruding from the forehead, large torn ears and, as noted earlier, round red eyes that glow more brightly and with greater intensity when the demonic thing is angry or uses any of its powers.

Although it is called the Devil "Ghost," it is not a wraith, but a tangible creature of great physical size (10 feet/3 m tall) and strength. It is called a "ghost" because it likes to lurk in the shadows and manipulate events without anyone realizing.

The creature's most dramatic appearance in the United States surrounded what has become known as the *Mothman Sightings*, in which the fiend made dramatic appearances, convinced locals it was some sort of extraterrestrial, and was associated with a disaster that cost dozens of lives.

A consummate liar and trickster, the Devil Ghost likes to convince people it is something other than what it really is, and torment as many innocent people (and Latent Psychics) as possible with Clairvoyant dreams, visions and visitations that confuse and frighten them. A favorite ruse is appearing in dreams and visions (and sometimes in person, though always at a distance and in shadow) as an angel, guardian or alien being who wants to help, but is itself, supposedly hunted, under attack or working in secret to undermine “evil forces.” This ruse instantly makes it a sympathetic and heroic ally struggling against evil (allegedly) to save lives and help people. Once it has the confidence of its human pawns, it shares with them information that is, at first, impressive and insightful, and which saves their own or the lives of others, but it is all a trick to secure their trust. Like a demonic confidence artist, once the Devil Ghost has its suckers on the hook, it begins to send them on wild goose chases, running around helter-skelter in an elaborate plot for its own twisted amusement. It is, however, always careful to provide just enough truth, create just enough coincidence, doubt and innuendo to keep its victims guessing, worried, concerned and on the hook. The Devil Ghost loves to target Latent Psychics and inexperienced psychic investigators (both an easy mark for its deceptions and powers), and favors weaving plots involving conspiracy, secrets and betrayal. The Devil Ghost’s plan is to manipulate people, create an atmosphere of paranoia and/or desperation and ultimately torment and ruin peoples’ lives. It is important to note that despite all the smoke, mirrors and lies, there is always a *genuine* tragedy, danger or conspiracy at work, which makes the monster’s machinations all the more convincing and cruel. An arrogant fiend who has no loyalty or fear of any being, it often works to undermine or reveal the activities of other supernatural forces, enjoying the conflicts and challenges it creates for all parties involved. Although the Devil Ghost is sometimes forced to serve Ancient Evil and dark gods, it never has any true allegiance to its master and often engages in subtle acts of sabotage and treachery. A Devil Ghost is not, however, a friend of humankind, but a Creature of Chaos tantalized by the raw emotions that arise from suffering, fear, desperation and tortured minds. It may take the role of being the “voice” or “invisible friend” who inspires paranoid schizophrenics, serial killers and other madmen and maniacs to do terrible crimes. The more fear, panic, desperation and chaos its pawn(s) create, the grander the fun and greater the emotional high it receives. A Devil Ghost loves nothing more than to put an entire community in a panic or under an umbrella of fear.

Devil Ghost – Trickster and Lesser Demon

Also known as the *Devil’s Prophet* and *Moth Man*.

Alignment: Always Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D8+14, M.E. 1D8+12, M.A. 1D8+10, Supernatural P.S. 1D8+18 (half in sunlight or daytime), P.P. 1D8+10, P.E. 1D8+12, P.B. 1D4, Spd 1D8+18 running (x5 flying; at least 72 mph/115 km).

Armor Rating (A.R.): 13; any attack less than 14 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: P.E. attribute number x5; reduce by half in daytime.

S.D.C.: 5D8+40; reduce by half during the day or in sunlight.

Discorporation: When slain, its body turns into a thousand black gnats that fly into the sky and vanish within two melee rounds as if they never existed.

Threat Level: x4; Hunter/Prankster, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 15

Size: 10 feet (3 m) tall with a wingspan of six feet (1.8 m) when the wings are closed, and 18 feet (5.5 m) fully extended.

Weight: 500-600 pounds (225 to 270 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute number x3, +2D6 per level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Feeds on emotion, fear and chaos. Supernatural Strength and Endurance, doesn’t breathe air, sees the invisible, nightvision 1000 feet (305 m), dimensional teleport 10% (+25% at a ley line nexus), and bio-regenerates 1D8 S.D.C. or Hit Points once every melee round.

Extended and Simultaneous Telepathic Transmission: This power is used to send the same dream, vision and shared Clairvoyant or Precognitive vision to its pawns/victims. Transmission range is ten miles (16 km) per level of the creature and as many as three individuals per level of its experience can be influenced by the Devil Ghost. The vision, if Clairvoyant or Precognitive, is actually known by the Devil Ghost via its own psychic abilities, but is then transmitted to humans to manipulate them. That means the Devil Ghost can take its original Clairvoyant vision and reshape it to be more frightening, ominous or cryptic and then transmit it to others. Each recipient of the transmission must be specifically known by the creature and deliberately targeted. I.S.P. Cost: 3. **Note:** The person/victim does NOT get a saving throw from the vision nor telepathic communicate after initial contact, because the character should welcome the visions as important, helpful and desirable, and psychics, especially Latent Psychics, are likely to believe them to be their own. If the Devil Ghost has revealed its presence, it will be as a mysterious, supernatural friend, angel or even god, or similar “helper” welcomed by the pawns it manipulates. Of course, when taking the guise of a friend and advisor, it will counsel its human contact to keep its presence a secret, and will have any number of plausible reasons for keeping its presence secret even from trusted friends.

Insect-like Movement: Can leap 8 feet (2.4 m) high and 12 feet (3.6 m) across without taking flight, and can climb walls and ceilings like an insect, and even skitter across water.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands, speaks and reads all languages at 98%. As a rule, communicates telepathically, but may also speak in a deep, warm and comforting voice.

Winged Flight (special): The Devil Ghost has wings and can fly at a speed of 72-90 mph (115 to 144 km). May also hover, and flight is muffled and quiet, like that of a bat or moth.

Limited Invulnerability (special): The demon is impervious to heat, cold, poison and disease. Man-made weapons inflict full damage, as do magic, psionics and physical blows.

Also see Psionics.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Though the Devil Ghost can stand and run across the surface of water, the demon cannot swim. If pushed underwater it flounders and drowns after 10 minutes. Fears large bodies of water (anything deeper than nine feet/2.7 m) and tends to avoid them.

2. Vulnerable to all weapons, but heals quickly.

3. The light of day (including the magical Globe of Day-

light) reduces the demon's physical attributes, Hit Points and S.D.C. by half.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Acrobatics (all at 80%), Basic Math 95%, Climb 95%/90%, Escape Artist 80%, Imitate Voices & Sounds 80%, Land Navigation 80%, Lore: Aliens & UFOs 90%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 90%, Lore: Superstitions 90%, Prowl 80%, Seduction 80%, Streetwise 70%, and Tailing 70%. Also see Natural Abilities, above and Psionics and Magic, below.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D8

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Bite: 3D6 damage. Large claws: 2D8 damage plus the usual Supernatural P.S. damage, punch as per Supernatural P.S., typically 2D4 damage on a restrained punch, 4D6 on a full strength punch or 1D4x10 for a power punch (counts as two attacks). Cannot do kick attacks.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +3 to strike, +3 to parry, +6 to dodge, +4 to pull punch/bite, +4 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs psionic attacks, +2 to save vs magic, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, and is impervious to heat, cold, poison, disease, possession and mind control.

Magic: Limited. Spells: Befuddle, Calling, Cloak of Darkness, Lantern Light, Shadow Meld, and one of choice for each level of experience (usually spells that communicate, confuse, deceive or conceal). P.P.E.: P.E. attribute number x3 +2D6 per level of experience.

Psionics: Considered a Master Psychic requiring a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attack. I.S.P.: P.E. attribute number x3 +2D6 per level of experience. Powers: Clairvoyance (6), Electrokinetics (varies), Group Trance (15), Hypnotic Suggestion (6), Meditation (0), Mind Block (4), Precognition (10), Presence Sense (4), Psychic Invisibility (7), Remote Viewing (20), Sense Time (2), Sixth Sense (2), Telepathy (4), and Thought-Reading (10).

Enemies: Dislikes greater powers that make it serve them. Humans are regarded as fools and playthings.

Allies: Few. Typically works alone and even avoids their own kind, but may pretend to work with or serve other, greater supernatural beings and manipulate them and lesser beings as pawns in their own schemes. Obeys Ancient Evil only for fear of punishment and destruction, but even then will work to undermine and cause problems for their masters, behind the scenes.

Habitat: Can be found anywhere throughout the world, in urban or rural settings.



Although fairly intelligent, the Dimensional Ghoul is more mischievous and curious than vindictive or cruel. Unlike the Dybbuk, it has no deep-rooted hatred for mankind. It just likes to eat them after they die. However, one should not assume that they are harmless or a minor danger. The Dimensional Ghoul finds humans strangely curious and likes to observe them and sometimes interact with them. Being a base creature, the Dimensional Ghoul hangs around dilapidated parts of town and seedy places of human habitation (bars, drug houses, slums, and the streets in the worst parts of town). They also enjoy harassing, scaring and hurting humans, roughing them up, and maiming people, especially when the monster feels threatened, cornered, or that its current meal might be taken from it. In fact, a D-Ghoul is at its most dangerous and savage while eating.

In urban settings, the Dimensional Ghoul may wander the streets disguised as a homeless person in search of street people who have recently died or linger at death's door. Unlike Grave Ghouls and other scavengers, the Dimensional Ghoul has no qualms about helping a sick or injured human or animal on the

Dimensional Ghoul

The Dimensional Ghoul is a tall, thin humanoid which, in dim light and at a distance, may be mistaken for a human. A closer look will reveal its long, jagged teeth, sunken eyes, large pointed ears, and sagging, grey skin hanging off a skeletal, thin body. Like all Ghouls, the creature feeds on the flesh of the dead. A true scavenger, it will eat any dead carcass, including animals, but prefers the taste of human flesh above all others.

verge of dying, do so a little faster, or drag them to a hiding place where no one should find them and wait until they pass away. That having been said, the Dimensional Ghoul seldom kills a healthy living creature. Even those who threaten it are fought only enough to chase the human pest away, render the person unconscious or hurt him enough that the human flees or crawls off somewhere. If the D-Ghoul accidentally kills a healthy human or finds a recently deceased individual, it will probably eat a portion (10%) of him on the spot, but like all Ghouls, "fresh meat" is not a very palatable taste, so it will carry or drag the body to its lair or a hiding place and let it rot for a few days before feasting on the corpse. **Note:** Most D-Ghouls like to have a hiding place for their "food" rather than taking a body to their lair, it's safer that way.

The Dimensional Ghoul gets its name because it has the power to move from dimension to dimension at any ley line nexus point. If a practitioner of magic can control it, the D-Ghoul can be commanded to take one living, man-sized creature with it into another dimension or to another ley line location anywhere in the world. The problem with this method of travel is that the process is excruciatingly painful to humans (1D6x10 damage) and the mage loses any mystic control he may have had over the Dimensional Ghoul the moment they reach the new dimension or destination. Of course, there are countless dangers and environmental problems when traveling through dimensions, and even a Dimensional Ghoul under the thrall of a sorcerer has no concern for his well-being. Ley line travel makes the D-Ghoul one of the most mobile of supernatural beings and enables them to visit the site of disasters, war and mass murder where they can strip the bones of the victims in a gluttonous feast.

Dimensional Ghoul — Lesser Demon

Also known as the Tall Ghoul and Ley Line Ghoul.

Alignment: Always Miscreant evil.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+4, M.E. 2D6+12, M.A. 2D6, Supernatural P.S. 1D6+15, P.P. 2D6+12, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 1D6, Spd 2D6+12.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 8; any attack less than 9 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: P.E. attribute number x3.

S.D.C.: 1D8x10

Discorporation: When slain, the body turns into hundreds of squirming maggots that crawl away. Examination of the maggots will show that they are ordinary fly larva that have recently fed upon human flesh.

Threat Level: x4; Scavenger/Predator, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 12

Size: 6-7 feet tall (1.8 to 2.1 m); tall and thin.

Weight: 150-200 lbs (67.5 to 90 kg).

Average Life Span: Uncertain, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: P.E. attribute number x2, +1D6 per level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Feeds on rotting flesh. Supernatural Strength and Endurance, doesn't breathe air, sees the invisible, night-vision 300 feet (91.5 m), normal day vision, resistant to fire and cold (half damage), dimensional teleport 5% (+75% at a ley line nexus), and bio-regenerates 1D6x10 S.D.C. or Hit Points every 24 hours.

Dimensional Travel Through Ley Lines (special): As noted previously, the Dimensional Ghoul can use a ley line nexus to travel to a different dimension or to a new ley line in the same dimension, regardless of distance; +10% to powerful ley line nexus points such as Stonehenge or the Great Pyramid. It takes only 1D6 seconds to reach the new destination. No P.P.E. cost.

Sense Ley Lines: The Ghoul can sense huge amounts of constant Potential Psychic Energy flows indicative of places of power. Range: 150 miles (240 km). No P.P.E. cost.

Temporal Intangibility: To escape the agony of the Dimensional Teleport, the D-Ghoul can momentarily become intangible. It can become intangible for 30 seconds (2 melee rounds) at a time as often as once every two minutes; self only. While intangible, the ugly demon is impervious to all physical attacks, but it cannot retaliate/attack and moves at one third its normal speed. When intangible, it can also walk through walls or drop through the ground to access a coffin, vault, sewer or other underground compartment. P.P.E. Cost: 3.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 78%, but cannot read, though most have figured out what certain words and neon signs like "bar" and "topless" mean. Speaks in a raspy voice.

Limited Invulnerability (special): The demon is resistant to heat and cold (half damage), and is impervious to rot, poison and disease. The light of day and holy symbols have no adverse effect on the D-Ghoul.

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

2. Magic fire inflicts double damage.

3. Dimensional Ghouls cannot swim, sink like a rock, and appear to be limp and dead after one melee round, but don't actually drown for 1D6 hours. Retrieving a D-Ghoul from water before it really dies will instantly revive the demon. Retrieving a dead one causes it to instantly turn into maggots the moment any part of it touches the air. Turns into maggots that disintegrate after 24 hours under water.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Basic Math 65%, Camouflage 55%, Climb 80%/70%, Gambling 55%, Gambling: Dirty Tricks 40%, Imitate Voices & Sounds 45%, Land Navigation 70%, Lore: Cattle & Animals 70%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 70%, Prowl 60%, Streetwise 70%, and Tailing 50%. Also see Natural Abilities.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: Bite: 2D6+2 damage. Claw strike: 2D6 damage plus the usual Supernatural P.S. damage, punch as per Supernatural P.S., typically 1D6 damage on a restrained punch or kick, 2D6 on a full strength punch or kick or 4D6 for a power punch (counts as two attacks). May also use a weapon, favoring knives and other bladed weapons.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +3 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +6 to pull punch/bite, +2 to disarm, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs psionic attack, +3 to save vs magic, +10 to save vs Horror Factor, resistant to cold and heat (half damage), and is impervious to poison, disease, spoiled meat, and possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Finds humans interesting and enjoys watching all types of vice, depravity and cruelty. Humans are regarded as entertainment and food (eats the flesh of the dead and leaves the bones). Grave Ghouls and other supernatural scavengers are considered to be competitors.

Allies: Few, tends to be a solitary scavenger, though may associate with other D-Ghouls and scavengers when food is plentiful. May serve a higher supernatural power or lord of the dead/death, as well as a powerful, human Necromancer. Respects and fears power and is always subservient to beings more powerful than itself. A D-Ghoul may also join forces with another supernatural being (or beings) to extract revenge or to get food, however, Dimensional Ghouls are pretty entrenched in the here and now, and are quick to forget all but the most grievous wrongs inflicted upon them.

Habitat: Can be found anywhere throughout the world, in urban or rural settings, where dead bodies can be had for eating.

Dybbuk – The Demon Ghoul

By Randy McCall and Kevin Siembieda

One of the most horrifying demons of the ancient world is the Dybbuk, “Eater of Flesh.” According to legend, a power mad Necromancer opened a doorway to the Dybbuk world and summoned an army of the savage creatures to destroy his enemies. Unfortunately, he greatly underestimated their power and became their first human victim in a millennium. An untold number of Dybbuk came through the portal before it collapsed and have spread across the world. They have wreaked havoc throughout the centuries, plundering graves, inciting disasters and tormenting the helpless.

The Dybbuk loathe humankind and delight in torturing, tormenting and killing people. Consequently, the Dybbuk frequently work with evil practitioners of magic and malevolent supernatural forces to cause mayhem and inflict agony. Dybbuk are intelligent, cunning and deadly, able to understand human behavior and learn basic skills and use that knowledge to hurt humanity. Despite their wiles, they are extremely intolerant of their own kind and squabble and bicker incessantly whenever two or more are forced together. For this reason, they shun the company of their own race.

The natural form of this demon-ghoul is a massive, barrel-chested humanoid with no neck, a vaguely human, bald head, and a large maw rimmed with a double row of pointed teeth. In place of the arms are a pair of oversized limbs, like those of an ape, thickly muscled, with massive, clawed hands, like shovels, that drag across the ground. These arms are used to dig up the graves of the dead and to rend flesh from large prey. Tucked under them is a second pair of arms. Spindly and delicate, a little shorter than a human's, and half as thick. The hands are small, with long fingers tipped with four inch (10 cm) long, razor sharp claws used to dismember its food and feed itself.

The Dybbuk cannot tolerate the light of day, which completely blinds it and physically hurts (1D8 damage per minute of exposure). As a result, the sinister creatures venture out only at night or rainy, overcast days. A Globe of Daylight spell has the same effect on a Dybbuk as it does a vampire, sending the creature scurrying away in pain and revulsion. Their favorite habitat is city ruins, graveyards, caves, tunnels, mines, subway systems, sewers, slums, parking garages and abandoned buildings. The Dybbuk's favorite food is dead, rancid meat, human or inhuman, consequently, they seldom eat a fresh kill, but stow it someplace for 3-8 days before feasting on it. They may also capture and keep a potential human meal for 1D6+4 days, subjecting their prisoner to all manner of abuse and degradation before finally killing the poor soul and eating the body a few days later. They quietly prowl the streets of the inner city preying on



young revelers partying all night long, street people, prostitutes, junkies, the infirm, old, and lost, but have no qualms about taking on healthy individuals and groups of as many as 6-8 men. Clever and streetwise, the Dybbuk has learned who they can attack with impunity and not create a stir (i.e., derelicts, runaways, prostitutes, junkies and gang members), and who they should not, namely the authorities, public figures and the wealthy.

There is one more aspect about the Dybbuk that makes it frightening and dangerous. The hideous beast can physically inhabit the recently deceased. If the body is not badly damaged and it is less than one hour since the time of death, the Dybbuk can disincorporate itself and enter the corpse and animate it as if it were his own. The perfect disguise for a demon-ghoul, at least until the body begins to rot. See *Natural Abilities* for a complete description.

Dybbuk, the Demon Ghoul – Demonic Servant and Lesser Demon

Also known as the *Death Ghoul, Undead Ghoul and Animator.*

Alignment: Half are Diabolic, and half are Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+6, M.E. 3D6+6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 2D6+18, P.P. 2D6+16, P.E. 2D6+16, P.B. 1D6, Spd 1D6+12.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 12; any attack less than 13 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: 2D4x10

S.D.C.: 1D6x10+100

Disincorporation: When slain, the body turns into a thousand tiny beetles that disperse in every direction and vanish within 1D4 melee rounds as if they never existed.

Average Life Span: 600-1000 years.

Threat Level: x4; Demonic Servant and Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 14 in its natural form or when an animated body is recognized as being an animated corpse, otherwise the animated body has the Physical Beauty attribute it did when the deceased was alive.

Size: 6 to 8 feet (1.8 to 2.4 m) tall.

Weight: 400 to 700 lbs (180-315 kg).

P.P.E.: 6D6 +1D4 per level of experience.

Natural Abilities: Track by smell 85%, leap 10 feet (3 m) high and 15 feet (4.6 m) across (increase by 30% with a running start), nightvision 600 feet (183 m), excellent normal night sight (can see in one sixth the light needed by humans), but blinded by sunlight (-10 to strike, parry and dodge). Artificial light is hard on the Dybbuk's eyes (30 foot/9.1 m range of vision without sunglasses). Can dig through packed dirt or clay at a rate of six feet (1.8 m) per minute, and almost always constructs a network of tunnels in its lair to confuse and escape intruders (Dybbuk love catacombs, labyrinths, mines and sewer systems). Bio-regenerates at a rate of 1D6 per melee round, impervious to cold and normal fire, but magic fire and magic cold do half damage.

Special: Inhabit the Dead: A Dybbuk can physically inhabit the recently deceased, which means some of its victims are carefully slain in such a way as to conceal physical damage and make an excellent disguise. If the body is not badly damaged and it is one hour or less since the time of death, the Dybbuk can disincorporate itself and enter the corpse. Immedi-

ately upon entering it, the corpse comes to life, possessed by the Demon-Ghoul. The memories, skills, personality and essence of the person are all *gone*. The body little more than an empty, lifeless husk that the Dybbuk wears like a suit of clothing. An animated corpse that appears alive and healthy is the perfect disguise to walk among humans, scout out an area, spy upon humans and get close to the monster's next victims. The Dybbuk can maintain the body, without it deteriorating, indefinitely, as long as the monster feeds *daily* on human blood; requires a minimum of three pints. Missing a meal of blood causes the corpse to deteriorate/putrefy one full day. **Note:** Though humans are the Dybbuk's usual choice (97% of the time) for an animated corpse, it may also inhabit and animate the corpse of a recently dead, large canine (70 lbs/31.5 kg or larger), a large wild feline such as a mountain lion, leopard, tiger or other large cat (100 lbs/45 kg or larger), and other large mammals such as a bear or bull, but *never* an animal that is commonly raised for work or eating, like cattle, steers, horses, goats or sheep.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands and speaks all languages at 80%, but cannot read, though most have figured out what certain words, universal symbols and neon signs like "bus stop," "men's room," "telephone," "exit," "bar" and "topless" mean. Speaks in a husky voice.

Limited Invulnerability (special): The Dybbuk is impervious to heat, cold, spoiled food, disease and possession, and is resistant to poison and drugs. Holy symbols have no adverse effect on the Dybbuk but the light of day blinds and pains it.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Sunlight hurts, blinds (-10 on all combat moves) and slowly kills the Dybbuk (1D8 damage per minute).

2. Vulnerable to all weapons, as well as magic and psionic attacks, but the Dybbuk heals quickly. Psionic and magic fire and cold attacks only do half damage, including the Fire Walker's power to Set the Supernatural Ablaze.

3. Vulnerable to the most deadly poisons and massive doses of drugs (triple or quadruple the dose one would give to a human), but even large doses last only half as long as a normal dose would, and each dose of poison does only 20% its normal damage. Other effects and penalties are half that of a normal dose on a human.

4. Tend to be arrogant and underestimate human opponents.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Basic Math 90%, Climb 90%/80%, Find Contraband 60%, Impersonation 80%/60%, Intelligence 70%, Interrogation 65% (+20% in demon form), Prowl 60%, Streetwise 70%, Swim 60%, Tailing 70%, Track Humans 80% (+10% to follow the scent of blood, decay and rotting flesh), and Undercover Ops 65%. In addition, the Dybbuk knows two skills for each level of its experience (Base skill percentage +20% skill bonus only). Make selections from the categories of Communications, Domestic, Espionage, Horsemanship, Paranormal Studies, Rogue, Technical, and Wilderness only.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D6+4

Attacks per Melee: Six in Dybbuk form, four when inhabiting a human corpse.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +2 on Perception Rolls, +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +2 to disarm, +4 to pull punch/bite, +4 to save vs Horror Factor and +4 to save vs magic.

Damage: In human form, punches and kicks do 2D6 damage +P.S. damage bonus and a bite does 1D6 damage.

In demon form, a punch or kick does damage as per Supernatural P.S., typically 2D4 damage on a restrained punch, 3D6 on a full strength punch and 6D6 on a power punch (counts as two attacks), but a claw strike with the large hands does 3D6 damage +Supernatural P.S. damage (6D6 on average, 1D6x10 for a power claw strike), the small arms do 1D6 damage +Supernatural P.S. damage, the Dybbuk's bite does 2D8 damage and a power bite 4D8.

Magic: None.

Psionic: None.

Enemies: Humans are generally regarded as fools, playthings and food. Psychics, especially *Ghost Hunters*, *Fire Walkers*, *Physical Psychics* and *Psychic Sensitives*, are regarded as natural enemies because they can identify their presence and have the power and abilities to track them down and destroy them, but they are targeted for elimination only when the psychic gets too close and when a Dybbuk's master so commands it.

Allies: Aggressive and powerful bullies, a Dybbuk may force one or two Dimensional Ghouls and/or 1D4+3 Grave Ghouls, or other lesser supernatural beings (like a Bogey Man or one or two Nightblood, or a few Hell Hounds) and/or 1D4+3 human stooges/henchmen or demon worshipers to serve it. In turn, the Dybbuk frequently and gladly serve powerful supernatural beings (Greater Demons and Ancient Evil) and powerful Necromancers, practitioners of magic or incredibly evil human masterminds.

Habitat: Anywhere, anytime.

Note: All Dybbuk are mean, vindictive, bloodthirsty creatures who enjoy killing and inflicting suffering.

Entities

An Entity is a supernatural energy being that is invisible to the human eye. Consequently, it is the Entity who has become known as ghosts, spirits, wraiths, specters, and similar non-corporeal apparitions. There are five major types of Entities, each uniquely different from the others. They are the *Poltergeist*, *Haunting Entity*, *Syphon* or Trapped Entity, *Tectonic Entity*, and *Possessing Entity*. All are P.P.E. vampires.

Entity: Poltergeist

The Poltergeist, known as the mischievous spirit, is a wild, wandering, supernatural force with a minuscule intelligence. The odd little energy being flies about looking for a good source of Potential Psychic Energy (P.P.E.) to feed upon. It is especially attracted to ley lines and nexus points and families with children, psychics and practitioners of magic. Once such a place (not just a person) is found, the Poltergeist settles in for the long haul. This is its home, its dwelling place. The Poltergeist(s) is

pretty oblivious to the activities of other life forms who may share its home, and is only interested in the human and/or animal occupants as a source of food and play. Most life forms are viewed as playmates.

Despite what you may be thinking, the Poltergeist's syphoning of P.P.E. from humans is painless and harmless (unless you're a practitioner of magic who needs his P.P.E. for spell casting). One Poltergeist only absorbs 1D4 points of P.P.E. per day, not much to be concerned with, unless there is a group of them *each* taking 1D4 P.P.E. And even if a person were drained of P.P.E., the energy automatically renews itself and most folks (other than sorcerers or Psi-Mechanics) don't use their P.P.E. reserve and don't know it's temporarily gone.

Poltergeists are very rambunctious beings whose idea of fun and play is moving, throwing and hiding physical items. And that's where trouble comes in. The dopey creatures love to play, and who better to play with than those lumbering two-legged, flesh and blood creatures called humans. Furthermore, Poltergeists can drink human emotions (empathy). Intense emotions, such as anger, love and fear are tantalizing to the mischievous spirits, giving them a drug-like euphoric high. It's only a matter of time before these Entities realize that *fear* is the easiest emotion they can evoke in humanoids, so that's the one they try to elicit most often. Humans get scared over the smallest things: banging or pounding in the middle of the night, doors flinging open or closed by themselves, pots and pans flying through the air, and so many other innocuous things that send them screaming and running into the night. Great fun and a buzz too!

When scare tactics don't work, silliness (laughter/humor) is the next best method of evoking strong emotions. Lifting a person into the air, messing up their hair, making utensils dance,



stacking objects, blowing out candles, moving a chair or object to cause someone to fall, etc., are all possible antics from a Poltergeist with a sense of humor.

Understand that despite this mischief, a Poltergeist is not deliberately cruel or sadistic, only stupid, selfish (it wants that buzz) and frisky. Unfortunately, Poltergeists don't understand these alien life-forms called humans and animals. Consequently, while they may not intend to hurt anybody, they may do so by accident. For example, they don't realize that telekinetically hurling cutlery could kill somebody, or that dropping a big tree branch or anvil on top of a person's head could kill him. Thankfully, for the most part, Poltergeists stick to small pranks, like hiding keys, unlocking doors, stealing socks, knocking things over, floating objects through the air, and similar eerie, but harmless tricks and pranks.

There are one or two more bits of bad news about Poltergeists. First, they tend to travel in groups of 2D6, and a nexus point is likely to harbor two or three times more. Second, once they find a nice home (i.e. one with plenty of P.P.E. and people to scare or amuse), they hate to leave.

Getting rid of a Poltergeist is easier than getting rid of most supernatural beings. Exorcisms, magic Protection Circles and Amulets of Protection against the supernatural will send them scurrying away. Spells like Constrain Being, Control and Enslave Entity, Summon Entity, and Banishment are all powerful means of controlling them. Meanwhile, psychic abilities like Spirit Strike, Desiccation Touch and others can hurt and destroy them, while the ability to Commune with Spirits enables the character to talk to them and *perhaps* convince them to leave. Empathic and telepathic communication might also convince the pest to vacate a premises.

Poltergeists – Haunter/Prankster

Alignment: Anarchist (97%) or Miscreant (3%), the latter uses scare tactics only.

Attributes: Not applicable. Low intelligence energy being, with minimal Mental Endurance or Affinity, doesn't understand biological life forms, naturally invisible and intangible themselves and possess a Spd of 44 (30 mph/48 km).

Hit Points: 4D6+10; no S.D.C. and no A.R.; an energy being.

Discorporation: Only people who can see the invisible or spirits can see the Poltergeist to begin with. Their natural state is invisible, and they appear as a sphere of energy about the size of grapefruit to soccer ball size. When destroyed, they simply vanish with a tiny wisp of smoke.

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

Horror Factor: 10

Size: Grapefruit to soccer ball sized energy sphere.

Weight: Not measurable.

Average Life Span: Unknown; possibly immortal.

P.P.E.: 4 of its own, but needs to feed daily and requires an additional four points to feel content and full.

Natural Abilities: Invisible is their natural state, can fly and hover, maximum speed is about 30 mph (48 km). They are also intangible which means they can pass through solid matter (but not through energy), and never tire. Understands all languages at 65%, but doesn't normally communicate with

mortals unless contacted first, and even then only through Commune with Spirits, a Psychic Medium, and similar means.

Vulnerabilities: All magic and psionic attacks. They are impervious to physical attacks, energy, gases, drugs, poison, cold, heat, fire, disease and most everything else that can harm a physical being.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents: Land Navigation 90%. That's it.

Equivalent Level of Experience: Fourth level.

Attacks per Melee: Two, by means of psionics only.

Damage: As per psionic attack or physical object thrown via Telekinesis.

R.C.C. Bonuses: +2 to dodge, +10 to save vs Horror Factor and impervious to possession. Note that attackers who cannot see the invisible are -10 to strike a Poltergeist.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Its own I.S.P. base is a mere 10 points, but the Poltergeist can draw on I.S.P. and P.P.E. of living beings and ambient energy all around it to perform psionic feats. Converts one P.P.E. point into four I.S.P. This means that the Entity has a virtually unlimited amount of I.S.P. when on a ley line, and can draw P.P.E. from the very people who seek to remove or confront the spirit.

Psionic Abilities: Empathic receiver, meaning they automatically feel the emotions of those around them (at no I.S.P. cost), plus See Aura, See the Invisible, Sense Magic (P.P.E.), Levitation and Telekinesis, all at the equivalent of a 4th level Major Psychic.

Enemies: None per se.

Allies: None per se.

Habitat: Anywhere there is an abundance of P.P.E. or I.S.P.

Note: As a psychic vampire, a Poltergeist draws on the I.S.P. of the people around it to perform its psychic feats. If there is no I.S.P. available (or it's used up) the creature can draw on the P.P.E. of people, animals and ambient P.P.E. sources (i.e. ley lines) and convert it into usable I.S.P. (One P.P.E. = four I.S.P.).

A few Poltergeists enter our dimension almost every time a dimensional portal is opened or a natural dimensional Rift occurs at a ley line nexus. They also sneak in whenever a practitioner of magic summons a lesser or greater supernatural being, or when greater beings enter our reality on their own.

Poltergeists are, of course, attracted to ley lines, but, as noted earlier, also to families with children, psychics, and practitioners of magic, all of whom have high Potential Psychic Energy on which the Entity can feed. Vacating a Poltergeist infested location for several months *may* send the hungry little buggers away in search of a new food source, provided there is no other available source of living P.P.E. in the immediate area; 01-35% chance of success. Bulldozing the dwelling and leaving the area increases the ratio for success to 01-79%, but is a rather extreme course of action.



Entity: Haunting

A Haunting Entity is a misguided and confused psychic bloodhound. Although we cannot see it, intelligent life forms leave a psychic impression wherever they have been. Our homes and work places hold the strongest emanations, because that is where we spend most of our time. Generally, the psychic impressions fade or are so weak that they are imperceptible. However, strong emotions, such as intense hatred, love, desire, anger, sorrow and so on, leave a deep, lasting mark, a psychic impression that the Haunting Entity sees and feels in every way. This Entity is like a *psychic sponge* with no identity of its own. It is drawn to the emotions of others, from the past as well as recent, soaks them up and languishes in them.

Since only the strongest emotions are perceivable, the Entity experiences only the most intense, happy, traumatic, painful, or frightful emotions and memories. Little snippets of life gone by.

The Entity finds the very strongest of these emotional events and plays them back over and over again, becoming absorbed in them. This is where trouble can arise, because the Haunting Entity has no individual identity and gets confused by the emotions and experiences of others. Confused to the point that "it" thinks that "it" is the central person of the recorded psychic impression. Locked in the memory of an event from the past, the Haunting Entity becomes a shadow of that person. An intangible apparition of the past. In every sense of the word, a *ghost*.

The Haunting Entity becomes so completely a part of the memory that it believes it is that specific person and re-enacts that fragmented memory endlessly. This is why the same "ghosts" are so often reported to be haunting a particular place and repeating one or two events, sometimes for centuries. This is the ghost who is always seen at the same place sobbing, or the ghost that always appears walking the same forlorn corridor. Haunted places are often inhabited by Poltergeists too, because the ghost radiates the intense emotions the Poltergeists enjoy so much, plus haunted places are often at or near ley lines and human visitors or inhabitants are scared by the "ghost."

Getting rid of a Haunting Entity can be surprisingly easy or incredibly difficult. Since it is bound to that specific person and memory of the past, sometimes it can be *fooled* into leaving. Most ghosts are reliving tragic or personal, painful events. If the present day humans can resolve its (perceived) plight, pain, fear or worry, the Entity is set free of the tumultuous memory that has bound it to that place. Satisfied, it leaves, and once gone from the area, those emotions fade and the Haunting Entity sets out in search for new experiences to live. For example: If a person was murdered, the Entity may not leave until it can be proven that the culprit was captured and punished. Another example might be a case of regret and an unfulfilled promise, like: Dear, sweet Auntie Mildred wanted her favorite niece to have a special token of her affection (a book, a brooch, hand-knitted scarf, or whatever), but Auntie died before she could give it to her. Thus, if the player characters could give the niece Auntie's gift, the ghost would be happy and leave. The elaborateness of the mystery or promise is strictly up to the Game Master. It can be laced with evil and intrigue, or be completely innocent, or soap-opera melodramatic (Auntie Mildred's book is found, presented to the niece and it is discovered to be a rare first edition and its sale saves the family house from foreclosure, or the niece now knows that Auntie forgave her for some past altercation. And so on.)

In some cases there can be *no solution* to get the Entity to leave. This requires a more direct means of removal, such as an Exorcism. While the *Exorcism* has the best chance for success, the ability to *Commune with Spirits*, and certain types of magic may also rid a place of a Haunting Entity. Characters with Psychic Sensitive or Psychic Medium powers are the ideal people to identify, locate and communicate with the Haunting Entity. As usual, the Entity is vulnerable to magic and psychic attacks only, and is certain to defend itself when it falls under attack.

Alignment: Any, varies widely. By nature, this Entity is the closest thing to a true neutral as is possible. It simply wanders the world without a care, desire, hope, dream, aspiration or involvement in anything. We will call it a *Passive Anarchist*. However, once the Haunting Entity is caught in a memory it assumes the identity and alignment of that deceased

individual and that may make the ghost friendly and kind, selfish or evil, aggressive and dangerous. An evil or vengeful persona will compel the Entity to react in kind. It will erroneously see living humans as the targets of its disdain or suffering and attempt to extract its vengeance or inflict its evil on each and every person who dares to invade its domain. This means if the deceased was an axe murderer, so is the ghost. If the memory it has absorbed is filled with hatred, the ghost is hateful, mean and potentially deadly, lashing out at innocent passers-by with cruel intentions. Fortunately, these ghosts always leave hints as to their intentions and motives before attacking.

Ghosts of a good alignment, on the other hand, are not overtly hostile, but may scare the dickens out of a character with its sudden appearances, moans, groans, sobbing, singing, whispering, footsteps, floating objects, an icy touch, and so on. The Entity does not mean to scare anybody, it's just perpetually reliving its imagined life. A good Entity may even be helpful and warn characters of evil forces or impending danger. Of course, since the Entity has no identity of its own (it has been good, evil, and selfish many times before), it simply becomes the person in the psychic memory impression.

Attributes: Not applicable. Low intelligence and little personal identity, equal to an I.Q. 6 and an M.E. 3. Doesn't understand biological life forms, is invisible and intangible itself and possesses a speed of 30 (about 20 mph/32 km) in its ghostly energy form.

Hit Points: 6D6+10; no S.D.C. and no A.R.

Discorporation: Only people who can see the invisible or spirits can see the Haunting Entity to begin with. Their natural state is invisible, and they appear as a sphere of energy about the size of a soccer ball when not assuming the appearance of a deceased individual from the past. When destroyed, they simply vanish with a tiny wisp of smoke.

Threat Level: x4; Haunter.

Horror Factor: 14

Size: A human-size energy being that usually appears as a glittering mist with vaguely human features; i.e. a ghostly apparition.

Weight: Not applicable.

Average Life Span: Unknown, possibly immortal.

P.P.E.: 1D6+4

Natural Abilities: Ethereal and intangible by nature, meaning it can walk through solid matter. Its natural state is invisible, but it can, for brief moments (3D4 minutes), become visible to the human eye either as a semi-transparent ghost image or completely solid and apparently real (via the use of Ectoplasm). The Entity can also hover and fly at a maximum speed of 20 mph (32 km). It is impervious to all physical and energy attacks. Understands all languages at 75% in energy form, but can only speak the language (or two) of the person whose life it is reliving. Normally communicates via Telepathy or through a Psychic Medium, but may also speak aloud when it appears as a "ghost."

Vulnerabilities: All magic and psionic attacks. They are impervious to physical attacks, energy, gases, drugs, poison, cold, heat, fire, disease and most everything else that can harm a physical being.

R.C.C. Skills: None, communicates by means of Telepathy.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+4

Attacks per Melee: Three psionic attacks per melee round.

Damage: By psionics or hurled object or weapon.

R.C.C. Bonuses: +1 to dodge, +3 to save vs magic, +2 to save vs psionic attacks, +10 to save vs Horror Factor, and impervious to possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Base I.S.P. is a mere 30, but the Haunting Entity can draw on the I.S.P. and/or P.P.E. around it to perform psionic feats. This means that the Entity has a virtually unlimited amount of I.S.P. when on a ley line and can draw upon the I.S.P. and P.P.E. of living beings within a 200 foot (61 m) radius of it. P.P.E. conversion to I.S.P. is four I.S.P. for every one P.P.E. point. The Entity may use its own 30 I.S.P. only when it has no choice.

Special: Stealing Psychic Energy: Each attempt to draw on another person's I.S.P. or P.P.E. is considered a psionic attack and the intended victim must roll to save vs psionic attack. A successful roll to save means the Entity did not get the energy it needed and must use its own energy reserve or skip an attack. A failed save means the Entity can steal up to 20 I.S.P. or 5 P.P.E. from that one specific person. The individual temporarily loses the energy points as if he had used psionic powers or cast magic himself. A person who willingly offers his or her I.S.P./P.P.E. does not roll a save vs psionic attack, the energy is automatically stolen; this is often the case with willing humanoid pawns.

Limited Psionic Powers: Empathy (4), Empathic Transmission (described in the Tome Grotesque), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), See the Invisible (4), Total Recall (4), Telepathy (3), Telekinesis (varies) and Ectoplasm (6+). Equal to its level of experience.

Enemies: None per se.

Allies: None per se, but often attracts 1D4 Poltergeists.

Habitat: Anywhere!

Note: The ghostly Haunting Entity must draw ectoplasm from an unwitting human source. On rare occasions the Entity may draw on the powerful emotions of a living person, becoming his or her ghostly clone. These are known as *Haunting Doppelgangers* who follow their human duplicate around, haunting and mimicking his movements, appearing and disappearing randomly. All the usual conditions and abilities of the Haunting Entity apply.

Entity: Syphon

The Syphon is an evil Entity that inhabits inanimate objects. Immediately upon inhabiting an object, the Entity is trapped, forever imprisoned until the item is destroyed. Such creatures inhabiting dead trees and rocks have certainly contributed to legends of foul-tempered "nature and earth spirits." The Syphon is also responsible, in part, for legends of magic amulets, rings and mystic artifacts empowered or possessed by evil spirits and demons. Some practitioners of magic and scholars suspect that some magic items and rune weapons are empowered by a trapped and controlled Syphon Entity.



The Syphon can inhabit any type of non-living matter, except *plastic* and items already imbued with magic, from rings, amulets, and medallions to mirrors, walking sticks, swords, and even toys and automobiles. The object inhabited by the Syphon can only be moved through Levitation, consequently, the most desired objects are small handheld items, especially items of value to humanoids, such as gems, jewelry, and weapons. The Syphon cannot inhabit or control the actions of a functioning or unprogrammed computer or robot, because it is already an *animated* machine with an artificial brain/control unit. Nor can it impart any of its S.D.C. to the object it possesses. **Note:** Cannot affect *prosthetics*, cybernetic and bionic parts either, because they are neurologically linked to living matter.

The trapped Entity lays dormant in a state of suspended animation until the presence of a living creature(s) with sufficient P.P.E. (Potential Psychic Energy) awakens it. Like the Poltergeist, the Syphon feeds off the host creature, requiring 20 P.P.E. to become fully awake and 10 P.P.E. or more every day to remain conscious and alert. However, the Entity is a glutton and will devour as much P.P.E. as is available, sometimes consuming 20 times the required amount. Sadly, such gluttony does not sustain it for more than an extra day and the eternally hungry Entity will need to feed again within 48 hours.

Obviously, being near a ley line or nexus will keep the Syphon active and alert without the need of a living source of P.P.E. But the Entity would rather inhabit a small portable object and be among people where it can create problems and have fun, than at a ley line where it would be constantly aware and fed, but terribly alone and unfulfilled.

Unlike the Poltergeist, the Syphon's intentions are far from playful or innocent. This is a diabolical creature that delights in manipulating, corrupting, and destroying humans. A common practice of the Syphon is to sense a corruptible individual and make telepathic contact. After initial communication has been established, the Entity weaves a fantastic story about being a powerful source of magic or possessing the knowledge/means to acquiring great power, or revenge, or whatever it is the person covets. It plays upon the person's greed, frustration, misery, lust for power, want for revenge, hatred, and love and exploits other weaknesses and desires. In exchange for its aid, the horrid creature often demands regular blood sacrifices to be made in its presence. This way the Syphon can absorb all the doubled P.P.E. of the murdered victim, as well as enjoy the slaying of an innocent person and its contribution to the moral decay of its human pawn. Even though a Syphon may pretend the person who owns the possessed object is a "friend," "partner," or "master," it is the Entity pulling the strings and the cursed thing only sees a dupe and a plaything who the Syphon will try to push to the brink of madness or destruction.

The Syphon is a diabolically cunning creature who is patient and calculating. It does not worry about what will happen when its current pawn is killed or imprisoned, because, sooner or later, there is *always another*. That person may be found an hour, a week or a decade later, it doesn't matter to the Syphon; time has little meaning to this eternal force of evil. When a human host is not available, it simply sleeps.

Although tougher than the Poltergeist, the Syphon is vulnerable to magic and psychic forces. An Exorcism or Banishment will set it free of the object and force the vile Entity to leave the area to find a new object to inhabit. The Syphon Entity must take possession of an object within one hour of being evicted or it is spirited back to its own dimension. In its freed energy form, the Entity is vulnerable to all forms of magic and psionic attack, but is still impervious to physical assaults. Psionic powers are always effective against a Syphon, whether housed inside an object or a free moving energy being. Although destroying the object the Entity inhabits forces it to flee the item and the immediate area (100 feet/30.5 m) to find a new object to call home, the destruction of the physical item does not harm the Entity in any way. However, the owner of the object under the Entity's influence *cannot* force himself to destroy it, that must be at the hands of someone else. **Warning:** The Syphon is far more capable and willing to defend itself than a Poltergeist, and one of its most *prized weapons* is the human pawn(s) under its influence.

Syphon Entity – Haunter and Demonic Prankster

Alignment: Half are Diabolic, the rest are Miscreant.

Attributes: Not applicable. Very cunning, intelligent and ruthless, equal to an I.Q. of 15, but doesn't understand biological life forms. Has a speed of 44 (30 mph/48 km) and is invisible and intangible as an energy being.

Armor Rating (A.R.): Not applicable in energy form, or as per the A.R. of the object that is possessed.

Hit Points: 6D6+10, no S.D.C.

Discorporation: Only people who can see the invisible or spirits can see the Syphon, a grotesque, ghostly insect-like apparition 8-12 inches (20-30.5 cm) tall. When destroyed, they simply vanish in a puff of light and wisp of white smoke.

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

Horror Factor: 10; none when inside an inanimate object unless it has a long history of being cursed or possessed.

Size: 8-12 inches tall (20-30.5 cm) as an energy being, but can inhabit an object as small as a ring and as big as a 50 foot (15 m) statue.

Weight: Not applicable as an energy being.

Average Life Span: Unknown, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: 1D4+3

Natural Abilities: In addition to its psionic powers, a Syphon is able to possess/inhabit non-living objects. Note that this does not enable the Entity to animate or move the object through any means other than Levitation.

In energy form the Entity can hover and fly at a maximum speed of 30 mph (48 km) and is intangible, which means it can pass through solid objects and its natural state is invisible. The Syphon is also a natural telepath, meaning it expends no I.S.P. during telepathic communication. Magically understands all languages at 90%, but cannot read and communicates exclusively through Telepathy.

Vulnerabilities: All magic and psionic attacks, but is impervious to physical attacks, energy, gases, drugs, poison, cold, heat, fire, disease and most everything else that can harm a physical being. Cannot possess or inhabit objects made of plastic, nor magic items or bionic or cybernetic parts, nor robots because they are animated by an artificial intelligence.

R.C.C. Skills: None, communicates by means of Telepathy and Empathy.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+2

Attacks per Melee: Two attacks per melee by psionic means only.

Damage: By psionics or the manipulation of its "owner"/pawn(s).

Bonuses: +2 to dodge as an energy being, +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs psionic attacks, +12 to save vs Horror Factor and is impervious to possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Base I.S.P. is a mere 20 points, but the Syphon can draw on the I.S.P. and/or P.P.E. around it to perform psionic feats. This means that the Entity has a virtually unlimited amount of I.S.P. when on a ley line and can draw P.P.E. from the very people who seek to control, contain or destroy it. P.P.E. conversion is one P.P.E. point = four I.S.P. points. The Syphon uses its own 20 I.S.P. only when it has no choice.

Special: Stealing Psychic Energy: Each attempt to draw on another person's I.S.P. or P.P.E. is considered a psionic attack and the intended victim must roll to save vs psionic attack. A successful roll to save means the Entity did not get the energy it needed and must use its own energy reserve or

skip an attack. A failed save means the Entity can steal up to 20 I.S.P. or 5 P.P.E. from that one specific person. The individual temporarily loses the energy points as if he had used psionic powers or cast magic himself. A person who willingly offers his or her I.S.P./P.P.E. does not roll a save vs psionic attack, the energy is automatically stolen; this is often the case with willing humanoid pawns.

Limited Psionic Powers: Unlimited Telepathy (costs no I.S.P.), Empathy (4), Empathic Transmission (described in *Tome Grotesque*), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), See Aura (6), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2), Levitation (varies), Bio-Manipulation (described in *Tome Grotesque*) and Hypnotic Suggestion (6). All are cast at a strength equal to the creature's level of experience.

Enemies: None per se.

Allies: None per se.

Habitat: Anywhere!

Note: Remember, the Syphon Entity cannot animate or otherwise control the inanimate object it inhabits. Thus, it cannot fire a bullet or make a weapon strike as if it is wielded by a ghost, but it is masterful at manipulating others to do its dirty work for it. If a melee weapon such as a dagger or sword, it may encourage those under its influence to use it to torture and kill.

Entity: Tectonic

One of the most powerful and dangerous Entities is the Tectonic, a wandering energy vampire that, like the Syphon, craves the pain and suffering of humans. As an energy being it has only psychic abilities to rely on. Actually, that's all it really needs because, like all Entities, it can easily draw P.P.E. from living creatures without hurting a soul, but the diabolical monster enjoys hurting and killing mortal beings, including humans and animals. The typical Tectonic Entity invisibly stalks its intended victim(s), then, at the right moment, builds itself a physical body from junk and rubbish, and attacks. It is this ability to *build* a body that gives the creature its name: "tectonic" as pertaining to "construction or building."

The "building Entity" can construct a body from any available inanimate objects and debris. The body can be made of trash (rags, tin cans, plastic, milk cartons, garbage and so on), or twigs and wood, or the bones from skeletal remains, leaves and newspaper, toys, junk, dirt, rocks, and any kind of scraps and debris. All the objects must be *small*, no tables, couches or car fenders, and all must be *nonliving*. To build its body, the Tectonic Entity telekinetically pulls the objects of choice together to build a frightening, massive (usually 10 or 12 feet/3 to 3.6 m tall) humanoid mound of walking debris. The Entity takes pleasure in the tasty emotion of fear that its macabre appearance evokes in most mortals. The terror satiates its demonic pleasure, while the act of killing is both enjoyable and doubles the amount of the P.P.E. available to devour. The artificial construct can be maintained for 24 hours before crumbling into a scrap pile. It cannot *reanimate* the junk or create a new body until 12 hours later.

Normally, the Tectonic Entity can also *inhabit and animate* small humanoid or animal shaped figurines, such as dolls, pup-



pets, statues, and robots. The normal size limitation for pre-made constructs like dolls and suits of armor is that the object can be no smaller than one foot (0.3 m) and no taller than six feet (1.8 m). The animated objects can be vacated at will, but cannot be reanimated for 12 hours after the Entity's departure.

A Tectonic Entity may be used by evil practitioners of magic or greater supernatural beings to breathe life into an infinite variety of monstrous puppets, including the legendary Golem and specially designed bodies. A Tectonic Entity can bring life to a department store mannequin or debris from a junkyard or alley.

Tectonic Entity – Supernatural Predator and Demonic Servant

Also known as the *Builder Entity* and *Junk Monster*.

Alignment: Always Miscreant or Diabolic.

Attributes: Not applicable. Good intelligence, crafty and cruel; equal to an I.Q. 10 or 11. Natural energy form is invisible, intangible, and has a Spd 30 (about 20 mph/32 km). See *S.D.C.* and *Natural Abilities* for the physical body.

Armor Rating: Not applicable, any roll to strike that is five or higher hits and damages the artificial body, but inflicts no pain to the Entity. Destroy the body and the Tectonic Entity vanishes for 12 hours and cannot attack again until after that period.

Hit Points: 2D4x10+20 for the energy form of the Entity itself.

S.D.C. as per Physical Body:

Leaves, Paper, Cardboard and Rags: 100 S.D.C.

Twigs and Wood: 1D4x100 S.D.C.

Plastic, Tin Cans and Rubbish: 2D4x100 S.D.C.

Dirt or Clay: 3D6x100 S.D.C.

Dirt, Rocks and Bricks/Concrete: 4D6x100 S.D.C.

Heavy Debris and Metal: 2D4x1000+100 S.D.C.

Light Debris/Scraps/Wood/Plastic & Other Junk: 1D8x100 S.D.C.

Large Animated Bodies: Like a stuffed doll, puppet, mannequin, stone statue, or suit of armor will have the same S.D.C. as originally designed into them; typically 5D6x10 S.D.C.

Discorporation: When the S.D.C. of the physical body is reduced to zero, whatever is left just falls into a heap of debris. Only people who can see the invisible or spirits can see the Tectonic Entity's energy form, a sphere about the size of a soccer ball. When destroyed, it simply vanishes in a puff of ordinary iron filings that flutter to the ground.

Horror Factor: 14 as an animated monstrosity made of junk.

Threat Level: x6; even though it is a Haunter and Demonic Servant, due to its potentially vast S.D.C. and raw power. One may think of it as a *Greater Entity*.

Size: Can build a body as big as 12 feet (3.6 m) tall and weighing hundreds of pounds, up to about 3 tons depending on the materials used.

Average Life Span: Unknown, probably immortal.

P.P.E.: 10 plus the P.P.E. it absorbs from others.

Natural Abilities: The energy form is impervious to all physical and energy attacks, but is vulnerable to magic and psionics. The energy form can fly and hover at a maximum speed of 20 mph (32 km) and is invisible to the human eye. Magically understands all languages at 65%, but cannot read

and seldom has a mechanism through which it can speak.

Build a Physical Body from Scrap: Can make a body from scrap, junk and debris or inhabit and animate objects such as dolls, puppets, and statues, and bring them to life. The physical body constructed or inhabited by the Tectonic Entity is *not* alive, consequently, it is *impervious* to cold, poison, drugs, gases, pain and so on, though it may burn (depending on what it is made of).

Supernatural P.S. (regardless of size and materials): 1D10+25, *Spd:* 1D10+12 (reduce by half if made predominantly of heavy clay, stone or metal), and does not fatigue or feel pain. Also see S.D.C., above.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Vulnerable to physical weapons and attacks, as well as magic, psionics and fire, depending on the composition of its body, but the thing may have so much S.D.C. that they have minimal effectiveness. Thus, explosives and other methods of inflicting vast damage are most effective against its S.D.C. body. Magic and psionic powers are always effective against the Entity and do full damage to its Tectonic Body and, depending on what it is, may affect the Entity within, provided the spell or power is directed at the invisible creature.

The only way to *stop* this juggernaut is to destroy its artificial body or cast out the Entity within. When the physical body is destroyed, the Tectonic Entity exists only in its invisible energy form and cannot build or inhabit a new body until 12 hours have passed. If destroyed in energy form the Entity is slain! Only those who can see the invisible can see the Entity, though some sensors may also be able to detect its presence and movement. Of course, the energy being is only affected by magic and psionics.

A warning about fire: Remember, the physical body is not alive and doesn't feel pain. Setting it on fire may eventually destroy the body, but until it is completely burnt to a cinder, all that setting it on fire does is turn it into a flame covered monster that's momentarily even more deadly (the fire doing an additional 2D6 damage from punches and setting combustibles on fire). The Tectonic Entity can function without impairment while on fire until all S.D.C. is gone.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Land Navigation 70%, Climb 70%/60%, and Basic Math 70%. Communicates by Empathy or by Telepathy.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+1

Attacks per Melee: Four psionic or physical attacks per melee.

Damage by Body Type: As per Supernatural P.S. 1D10+25, +6 from a body made of wood, dirt, or clay, +8 if made of stone and/or brick, and +12 if made of rock, concrete and/or metal body. May use any weapons that are part of the body or which the Tectonic Body can pick up and handle. **Note:** Typical damage for a Supernatural P.S. of 26-30 is 2D6 damage on a restrained punch, 4D6 on a full strength punch or kick, and 1D4x10 on a power punch (counts as two attacks).

Bonuses (in physical form): +1 on initiative, +2 to strike, parry, and dodge, +2 to pull punch. **Bonuses in both forms:** +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs psionic attack, +10 to save vs Horror Factor and is impervious to possession.

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attack. Base I.S.P. is a mere 20, but it can draw on the I.S.P. and/or P.P.E. around it to perform psionic feats. This means that they have a virtually unlimited amount of I.S.P. when on a ley line. P.P.E. conversion to I.S.P. is four I.S.P. for every one P.P.E. point. The Tectonic Entity will use its own 20 I.S.P. only when it has no choice. Stealing psychic energy from living creatures is the same as the *Syphon Entity*.

Limited Psionic Powers: Empathy (4), Mind Block (4), Presence Sense (4), See the Invisible (4), See Aura (6), Sixth Sense (2), Telekinesis (varies), Telekinetic Leap (8), and Telekinetic Lift (7) performed at a level equal to its experience level.

Enemies: Hates humans and things of beauty.

Allies: None per se, though it may associate with other Entities and willingly serves powerful supernatural beings; grudgingly serves human practitioners of magic.

Habitat: Anywhere, but is thankfully, rare, and almost always has to be summoned to Earth by a third party.

Possessing Entity

The Possessing Entity is generally considered to be the most powerful and dangerous of all the Entities. It is an intelligent and malevolent force that relishes human torment and anguish. Like the other Entities, it is a psychic vampire that feeds on the P.P.E. of its victim and those around it. However, it takes particular pleasure in horrifying and bedeviling the friends and family of the person it possesses.

A successful possession means the Entity has inhabited the body of a living creature and completely dominates that body. The essence and intellect of the original person is completely submerged, dormant, as if asleep, and will have no idea or memory of what the Possessing Entity is doing with his or her body. The hideous thing can commit murder or worse, vacate the body, and leave the innocent character holding a bloody knife, but without any memory of committing a crime.

Similarly, the Possessing Entity can allow the possessed individual to regain his faculties and momentary control without leaving the body, by releasing its domination over its host. The Entity can regain control instantly, at will, and unlike the victim of the possession, the Entity is completely aware of *everything* the individual experiences regardless of which of them is currently in control. A favorite ploy of a Possessing Entity is to relinquish its control long enough to convince the victim and those around him that he is insane – a psychopath or multiple personality – and then abandon him in search of a new playmate, or continue to bring tragedy and turmoil to the poor soul and those trying to help him. Many evil Entities play this charade out until it has pushed things so far that the host is imprisoned, committed to an insane asylum, or is killed. Only then will it drop its charade and let those around it know of its true identity/presence (who's going to believe them?) or simply leave. Some continue to control and manipulate their victim even in a prison or hospital situation, though such environments quickly become boring for it (limited options for mayhem).

Getting rid of a Possessing Entity is extremely difficult. Only Exorcism has any chance of success. Banishment, Control or

Summon Entities, and all the rest are ineffective. Of course, one can always try to *talk* the damned thing out, but that seldom works. Psychic Exorcism and other psionic powers can be used to attack the Entity *itself*, but will definitely provoke the creature to violence. The incapacitation of the host body through drugs or other means for long durations (1D6 months) may entice the Possessing Entity to leave in search of a more fun host body. Killing the host body always sets the Entity free, but doesn't do much good for the victim.

Possessing Entity – Haunter/Prankster and Demon

Alignment: Aberrant (15%), Miscreant (40%) and Diabolic (45%).

Attributes: Not applicable to the Entity in energy form, although it is extremely intelligent, cunning and treacherous, and has an I.Q. of 1D4+16. Its natural state is invisible and intangible in energy form with a speed of 50 (35 mph/56 km). Otherwise, the Possessing Entity has the physical attributes of the host body it controls – though *not* the skills or memory of that individual, and its control of the body gives it Supernatural P.S.

Armor Rating: Not applicable for humans.

Hit Points: 2D6x10+40 for the Entity itself, Hit Points of the host body are per that individual.

S.D.C.: As per the victim/host body, not the Entity.

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

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

Horror Factor: 11

P.P.E.: 1D4+2

Size: About the size of a basketball.

Weight: Not applicable to energy beings.

Natural Abilities: In energy form the Possessing Entity can hover and fly at a speed of 35 mph (56 km), its natural state is invisible and it is impervious to physical and energy attacks.

Possession (special): The ability to seize control. Potential victims roll to save vs Possession and need a 13 or higher (plus bonuses if any). A failed roll means the victim is possessed! Successful possession gives the Entity complete control over the body and turns the body's P.S. into Supernatural P.S. to be used when needed. Additional details on Possession, including possession by an Ancient Evil or Alien Intelligence, will be addressed in the **Tome Grotesque**.

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

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

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

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Basic Math 85%, Dance 70%, Escape Artist 60%,

Find Contraband 60%, Gambling 70%, Gambling: Dirty Tricks 55%, I.D. Undercover Agent 50%, Land Navigation 70%, Seduction 60%, Streetwise 55%, and understands all languages 90%, but cannot read. May also use psionics to compensate.

Equivalent Level of Experience; 1D6+2

Attacks per Melee: Four physical attacks per melee round in a host body or two psionic attacks (being locked in the physical form impairs its psychic abilities; has four psionic attacks in energy form).

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

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

Magic: None.

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

Limited Psionic Powers: Empathy (at no I.S.P. cost), Death Trance (1), Empathic Transmission (described in *Tome Grotesque*), Bio-Manipulation (described in *Tome Grotesque*), Impervious to Fire (4), Levitation (varies), Mind Block (4), Sixth Sense (2), See the Invisible (4), Telekinesis (varies), and Telepathy (4). Equal to the Entity's level of experience.

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

Allies: None per se, typically a loner.

Habitat: Anywhere. Thankfully, Possessing Entities are rare (the least common of all Entities) and usually require being summoned to Earth by evil sorcerers, demonic lords or evil gods.

Grave Ghouls

The Classic Ghoul

Grave robbing demons who eat the flesh of the dead are known as Ghouls, and have appeared in the legends of all people around the world. They are ugly, human-size creatures who resemble walking, skeletal corpses. Grave Ghouls are unaffiliated with any specific demonic realm or race, and see other types of Ghouls and scavengers as rivals to trick and rob. Grave Ghouls are ugly, human-size creatures who resemble walking, skeletal corpses. As one might expect, they are frequently found in large, old cemeteries near ley lines and in the slums and sewers of large metropolitan areas. Grave Ghouls seldom stray far from a ley line or comfortable hiding place, and unlike the other scavengers, are a cowardly lot who simply wish to be left alone to dine on the remains of the dead.

When discovered, they hiss and growl menacingly, and even throw bones or a skull. If that does not seem to frighten away in-



truders, they try to escape by fleeing into the shadows and burrowing into the earth. Grave Ghouls fight only when cornered and when they outnumber an opponent by at least three to one. A single Ghoul might attack a child under the age of fourteen, but would do so only out of spite or anger, and then only do enough to chase the kid away. Grave Ghouls hate “fresh flesh,” so they never actively engage in murder, or mutilate any corpse less than a few months old.

Grave Ghouls always travel in groups of 2-8, but even with four pairs they are shameless cowards. However, if an individual or group of humans exhibits genuine terror and flees screaming, the Grave Ghouls will give chase, hooting and howling just for the malicious fun of it. Even then, they rarely make a concerted effort to actually catch the individual for fear that he might fight back and hurt one of them. Don’t be fooled, however, a cornered Grave Ghoul will fight with the ferocity of a tiger.

Grave Ghoul – Supernatural Predator/Scavenger

Alignments: Anarchist (50%), Miscreant (30%) or Diabolic (20%).

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+3, M.E. 1D6, M.A. 1D6, Supernatural P.S. 1D6+14, P.P. 2D6+6, P.E. 2D6+9, P.B. 1D4, Spd 3D6+9.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 6; any attack less than 7 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: 1D6x10

S.D.C.: 1D4x10

Discorporation: When slain, a dead Grave Ghoul looks exactly like an exhumed human corpse and tests will show nothing

out of the ordinary. When slain by magic, the Grave Ghoul’s body turns into a small pile of (1D4x10) ordinary worms that work their way into the ground within 1D6 minutes.

Threat Level: x4, Supernatural Predator/scavenger, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 12

Size: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m).

Weight: About 125 lbs (56 kg).

Average Life Span: Immortal, until destroyed.

P.P.E.: 1D6

Natural Abilities: Nocturnal carrion eaters, they avoid the light of day. Nightvision 200 feet (61 m), partially blinded by daylight or bright artificial light (-8 to strike, parry, and dodge), do not need air to breathe.

Special: Burrowing Ability: Can dig into dirt and clay at a rate of ten feet (3 m) per minute. Do not breathe, prowl 68%, and have the innate magic ability to Shadow Meld (equal to a 10th level spell).

Special: Sense Night & Day: Even deep underground, the shy Grave Ghoul can sense when it is daytime and when it is night. Though the sun does not hurt them, Grave Ghouls only come out under the cover of night. They are seen during the day only when their underground sleeping place has been disturbed.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands all languages at 70%, but cannot speak a word nor read; growl, moan, hiss and howl.

Limited Invulnerability (special): Grave Ghouls are impervious to heat, cold, poison, drugs, gases, spoiled food, disease and most manmade weapons, bullets and physical weapons.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Dislikes the light of day and are partially blinded without protection for the eyes (simple sunglasses will do); -8 to strike and all other combat moves.

2. Fire and weapons made of bone inflict *double damage*, and all types of magic have full effect, as do most psionic attacks.

3. Exorcism, Banishment, Constrain Being, and Summon Lesser Being, are all excellent means of controlling or discharging the cowardly beings.

4. During the day, they sleep underground, in the dirt, and often access coffins from underground. They are compelled to walk on the surface during the night of a full moon. On that night the Grave Ghouls cannot take refuge underground until the first light of day. This night is often used by Ghost Hunters and other exterminators of supernatural menaces as a time to hunt and destroy the repugnant creatures.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Camouflage 75% (used to hide themselves and stolen corpses for consumption later), Carpentry 70%, Escape Artist 55%, Excavation 65%, Land Navigation 85% (above and below ground) and Masonry 65%.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+1

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: Claw/punch or kick does 2D6 damage, so does a bite. Will, occasionally, pick up and use an available weapon, but never carry weapons or magic of any kind on them.

R.C.C. Bonuses: +1 to parry, +2 to dodge, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, and +1 on all saving throws.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Humans and most other non-supernatural life forms.

Allies: None per se, may associate with other supernatural beings and scavengers and will obey beings who are more powerful than they, particularly Greater Demons and Ancient Evil, but also powerful Necromancers.

Habitat: Anywhere near a ley line as well as graveyards, tunnel networks or catacombs.



Gremlins, Techno-Terrors

Gremlins are wicked pranksters with a cruel streak a mile wide. The creature stands about two feet (0.6 m) tall, has a pot-belly, hairy legs and arms, pointed ears, slanted, red eyes, large clawed feet, and an oversized, sneering mouth with jagged teeth. They are fairly weak in hand to hand combat and always flee when confronted with an opponent(s) who is more powerful or dangerous than they.

The Gremlin has only a handful of significant psychic abilities, but they use them to their maximum potential for destruction and evil. They also have an uncanny, natural mechanical aptitude the little demons use to *sabotage* electrical and mechanical devices with the intent of causing trouble, destruction and death, ideally en masse. Gremlins delight in scaring people, creating trouble and causing humans to suffer and die. They think it is great fun to cross wires, short-circuit electrical systems, deactivate warning systems, tamper with a vehicle's brakes, cause mechanical failures of all kinds (large and small, often in a progressive sequence), knockout electrical service, deactivate or jam weapon systems, start fires, and vandalize.

Timing is everything if one wants to create a truly excellent fright or disaster. This means the Gremlins' best work (or worst, depending on your outlook) is causing a mechanical failure or malfunction that causes a vehicle or aircraft to crash into a building or crowd, or gasoline tanker, and so on, creating a chain reaction of mounting disaster, injury and death. In fact, they are masters of starting a domino effect that just gets worse and worse, delighting in the glee that all they did was set the spark to get it all crashing down. Furthermore, as long as an opportunity presents itself, Gremlins will cause trouble and mayhem at the same location as long as they feel they won't get caught and there is enough mischief to keep them amused. They can be a nightmare of trouble especially in high-tech cities and industry. (**An aside:** You'll note I've been referring to *Gremlins* in the plural. That's because they typically operate in pairs or small groups of 3-6, which makes them all the more dangerous.)

Gremlins – Pranksters and Lesser Demons

Alignment: Half are Diabolic, the other half Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+5, M.E. 2D6+5, M.A. 1D6+4, P.S. 1D6+2, P.P. 2D6+5, P.E. 1D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd 2D6.

Armor Rating (A.R.): 6; any attack less than 7 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: 4D6 plus P.E. attribute number.

S.D.C.: 1D4x10

Discorporation: When slain, the Gremlin's body vanishes in a shower of electrical sparks and hot ash.

Threat Level: x4; Prankster, a Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 10

Size: 2 feet (0.6 m) tall,

Weight: 20-30 pounds (9 to 13.5 kg).

Average Life Span: 500 years.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Natural Abilities: Nightvision 100 feet (30.5 m), do not need air to breathe, can leap six feet (1.8 m) high and 10 feet (3 m) across, ambidextrous, and bio-regenerate 1D6 S.D.C. or Hit Points per hour.

Uncanny Mechanical Aptitude (special): Enables the malicious fiends to understand, operate and tinker with machines equal to a 50% Mechanical Engineering and Electrical Engineering skill proficiency and with an innate understanding of machines and electronics. Repairs (or sabotage) are implemented in half the usual time and they understand schematics at a glance.

Knows All Languages: Magically understands, speaks and reads all languages at 85%. However, the conversation usually pertains to questions and comments about machinery, mechanics, electronics, sabotage, how stupid humans are, and their evil tricks and triumphs (all remembered and retold in excruciating detail).

Also see *Psionics*.

Vulnerabilities: 1. Copper. Weapons made of or plated in copper inflict double damage, and if bound in copper wire, the Gremlin cannot escape.

2. Their guile and arrogance often compels them to overstay their welcome and underestimate human beings.

3. Curiosity about machines can lure them into traps and trouble.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not improve with experience): Automotive Mechanics 80%, Basic Math 88%, Basic Electronics 90%, Climb 80%/70%, Computer Operation 90%, Computer Programming 70%, Computer Repair/Sabotage 65%, Computer Hacking 55%, Electronic Countermeasures 60%, Find Contraband 65%, General Repair & Maintenance 80%, Jury Rig 70%, Locksmith 65%, Prowl 60%, Salvage 70%, Sensory Equipment 75%, Weapon Systems 55%, and can pilot *any* vehicle at 82% proficiency. **Note:** All skills suffer a -40% penalty when dealing with Psi-Mechanic devices and don't know how to sabotage magic items.

Equivalent Level of Experience: 1D4+3

Attacks per Melee: Four physical or psionic attacks per melee.

Damage: Restrained punch or kick: 1D6, claw attack: 1D6+4, bite: 1D6 damage, or by weapon, including guns.

R.C.C. Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative, +4 to Perception Rolls involving machines, mechanics, electronics, traps and sabotage, +2 to dodge, +6 to save vs Horror Factor and possession, and are impervious to drugs, poisons, gases, and electricity (it tickles).

Magic: None.

Psionics: Needs a 12 or higher to save vs psionic attacks. I.S.P. 1D6x10+20.

Limited Psi-Powers: Levitation, Electrokinetics, Machine Activation (5), Machine Diagnosis (5), Open Lock (6), Telemechanics (10), Telemechanic Mental Operation (12), Telemechanic Paralysis (20) and Thoughtography (5).

Enemies: Any beings who use machinery are playthings and targets for Gremlins, with humans at the top of the list.

Allies: May join forces with other wicked supernatural beings or evil practitioners of magic. Often summoned and commanded by supernatural beings more powerful than they, as well as maniacal and evil humans who summon them or appeal to the malicious little demons.

Habitat: Anywhere there are machines, people and trouble to be made; the more technology, the better. They are typically summoned to serve a human mage or demonic power, but 1D4 may also slip into our world whenever a dimensional portal is opened.

Hell Hounds

Earth myth is rife with tales of *monstrous dogs* and *demonic hounds* of Hell. These so-called "Hell Hounds" or "Devil Dogs" are actually weird, shape-changing creatures who try to assume the form of a wild dog. However, like the Boschala, these strange beings do not fully understand the physiology of Earth animals and often assume a twisted and grotesque appearance which can only be described as a monstrous resemblance to canines. The creatures usually have four legs, a tail, a hideous, gnarled or deformed body and demonic canine head with a huge maw (sometimes the head is insect-like).

England and Scotland, in particular, have had a long history of spectral dog packs, and demon hounds, the most famous of which is probably the *Headless Hounds of Dartmoor*, but the aboriginal people of Australia, as well as other countries, also speak of demonic hounds. Hell Hounds always run in packs of

four or more (roll 4D4 dice) and hunt only at night. At the first light of day the hideous mockeries of nature fade away, giving credence to the belief that they are ghostly apparitions. In reality, sunlight transforms the weird beasts into their natural form as invisible energy beings. In their energy form they have no powers to use against humans and float around aimlessly or hole up in an abandoned building, sewer or cave. At night they can again assume physical form and canine shape to stalk humans and prey upon dogs, cats and other "friends of man." The hounds may also slaughter cattle, chickens and other domesticated animals just for fun. Hell Hounds are natural predators with animal intelligence and instincts, with a lust for blood – man-eaters. The demon dogs attack humans simply because they are easy prey and are hated by all demons. What makes Hell Hounds even more dangerous is that the demon is territorial (roams a 50 mile/80 km range it considers "its" territory) and are hyperactive, irritable and aggressive in the extreme, attacking with the slightest provocation and for the sheer pleasure. They are often summoned and controlled by intelligent Demonic Servants and Ancient Evil, as well as the human minions of these greater beings.

Hell Hound – Supernatural Predator, Lesser Demon

Alignment: 40% are Miscreant, 60% are Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. High animal intelligence about equal to a real dog's, M.E. 2D6, M.A. 1D6, Supernatural P.S. 2D6+14, P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 1D6, Spd 4D6+32 (25-30 mph/40 to 48 km).

Armor Rating: 8; any attack less than 9 does no damage even if it hits.

Hit Points: 6D6 +P.E. attribute number.

S.D.C.: 1D4x10

Discorporation: When slain, a Hell Hound turns into a small sphere of light that rises into the air and then pops, like a bubble, and is gone without a trace.

Threat Level: x4; Supernatural Predator, Lesser Demon.

Horror Factor: 16 for the pack, but only 11 when facing a single hound.

Size: About the size of a German Shepherd, coyote or wolf.

Weight: 50-100 pounds (22.5 to 45 kg).

Average Life Span: Immortal until destroyed.

P.P.E.: 2D6

Natural Abilities: Supernatural P.S. and P.E.; never tires. Track by smell 70% (+15% to follow a blood or death scent), keen nightvision 400 feet (122 m), can leap 15 feet (4.6 m) high and 30 feet (9.1 m) across (increase by 50% with a running start), impervious to fire (even magic fire), and bio-regenerates 1D6 S.D.C. and Hit Points per hour. Completely regenerates lost limbs and eyes within 72 hours. In energy form, the Hell Hound becomes docile and is ethereal which means they can pass through solid matter like a ghost (can be contained in certain crystals and magic circles, however).

Vulnerabilities: 1. Impervious to normal man-made weapons, but weapons made of or coated with silver inflict full damage, as do magic weapons, spells and most psionic abilities.

2. Vanish in the daytime, only appear at night.

3. When cornered, hurt or angry, and when commanded to do so by its master, a Hell Hound will fight to the death.

R.C.C. Skills or Equivalents (do not increase with experience): Detect Ambush 50%, Dowsing (water) 70%, Identify Plants & Fruits 75%, Land Navigation 90%, Track Humanoids 80%, and Swim 60%.

Average Level of Experience: Not really applicable.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Bite inflicts 2D6 damage, claws 1D8 damage, a leap attack does 1D8 damage and has a 01-60% chance of knocking a man-sized opponent down (the victim loses initiative and one melee attack).

Bonuses (in addition to attributes): +1 on initiative and Perception Rolls, +3 to strike and dodge, +1 to disarm, +2 to pull punch/bite, +2 to roll with impact, +10 to save vs Horror Factor, impervious to fire (and does not fear it), spoiled food, and disease, and is resistant to cold (half damage).

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Humans and animals that serve humans, all of whom they see as prey, and the enemies of their masters.

Allies: Hell Hounds can be summoned and controlled by practitioners of magic and powerful supernatural beings. Evil mages, cultists and supernatural beings often keep Hell Hounds as pets, attack dogs and guardians for their lairs and secret sanctums. As attack dogs, the Hounds may be sent out to track and slay specified enemies. Occasionally used in blood sport/dog fights.

Habitat: May appear anywhere they are summoned, but are also common to certain places in the world, including the British Isles, Australia, China, Africa, Mexico and remote parts of northern Canada. Always hunt in a pack of 4D4.



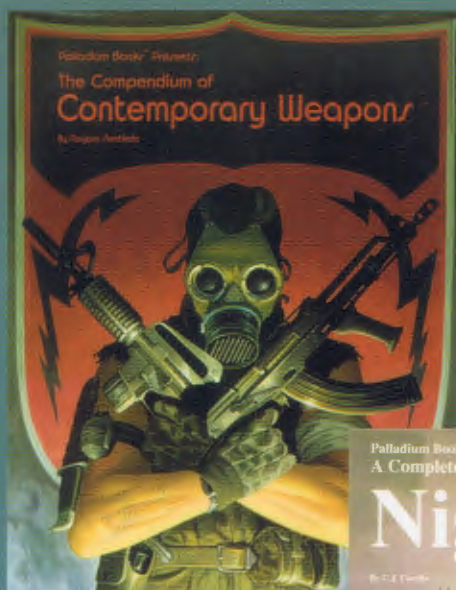
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