

MONGOOSE PUBLISHING PRESENTS

56

Signs & Portents

A Call To Arms

2 Campaigns and the Gaim Intelligence Fleet List

Ichthus of the Nazanene

The fourth and final chapter of Ichthus of Life

The Meregahn

A sample Elic cult to wet your appetite in advance of
Cults of the Young Kingdoms

Plus. . . The making of Dara Happa, Alpha Complex slang, New forces for Battlefield Evolution
World At War, Cthulhutech spells and much, much more!

Signs & Portents 56

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What is it about dogs that make us all smile? This month in the studio we have been honoured by the presence of Milo: life companion of Nick the Greek, one time “Editor” of Signs and Portents and as we have recently discovered, the key to a thoroughly productive Mongoose Studio.

The little scamp has been welcoming visitors, chasing a ball back and forth and administering healing snuggles whenever the pressures of the publishing world have begun to get us down. Couple that with the fact that he makes us all laugh out loud by howling every time he hears a siren and I think you will agree that he is the perfect office mascot.

One day Milo even got a friend for the day in the shape of Matthew’s “not a poodle” Daisy, however he seemed suitably unimpressed by the fact that Daisy would rather cry than play! Although she did make the effort with me by sitting on my lap for most of the day, though it did set off my allergies!

Unfortunately as I have discovered in the later part of this month, Milo is not representative of the dog population in general. I have been house sitting for my mother whilst she enjoys a cruise (alright for some) and looking after her dogs, one of which is very young, and the other being so old that he has to wear a coat all of the time due to having no remaining fur and he needs his food liquidised... don’t even start me on how long it takes just to walk him 100 yards down the road!

Anyhow on my first night of said torture, being in my mother’s very creeky and scary cottage alone, in a moment of weakness I let the younger dog’s puppy dog eyes win me over and allowed him to sleep on the bed with me. Here’s Helpful Hint Number 1... when a dog refuses to pee before bed... DO NOT let them sleep with you! I woke in the night to find the duvet rather moist. Helpful Hint Number 2... when you are unlucky enough to experience such a trauma at 3am, DO NOT yell at the dog for this results in them becoming very nervous, and what does a dog do when it is nervous... pees itself some more... as it runs along... down two flights of stairs and through three rooms and two hallways! Helpful Hint Number 3... when there is a dog in the house always have spare duvets, lots of disinfectant cleaning products and a very powerful shower!...

Have a good month everyone!

Please note for the sake of my pride that the dog pee did not actually get me or the mattress ... however I did shower five times in the following hour... just in case.

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Convention and Events Diary

Mongoose Hall 08. Croft Sports Centre,
Swindon, UK.
Sunday 11th May 2008.
<http://www.mongoosepublishing.com>

Tentacles 2008. Castle Stahleck, Bacharach, Germany.
Friday 9th - Monday 12th May 2008.
<http://www.tentacles-convention.de/>

UK Games Expo 2008. The Clarendon Suites, Stirling
Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham, UK.
Saturday 31st May - Sunday 1st June 2008.
<http://www.ukgamesexpo.co.uk>

Q-Con XV. Queen's University Belfast Students' Union
Friday 27th - Sunday 29th June 2008
www.q-con.org.uk

Continuum 2008. John Foster Hall [also known as New Hall],
Leicester University. UK.
Friday 1st - Monday 4th August 2008.
<http://www.continuum.uk.net>

Gen Con UK 2008. University of Reading, Berkshire. UK.
Thursday 28th - Sunday 31st August 2008.
<http://www.horsemenevents.com/>

Game '08. New Century House, Manchester, UK.
Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd November 2008.
<http://www.game08.eu/>

An Introduction to Traveller: 760 Patrons

By Bryan Steele

The universe of *Traveller* contains a million to the millionth power of souls, each one living its own life in its corner of the galaxy. There are aliens, extra-dimensional beings, time travellers and just your neighbourhood drunk that likes to talk too much. There are possibilities of encounter beyond your imagination and each one can bring an interesting and unique facet to a *Traveller* gaming session.

Throughout a normal *Traveller* character's life he will meet countless numbers of these people, some of which will leave their own influence upon the character forever. They could be a future ally or a steadfast enemy but they each bring something different to the table and add to the overall story. Coming up with how these individuals can meet up with characters in a gaming session used to be daunting for a Referee – but not anymore.

Traveller: 760 Patrons is paying homage to an earlier *Traveller* product that added an interesting random element to the *Traveller* gaming system by offering 76 random job opportunities to characters through a few off-hand die rolls.

Our book contains quite literally **ten times** more opportunities for action, adventure and social interaction. Unlike its predecessor however, this book does not merely contain job opportunities within its pages.

Through a series of random die rolls based upon the interacting characters, the Referee can bring one of 760 different individuals into their sessions. Each of these interactions brings its own brand of villainy, heroism or opportunity to the game. There are antagonistic and protagonist 'patrons' for nineteen different categories of character; opening many situations that these characters may never have thought about before.

From the most innocent of run ins with a starport vagabond looking to beg a ride to the most sinister of cyber-pirates in search of combat implants to poach – *Traveller: 760 Patrons* can bring them to your own game sessions. Maybe that entertainer character of yours has just met with a powerful media reporter; could it be that he wants to make or break the characters' career? Which Star Marine out there would not want

to pal around with a veteran of a dozen insertions? Or is it that he wants the characters to join him on his next one?

What will your characters do when confronted by someone who claims and honestly believes himself to be an *angel*?

A lesser product would perhaps only give 152 possibilities, maybe even 228...but not Mongoose. We have dropped 760 options between these two covers and we know that each and every one will find its way into some *Traveller* game out there somewhere...

...maybe even yours!

Campaigns of Terror

A Variant Campaign for two Players

By Matthew Sprange

The current campaign system of A Call to Arms features huge clashes between empires, massive battle fleets preparing to go toe-to-toe with the latest technologies and the most fearsome weapons. While this is pretty exciting stuff, such clashes are not altogether common in the galaxy of Babylon 5 (though there was certainly a lot of action in the years covered by the TV series) and most conflicts are altogether of a lower key.

Campaigns of Terror depicts an altogether different type of confrontation, one where a small raiding force has entered a hostile system and is matched against a vastly superior force. Using their guile and skill, the invaders must disrupt the defender's operations as much as possible, before withdrawing with their forces more or less intact.

This type of campaign is perfect for players with a fleet of Raiders but it can also be used to reflect the actions of a team of Rangers deep inside Centauri space, League forces in a system dominated by the Shadows, the Earth Alliance against the Minbari or any one of a dozen other conflicts.

Waging a Campaign of Terror

This variation of the campaign rules is for two players. One will play as the invading force while the other plays the defender.

The goal of the Raiders is simply to amass as much wealth as possible before being forced out of the system. His opponent will be trying to eradicate all pirate activity from the system before too much damage is done to his shipping and trade. In order to do this, he will have to locate the Raider's hidden base and destroy it.

The Raiders Campaign follows all the normal rules for campaigns as detailed in the main rulebook. Where changes are necessary, they are listed below.

Beginning the Campaign

The Raiders player must choose the type of system in which he is launching his attacks. This will determine what he has to achieve in order to win the campaign and the type of forces he will be facing. The choices are listed below.

Frontier System: With just a small military presence, the pickings will be easy here but slight.

Civilised: A perfect balance of risk against reward.

Core World: Only a brave or foolhardy Raiders captain would dare to launch a campaign against the core worlds of an empire.

There will be 10 Strategic Targets in the system. One will automatically be a Settled World, as normal, while the others are generated randomly.



Once the system has been generated, the Raiders player secretly notes down one Strategic Target where his hidden base will be located. This may not be on a Settled World.

Defending Fleet

The defending fleet starts the game with 10 Fleet Allocation Points. These will be at Raid level in a Frontier system, Battle level in a Civilised system and War level in a Core World. The defending player is free to make any choices from his fleet list as normal.

Raiders Fleet

The Raiders player starts with 1 Fleet Allocation Point at Raid level – yes that is all! He might choose to have a powerful Battlewagon right at the beginning or a couple of Strike Carriers or maybe a Strike Carrier and some supporting fighters. Even this level of fleet represents an already successful Raiders captain.

Fighting the Raiders

The defending player enjoys certain advantages in this campaign, beyond having a vastly superior fleet. This is, after all, his own system and he can count on the help and support of its inhabitants who are suffering from constant Raiders activity.

He begins the game automatically controlling the Settled World as a Strategic Target. At the end of every campaign turn, he will automatically claim ownership of one more Strategic Target. This represents his fleet's forward forces spreading throughout the system, seeking for any trace of Raiders activity and securing valuable strategic objectives. The Raiders are powerless to stop this and their opponent's domination of the entire system is inevitable, given time.



The Campaign Turn

During the Raiders Campaign, the campaign turn proceeds as normal but for the following changes.

Initiative

The Raiders player will automatically win the Initiative in the first turn and every turn thereafter in which he has not lost a battle in the turn before. The Raiders fleet is small and fast, forced to live by the wits of its captain and able to disappear before a major military force responds to distress calls.

If the Raiders player loses a battle, he will still gain a +2 bonus to his initiative in the next turn, so long as his secret base has not been discovered.

Select Targets

If the Raiders player wins the initiative, he may select any Strategic Target he wishes. This will be the main target for his pirating in this turn. He must also select one of the following tactics – these will determine the type of scenario plaid and the opposition faced.

All-Out Assault: You own the system and are determined to prove it! By tweaking the

lion's tail, you hope to teach the military that you are here to stay and earn the highest profits.

Business as Usual: By selecting targets that promise high reward, you take risks but not foolish ones.

Softly, Softly: Cautious to the maximum, you will avoid trouble where you can, picking only on the weakest of targets. Income will be lower but you will likely meet far less trouble.

If the defending player wins the initiative, he selects one Strategic Target in order to locate the hidden Raiders base.

If he does not own this Strategic Target, he will discover the Raider's base (if, indeed, it is actually there!) by rolling one dice and scoring a 5 or 6. If he does own the Strategic Target, he need only roll a 4 or more. He may increase his chances of discovering the base by using one less Fleet Allocation Point in the next battle as he diverts more forces for the search. This will grant him a +1 bonus to the dice roll. If the defending player is successful in his search, consult the Raiders Secret Base section below.

Generate Scenario

All battles in a Campaign of Terror are fought at Raid level and the Raiders player may always choose to use his entire fleet, though he is not required to do so.

The Fleet Allocation Points used by the defending player can vary greatly, depending on what tactics the Raiders player has chosen and what type of system he is fighting in. Roll on the table below to determine how many Fleet Allocation Points the defending player may use, applying the appropriate modifiers.

2d6	Fleet Allocation Points
5 or less	1
6	2
7	3
8	4
9 or more	5

Frontier System	-2
Civilised System	+0
Core World	+2
All-Out Assault Tactics	+1
Business as Usual Tactics	+0
Softly, Softly Tactics	-1
Defender has three Strategic Targets	+1
Defender has six Strategic Targets	+2
Defender has nine Strategic Targets	+3

If the Raiders base has not been discovered, a scenario is generated using the tables below, again dependant on the tactics the Raiders player has chosen.

All-Out Assault

1d6	Scenario
1	Ambush
2	Annihilation
3	Assassination
4	Blockade
5	Call to Arms
6	Space Superiority

Business as Usual

1d6	Scenario
1	Ambush
2	Blockade
3	Convoy Duty
4	Flee to the Jump Gate
5	Recon Run
6	Supply Ships



Softly, Softly *

1d6	Scenario
1	Ambush
2	Assassination
3	Blockade
4	Convoy Duty
5	Convoy Duty
6	Rescue

* The Raiders player may adjust the dice roll by +1 or -1 after it has been rolled, giving him a choice of scenarios to play when using Softly, Softly tactics.

The scenarios are played as normal, with the following exceptions.

Ambush: The player with the initiative this turn will be the attacker. If the Raiders are the attacker, the defending player will also have six corporate freighters, which may be swapped out for different civilian ships, as normal.

Assassination: If All-Out Assault has been chosen, the Raiders will be the attacker and the Raiders player may choose any ship in the defending player's fleet as a target – this ship must be used in the battle. If Softly, Softly tactics are chosen, then the defending player will be the attacker, though he may not force the Raiders player to use a specific ship.

Blockade: The defending player will be the blockader unless All-Out Assault has been chosen, in which case the Raiders will. If the Raiders are the blockaders, the defending player will also have six corporate freighters, which may be swapped out for different civilian ships, as normal.

Convoy Duty: The Raiders will always be the attacker in this scenario.

Flee to the Jump Gate: The Raiders will be the attacker in this scenario. In addition to his forces, the defending player will also have six corporate freighters, which may be swapped out for different civilian ships, as normal.

Recon Run: The Raiders player will be the attacker in this scenario.

Supply Ships: The Raiders player will be the attacker in this scenario.

Fight Battle

Once the scenario has been generated, the Raiders player may place Stellar Debris anywhere he wishes. He can place one piece of Stellar Debris in a Core World, two in a Civilised system and three pieces in a Frontier system.

After that, the battle will be fought as normal. Neither side will capture the Strategic Target when the battle is over.

The Raiders player can never own any Strategic Targets. However, the defending player will automatically capture one new Strategic Target at the end of every turn, whether he wins or loses the battle. This represents his forward forces spreading throughout the system in an attempt to locate the Raiders secret base.

Ship Experience

Experience is handled as normal in a Campaign of Terror.

Repairs and Reinforcements

This is handled very differently in a Campaign of Terror. The defending fleet is dependant on its government for resupply, who will be slow to adapt to sudden changes (such as a horde of Raiders occupying the system). He will automatically receive 10 RR points a turn if the campaign takes place in a Frontier system, 15 RR points in a Civilised system and 20 RR points in a Core World.

The Raiders player will receive a number of RR points (each RR point representing around a million credits) depending on where the campaign takes place, what tactics were chosen and what was accomplished during the turn.

Action	RR Points Gained
Playing in Frontier System	+1d6
Playing in Civilised System	+2d6
Playing in Core World	+3d6
Used Softly, Softly Tactics	+0
Used Business as Usual Tactics	+3
Used All-Out Assault Tactics	+5
Each Civilian Ship Destroyed	+ the ship's CFP
Each Civilian Ship Boarded	+ three times the ship's CFP
Each ship scanned in Recon Run	+1
Objective Captured in Rescue	+5
Target Destroyed in All-Out Assault	+12
Victory Achieved in Space Superiority	+8
Scenario was a Victory	x2 all RR points gained this turn

RR points can also be gained by scrapping ships – Raiders do this all the time, effectively recycling components and large portions of the hull that regular fleets would simply dispose of. The Raiders player gains the following RR points for scrapping ships. Fighter flights may never be scrapped in this way.

Priority Level of Ship	RR Points Gained
Patrol	1
Skirmish	2
Raid	4
Battle	6
War	10
Armageddon	20

The defending player may spend his RR points on Repairs, Recruiting and Reinforcements as normal. The Raiders player can spend his RR points in this way as well but also gains the following options.

Refits: Raiders ships are often rigged with temporary repairs or have spare parts grafted on from completely different vessels. There are very few ‘standard’ ships in a Raiders fleet. Because of this, 5 RR points may be spent gaining an extra Refit roll.

Defence Satellites: The Raiders player may reinforce his secret base with defence satellites. These cost 5 RR points each and a maximum of 10 may be purchased. These are identical to the satellites shown on page 40 of the main rulebook.

Secret Base: RR points may also be spent on fitting new systems to the Raiders secret base. The Stealth 4+ trait may be purchased for 30 RR points, Fleet Carrier for +15 points, the Delta-Vs upgraded to Double-Vs or Delta-V2s for +10 points, Troops increased to 15 for +5 points and the Hull may be increased to 5 for 20 RR points.

Boarding Ships

It should be noted that if a Raiders player boards an enemy ship and wins the scenario, then he may include that ship in his own fleet from that point on. It will need to be re-crewed (and no doubt repaired too) but this is a good way for a Raiders player to gain access to ships far more powerful than he might otherwise be able to use.

If the defending player boards and captures a Raiders ship, it will simply be impounded or destroyed.

The Raiders Secret Base

Once the Raiders base has been located, the defending player may decide to attack it at any time he gains the initiative at the start of a campaign turn. The mission will be Assassination, with the Raiders as defenders and their secret base as the assassination target.

The Raiders player will place a planet in his deployment zone if the Strategic Target in which the base is located is a Dead World or a moon if it is not. His base will be in its gravity well, accompanied by any Defence Satellites that have been purchased. The Raiders secret base is a Space Station and has the following characteristics.

Raiders Secret Base

Hull: 4

Damage: 200/100/50

Troops: 10

Craft: 6 Delta-V flights

Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 4, Carrier 2, Command +1, Immobile, Interceptors 4, Space Station, Targets 2

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD
Special			
Missile Racks	20	T	2
Slow-Loading, Super AP			
Medium Pulse Cannon	12	T	6

Victory and Defeat

Sooner or later, the player hunting for the Raiders will find their base and destroy it. At this point, the campaign ends, as the Raiders leave the system to pursue riches elsewhere.

The Raiders player may claim victory if he manages to either build his fleet up to ten Fleet Allocation Points worth of ships at Raid level, or if he manages to build his bank balance up to a total of 100 RR points.

If the Raiders player fails in any of these tasks, then victory belongs to the defending player.

Other Fleets

A Campaign of Terror can be waged with fleets other than Raiders. It is certainly feasible to have a small Narn fleet invading Centauri territory with a series of hit and run attacks, operating in much the same way as Raiders do. The same could be true for any of the League worlds and even an Earth Alliance fleet (perhaps under Sheridan's command) deep in the Rim against the Shadows.

No changes are needed to the rules presented here, as they represent a fleet cut off from its main supply lines, and forced to live by its wits on meagre resources that are either flown into the system intermittently by its own government or on what it can scavenge by its own activities.



A black and white photograph of a soldier on a rooftop holding a large Soviet flag over a city during a battle. The background shows a city with smoke rising from buildings, suggesting a war-torn urban environment. The soldier is in the foreground, silhouetted against the bright sky, holding a large flag with a white star and hammer and sickle symbol. The city below is filled with smoke and the remains of buildings.

BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION WORLD AT WAR

28MM WORLD WAR II WARGAMING RULES

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**CONAN**

ALTERNATIVE BORDERER COMBAT STYLES

STEFEN STYRSKY

CONAN

The borderer described in *Conan the Roleplaying Game* is a generic example of the class, meant to fit a PC no matter his race. If *Conan* is about anything, it is the differences between nations and their peoples. It makes sense that diverse regions produce borderers as varied as their home landscapes. Below are new combat styles based on a borderer's origin and the weapons most preferred in his home country.

A combat style must be chosen at 2nd level. Once made, this selection can not be altered. As usual, the borderer does not need to meet the prerequisites for any feat granted through his combat style. He only gains the benefit of the feat (or other abilities based on the combat style) when wearing nothing heavier than light armour.

In some cases a borderer exchanges his favoured terrain for a new ability. When this occurs the borderer still gains subsequent favoured terrains at the bonuses listed in the main rule book but they are then called first, second or third favoured terrains, respectively.

For example, a Darfari meat hunter does not gain a second favoured terrain at 7th level. However, at 13th level when he would normally gain a third favoured terrain +1, he gains a second favoured terrain +1.

To maintain the exotic nature of these combat styles it is suggested that a borderer adopting one of them come from the race for which the style is most prevalent. However, the Games Master may rule that borderers can adopt any fighting style the player chooses.

AQUILONIAN ARBALESTER

Adjoining several barbaric peoples, Aquilonia produces borderers in great numbers.

These men and women provide early warning of invasion and are the nation's first line of defense. However, not all Aquilonian borderers react to Pictish and Cimmerian raids. Borderers trained in the arbalester combat style cross the frontier into hostile territory and slay enemy warriors and leaders, culling potential threats.

When employing the arbalest, a borderer with the arbalester combat style gains the following:

2nd level: Far Shot.

5th level: Ranged Finesse: However, with the steadiness of an arbalest, the feat can be used up to 100 feet from the target.

11th level: Ranged coup de grace: At 11th level the arbalester has become so precise with his weapon that he can kill with a single bolt. To use this ability the target can not be more than three range increments away and must not be able to see the arbalester. Once all other conditions for a ranged finesse attack have been satisfied, the arbalester may fire. A successful hit indicates he has struck the target in a vital area, who, if he survives the critical-hit damage, must then make a Fort save (DC = 10 + damage dealt) or die. This ability may only be used against humanoids, monstrous humanoids and animals.

Bonus Feats: An arbalester adds Out of Thin Air (from *Across the Thunder River*) and replaces Toughness with Improved Precise Shot on his list of bonus feats.

Skills: One of the skills an Aquilonian arbalester must choose as a class skill under his adaptability racial feature is Concentration. For the arbalester to employ his combat style he must possess at least 5 ranks in the skill.

ARGOSSEAN/ZINGARAN GHOUL HUNTER

The ghouls that haunt the forest separating Argos and Zingara must be constantly kept in check. Many Argossean and Zingaran borderers exist solely to protect the populace from these rapacious monsters.

A ghoull hunter gains the following:

2nd level: Iron Will: The ghoull hunter's experience has hardened his mind and will power.

5th level: Poison Use: Ghouls are such vicious monsters that the ghoull hunter employs poison on his weapons. He needs every advantage he can get.

7th level: Ghoull Slayer: Many generations of hunting ghouls has taught these borderers how to best combat these and other monstrous humanoids. Instead of a second favoured terrain, the ghoull hunter adds a bonus to attack and damage rolls equal to his replaced second favoured terrain bonus when battling monstrous humanoids. He also gains an equal bonus to Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot and Survival (when tracking) rolls against monstrous humanoids.

11th level: Improved Critical: When fighting monstrous humanoids a ghoull hunter increases by 1 the critical threat range of any weapon he wields.

Favoured Terrain: At 1st level the ghoull hunter must choose forest as his favoured terrain.

Background Skills: Ghoul hunters from either nation may choose Survival as a background skill rather than Profession (sailor) reflecting an early life spent in the wilderness.

DARFARI MEAT HUNTER

The Darfari borderer is as much a hunter as a protector. He employs his tracking and guide skills to lead war parties on the hunt for meat. His combat style is based on the club.

A Darfari borderer with the club combat style gains the following:

2nd level: Stunning Critical: A Darfari borderer with the club combat style can stun an opponent on a successful critical hit with a club. The victim must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC = 10 + ½ borderer's level + STR bonus) or be stunned for one round.

5th level: Scent: A Darfari meat hunter can use scent to track human prey.

7th level: Darfari prefer their meat fresh, alive if possible. A Darfari meat hunter does not gain a second favoured terrain bonus at 7th level. Instead, he adds a bonus equal to double his replaced second favoured terrain bonus to damage rolls when striking for non-lethal damage.

11th level: Stunning Attack: The Darfari meat hunter can use Stunning Attack when employing a club. Use of the 2nd level stunning critical ability does not count against his daily uses of stunning attack.

Background Skills: Darfari meat hunters have Intimidate rather than Perform (ritual).

GUNDERLAND PIKE FIGHTER

Most Gundermen enlist as soldiers in Aquilonia's army. However,

the country's northern border abuts Cimmeria, so Gundermen must always be on the alert for barbarian raids. A Gunderman borderer's pike-fighting style allows him to defend himself even if caught alone in the wild areas between settlements.

A Gunderman trained in the pike-fighting combat style gains the following:

2nd level: Adjacent Attack: A borderer trained in this style can attack enemies in adjacent squares with his pike without penalty.

5th level: Push: The Gunderman can, with a successful melee attack, knock an opponent backwards five feet with his pike as if he had performed a bull rush. The opponent can make a strength check to resist the bull rush but the Gunderman receives a +4 bonus to his check. The Gunderman does not move as a result of this attack.

He may not perform this maneuver on an adjacent opponent.

11th level: The Gunderman borderer gains the Improved Trip feat as long as he wields a pike. In addition, any opponent successfully tripped by the Gunderman has its movement reduced by 10 feet and suffers a -4 penalty to Dodge Defence until given first aid through the Heal skill.

KHITAN STAFF FIGHTER

Khitan steel is notoriously inferior to the alloy produced in other nations. To compensate, many Khitan borderers have developed a style of staff combat that takes advantage of the weapon's unique properties.

A Khitan with the staff combat style gains the following:

1st level: Khitan staff fighters are wanderers, rarely staying in one place for very long. As such they do not receive the favoured terrain class ability at 1st level. (They gain the ability at later levels.) Instead, when wielding a staff as a finesse weapon this borderer adds a bonus equal to his replaced first favoured terrain bonus to his total attack roll to determine if the attack has bypassed an opponent's DR. He also gains an equal bonus to his Parry Defence while wielding a staff.

2nd level: While wielding a staff the Khitan borderer resists grapple attempts with a +4 bonus. If the grapple attempt fails the border gains an attack of opportunity against his opponent even if the opponent possesses Improved Grapple.

5th level: While wielding a staff a Khitan borderer can use his Parry Defence against ranged weapons and also gains a +1 parry bonus to his Parry Defence for each range increment through which the weapon must be shot or thrown to reach him. This parry bonus is doubled if the borderer is fighting defensively or executing the total defence standard action.

He may employ this ability a number of times per turn equal to one-half his borderer level.

11th level: Tip Strike: When determining if a successful finesse strike has bypassed an opponent's armour, the Khitan staff fighter also adds his Wisdom modifier (in addition to his replaced first favoured terrain bonus) to the total roll.

Bonus Feats: A Khitan borderer adds Dabbler, Knowledgeable and Whirlwind Attack to his list of bonus feats, replacing Toughness and Great Fortitude.

Skills: A Khitan borderer replaces Ride with Diplomacy on his list of class skills.

KUSHITE AND NORTHERN BLACK KINGDOM TRIBESMAN SPEAR FIGHTER

The spear is the weapon of war among Kush and its neighbours. Kushite borderers train in the area's indigenous weapon.

A Kushite spear fighter gains the following:

2nd level: When wielding a spear a borderer with the spear fighting combat style gains a +2 to his Parry Defence. He can also use it to keep his footing. When held, a spear grants him a +4 bonus to Balance checks.

5th level: When wielding a spear in two hands the spear fighter gains the Improved Two Weapon Combat feat. He is able to make an off-hand attack with the spear's blunt end. A war spear does 1D6 bludgeoning (AP 2) and a hunting spear deals 1d4 of bludgeoning damage (AP 1).

11th level: A spear fighter learns how to increase the piercing ability of his weapon. When a Kushite spear fighter strikes with a successful critical, on the following round the victim suffers 1D4 points of Con damage from blood loss. On subsequent rounds the victim must make a Fort save (DC 10 + ½ borderer's level) or suffer another 1 point of Con damage. The Constitution damage continues each round until the save is successful.

A DC 15 Heal check also halts the blood loss.

This ability only affects creatures vulnerable to critical hits.

NORDHEIMER WAR SWORD WIELDER

Nordheimer borderers are typical of their race: strong, ruthless and brutal. They enjoy

plunging into combat with their war swords, facing enemies up close and head-on.

A Nordheimer borderer with the war sword combat style gains the following:

2nd level: Power Attack

5th level: Improved Sunder

7th level: Knock Down Attack: Instead of a second favoured terrain this Nordheimer borderer gains knock down attack. He can use his war sword to batter away an opponent's weapon and shield and open up his defences. When an opponent attempts to parry the Nordheimer's war sword, the next attack the Nordheimer makes against that opponent gains a +4 bonus to the attack roll.

11th level: Crushing Blow: On a successful critical hit with a war sword, the Nordheimer borderer doubles the weapon's AP rating.

Bonus Feats: This borderer replaces Stealthy with Monster Slayer on his list of bonus feats.

Background Skills: This border variant loses the Profession (farmer) background skill.

SAAMI LASSOER

A race living in the extreme north (see *Signs and Portents Roleplayer* # 41), the Saami have few enemies. Their combat style is an off-shoot of their hunting skills.

When wielding a lasso the Saami lassoer gains the following:

2nd level: Improved Trip. He can also rewind the lasso in 2 rounds rather than four.

5th level: Combat Reflexes: The Saami tactic is to take down an enemy and exploit the attacks of opportunity as their foe tries to stand up.

11th level: When a Saami entangles an opponent he may choose to strangle him as well, dealing 1D8 points of damage and 1D4 Constitution damage to his opponent per round as long as he remains entangled and the Saami maintains hold of the rope. The Constitution damage may be halved if the victim makes a Fort save (DC = 10 + ½ Hit Point damage).

Favoured Terrain: At 1st level the lassoer must choose tundra as his favoured terrain.

SOUTHERN BLACK KINGDOM BARE- HANDED FIGHTER

The people of the southern black kingdoms choose their leaders and war-chiefs through the rite of unarmed combat. Borderers from this area train in unarmed combat to ensure their position within the tribe.

A Southern Black Kingdom borderer trained in the unarmed combat style receives the following bonus feats:

2nd level: Improved Unarmed Strike

5th level: Brawl

7th level: Improved Grapple: A borderer with the unarmed combat style gains Improved Grapple instead of a second favoured terrain.

11th level: Crushing Grip

Bonus Feats: This borderer adds Weapon Focus (unarmed strike) and Weapon Specialization (unarmed strike) to his list of bonus feats.

Background Skills: This borderer variant takes Intimidate instead of Perform (ritual).

SOUTHERN ISLANDER SWIMMER

Southern Islanders learn to swim before they can walk. The borderers of the area use their extraordinary swimming skills to hunt, gather shellfish and attack enemies.

A Southern Islander Swimmer gains the following:

2nd level: Born to the Water: A Southern Islander borderer gains the Water Wise feat (from *Across the Thunder River*). He may swim up to his speed as a full round action or half his speed as a move action with a successful Swim check. He may use a Survival check instead of a Constitution check to avoid drowning.

He also retains all bonuses to his Dodge Defence while swimming.

5th level: Hold Breath: A southern islander can hold his breath an extra number of rounds equal to double his Constitution modifier.

Also, a Southern Islander swimmer suffers no penalties when attacking with a piercing melee weapon under water.

7th level: Instead of a second favoured terrain a swimmer gains a bonus equal to his second favoured terrain bonus to Defence and Hide and Move Silently checks while in water at least up to his waist in depth. This stacks with any bonuses he might receive for being in his favoured terrain.

11th level: A swimmer gains Skill Focus (swim) as a bonus feat. If he already possesses this feat he may instead select Skill Focus (any). When in fast moving water he suffers non-lethal damage every other round instead of every round.

Also, with a successful Swim check a Southern Islander swimmer may propel himself out of the water to reach or grab something above his head. The DC for such an action is equal to four times the distance to be covered as measured from the water's surface. The water must be at least as deep as the distance he is to cover.

Bonus Feats: A southern islander borderer replaces Quick Draw and Run with Athletic and Fighting Madness on his list of bonus feats.

Skills: A southern islander swimmer loses Ride as a class skill.

TURANIAN CAVALRY MAN

Most Turanian borderers choose the archery combat style. However, Turanians have adopted the mounted combat style of more sedentary people, developing heavy cavalry dependent on lances and swords rather than bows.

A Turanian cavalryman borderer gains the following:

1st level: The bonuses for his first favoured terrain also extend to his mount.

2nd level: Ride-by Attack.

Also, his presence is so fearsome a Turanian cavalryman gains a +4 circumstance bonus to Intimidate rolls while mounted.

5th level: Spirited Charge

7th level: Strength of Two: A Turanian cavalryman and his mount draw strength from each other. While he remains within 30 feet of his horse, this Turanian borderer gains a +2 morale bonus on all Will saves and opposed Intimidate checks. His mount uses his Will bonus as its own for applicable saves. The cavalryman gains this instead of a second favoured terrain.

11th level: Devastating Charge: When charging the Turanian cavalryman gains a +4 bonus to hit opponents who are not mounted. Also, on a successful hit against any opponent after a charge he triples his damage with a melee weapon and quadruples his damage with a lance.

Bonus Feats: A Turanian borderer with the mounted combat style adds Trample to his list of bonus feats.

ZINGARAN SERPENT HUNTER

The above ghoulish hunter variant can also be used as the basis for borderers who patrol Zingara's serpent-infested swamps. Change the 1st level favoured terrain to swamps and the combat style to trapping. At 7th level this borderer receives the same combat bonuses listed above except it applies to snakes.

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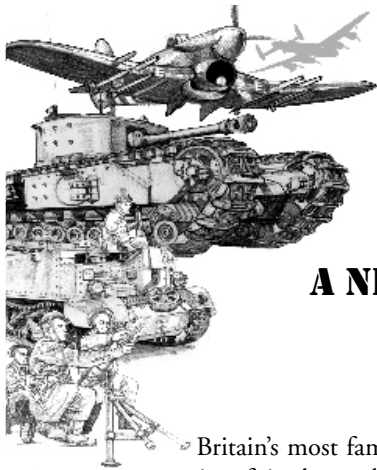
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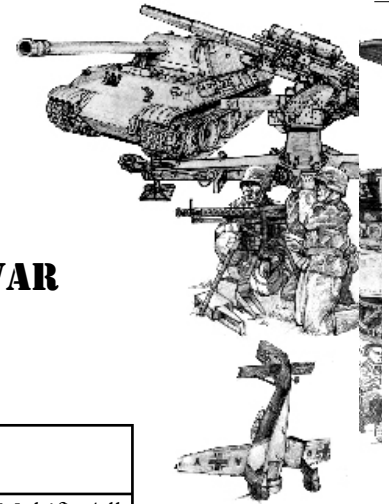


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SPITFIRE!



A NEW UNIT FOR BRITISH FORCES IN BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION: WORLD AT WAR

BY MATTHEW SPRANGE

Britain's most famous fighter and probably the most recognised military aircraft in the world, the Spitfire was the original glamour puss of the skies. Credited (albeit unfairly, in the eyes of supporters of the Hurricane) with victory during the Battle of Britain, development of the Spitfire went on throughout the war and was the only allied fighter to be manufactured continually throughout hostilities. It served in a multitude of roles, from air defence, to ground attack and photo reconnaissance and many variants were introduced to take advantage of more powerful weapons and engines. If it is not credited with being the finest fighter of the war, it is probably the most versatile.

The Spitfire detailed here is representative of the marks used in the late period of the war, including the Mk XIV onwards.

The Spitfire is an Armour Asset for Late War British forces.

SPITFIRE – 195 POINTS

The epitome of fighters in the war, the Spitfire became the classic symbol of British resistance and dogged determination.



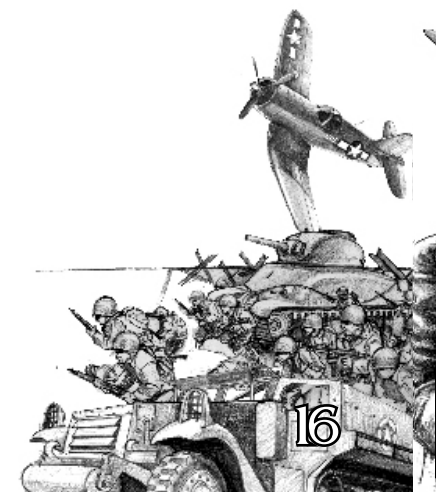
Type	Size	Move	C l o s e Combat	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
Spitfire	4	Loiter Cruise	4xD10	6+	5+/4+	8+	Hits/2, Multifire/all

Unit: Spitfire with two Hispano 20mm cannon (FaF), and four Browning .303 MG (FaF).

Options: Two 250 lb. Bombs may be added for + 35 points.

EXTENDED BRITISH ARMOURY

250 Lb Bomb	Dropped	D6+3	Lethal Zone/4", Multihit, One-Shot
Browning .303 MG	30"	D6	Auto





STURMTIGER!



A NEW UNIT FOR GERMAN FORCES IN BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION: WORLD AT WAR

BY MATTHEW SPRANGE

After the Battle of Stalingrad, a need was identified for tanks that could support infantry in heavily built-up areas, where enemy troops were capable of holding buildings for extended periods of time. So as to avoid the stalling of any advance, the Sturmtyger was developed, a tank that could blast a structure apart, killing or burying any infantry within.

Based on the Tiger I chassis, the Sturmtyger mounted a short-barrelled 38cm rocket mortar, developed from an anti-submarine depth charge. The armour was increased, to allow the new tank to withstand short-ranged attacks, especially from infantry who managed to outflank it.

By the time the Sturmtyger was deployed, the war had turned against Germany, though the tank still remained potent as a defensive weapon and its heavy armour made outright destruction difficult. However, it had its disadvantages as well, as it was slow, carried only limited ammunition and was prone to mechanical problems. Only a few were ever completed and they had no real effect on the war.

The Sturmtyger is an Armour Asset for Late War German forces.

STURMTIGER – 800 POINTS

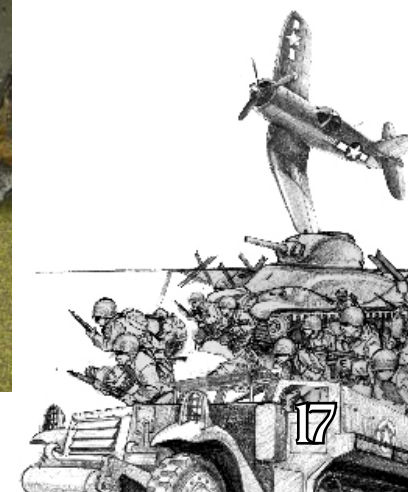
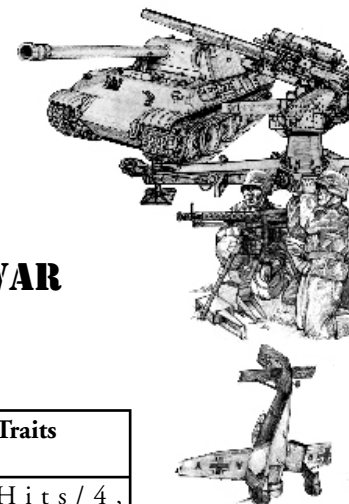
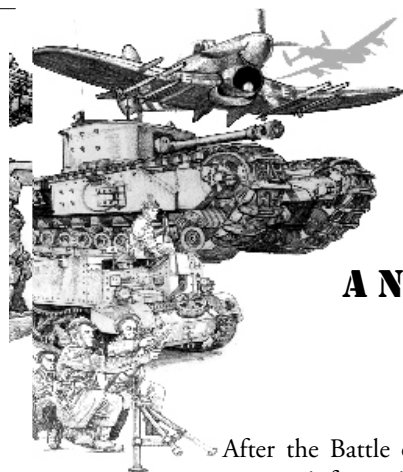
A modified Tiger I chassis with heavier armour and an out-sized mortar, the Sturmtyger proved to be a fearsome opponent when deployed within defensive positions.

Type	Size	Move	C l o s e Combat	Facing	Target	Save	Kill	Traits
Sturmtyger	4	4"	5xD10	Front	9+	2+	13+	H i t s / 4 , Lumbering, Multifire/2, Tracks/6"
				Side	9+	3+	13+	
				Rear	9+	3+	12+	

Unit: Sturmtyger with 38cm rocket mortar (FaF), and MG34 (FaF).

EXTENDED GERMAN ARMOURY

38cm rocket mortar	48"	D10+3	Killshot, Lethal Zone/3", Multihit, Piercing/2, Slow
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Cthulhutech Spells

By Carl Warmesley

Ancient scrolls and lost tomes hold an unknown number of rituals that are just waiting to be unearthed and put to use. Added to this, sorcerers, driven on by the demands of the Aeon War, are constantly seeking to develop new incantations that will give them an advantage over their adversaries. Presented here is a selection of spells – old and new – for use in your *Cthulhutech* games.

Mind Barb

Second Order

aka: Sorcerous Gaze

Type: Transmogrification

Legality: Illegal

Learning Time: 1 Month

Insanity Test: Challenging/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Adept

Intellect required: 6

Tenacity required: 6

Prep Time: 12 Hours

Casting Time: 6 Hours

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 10

Components and Requirements: At least 100 square feet of reasonably undisturbed working space, candles, piercing needles, blood from the primary caster, one pound of freshly harvested brain matter, various herbs, various incense.

Effects: This spell creates a mystical arrow, which is held at the point of release within the sorcerer's mind. The barb

may be fired as a Normal Action at any living creature that the Sorcerer can see*.

Whilst the barb is held ready for release, some small portion of the sorcerer's mind is occupied by the effort of doing so. As a result, he may never be considered to be truly resting. He will only recover Ruach – including any he used to cast this spell – at a rate of 1 point every four hours until such time as the barb is released. Of course, a sorcerer may elect to end this spell prematurely – firing the barb into the ether – if he wishes to regain his normal Ruach recovery rate.

A creature targeted by the spell must engage in a Skill Contest with the caster. The caster uses his Occult Skill, whilst the target may use either its own Occult Skill level (if it has one) or its Tenacity Feat Skill. If the caster wins the contest, he forces the barb into the target's psyche, achieving one of two effects.

The first effect directly damages the creature: this is considered an attack causing +1 Damage. Success in the Contest may increase damage as it would any other attack. Any Armour the target is wearing – including a Ward of Corporal Protection – is ignored.

The second effect is to induce terror within the subject by stimulating a fear response in its brain. A roll is made on the Fear effects table (*Cthulhutech*, page 135) to determine how the target reacts.

If a sorcerer can make direct, eye-to-eye contact with his target (limited to a range of 20 yards) he receives a +2 Contest Modifier when casting this spell.

**The sorcerer must have a direct 'physical' line of sight to his target. He may not, for instance, use the spell against a creature that he is watching through a remote camera or with the aid of binoculars.*

(Black) Market Price: 8400 Tn

Casting Fee: N/A

Component Cost: 500 Tn

Portents of Doom

First Order

aka: Vision of Peril

Type: Scrying

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 1 Month

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Novice

Intellect required: 5

Tenacity required: 5

Prep Time: 6 Hours

Casting Time: 3 Hours

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 10

Components and requirements: At least 100 square feet of reasonably undisturbed working space, candles, dissociative or hallucinogenic herbs, various incense. Also, ritual participants must be blindfolded for the duration of the ritual.

Effects: The caster receives a pre-cognitive vision, warning him of some danger that he will face during the next month. The images and sounds conjured are fractured and incomplete and more than a little confusing. Typically, the caster will be unable to make any sense of what he has seen until only moments before the danger is about to manifest: however, this warning can often be enough to save his life.

In game terms, a character who has successfully cast this spell may elect to have his pre-cognitive vision snap into sharp focus at any time he faces a direct danger. This might be something attacking him, a car hurtling towards him, his foot edging towards an undiscovered landmine and so forth. For the next Skill Test (or Contest), the character is considered a Master in whatever skill is most useful in terms of keeping him out of harm's way.

If a character does not benefit from the effects of this spell within a month of it being cast, its benefits are lost.

Casting this spell subjects the sorcerer to disturbing – if cloudy – images of his own possible demise. This can be very unsettling. Each time this spell is cast, the sorcerer must pass an Easy Insanity Test or gain 1 Insanity point.

(Black) Market Price: 2500 Tn
Casting Fee: 600 Tn
Component Cost: 100 Tn

Eldritch Warning

Second Order

aka: Mystic Alarm

Type: Scrying

Legality: Legal

Learning Time: 2 Months

Insanity Test: Average/1 Insanity Point

Occult Rating Required: Adept

Intellect required: 5

Tenacity required: 6

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Casting Time: 1 Hour

Difficulty: Challenging

Extended Tests Required: 2

Ruach Cost: 15

Components and Requirements: At least 100 square feet of reasonably undisturbed working space, candles, a bell or wind chimes, various large harmonic crystals, various incense.

Effects: This spells allows the caster to erect mystic tripwires that will signal the approach of intruders. The spell may be used to surround the perimeter of an average sized house: if a location is larger than this, an equivalent portion will be protected.

As soon as something other than the caster crosses the line of protection erected by the spell, the caster becomes aware of it. Note that entering the area protected by the spell either from above or below will *not* circumvent it.

This spell will last for the duration of the current day/night cycle: as soon as the sun either rises or sets, the spell ends. In addition, the caster must remain conscious for the spell to function.

Eldritch Warning cannot be cast in an area protected by a Ward of Seclusion. A character shielded by a Ward of Solitude will *not* trigger an Eldritch Warning spell if he crosses into its area of effect.

Dust of Ibn Ghazi sprinkled over the edges of an Eldritch Warning spell will reveal its presence as will use of the Eldritch Faculties spell.

(Black) Market Price: 8000 Tn
Casting Fee: 350 Tn
Component Cost: 200 Tn



The Gaim Intelligence - Revised



Another Look at the Gaim in A Call to Arms

Matthew Sprange

The Gaim Intelligence has some of the nicest models available for any fleet in A Call to Arms, and has unique dynamics that have brought the Gaim a lot of fans. However, the original fleet list has been open to some abuse, leaving other fleets unable to handle the sheer number of fighters, breaching pods and energy mines some of these ships can kick out every turn.

We therefore present this revised fleet list for the Gaim that keeps their unique way of fighting intact, but should take the edge off the 'killer' fleets that were once possible. This fleet list is an official update to A Call to Arms, and effectively replaces the Gaim Intelligence in the Fleet Lists book.

The Gaim Intelligence Fleet List

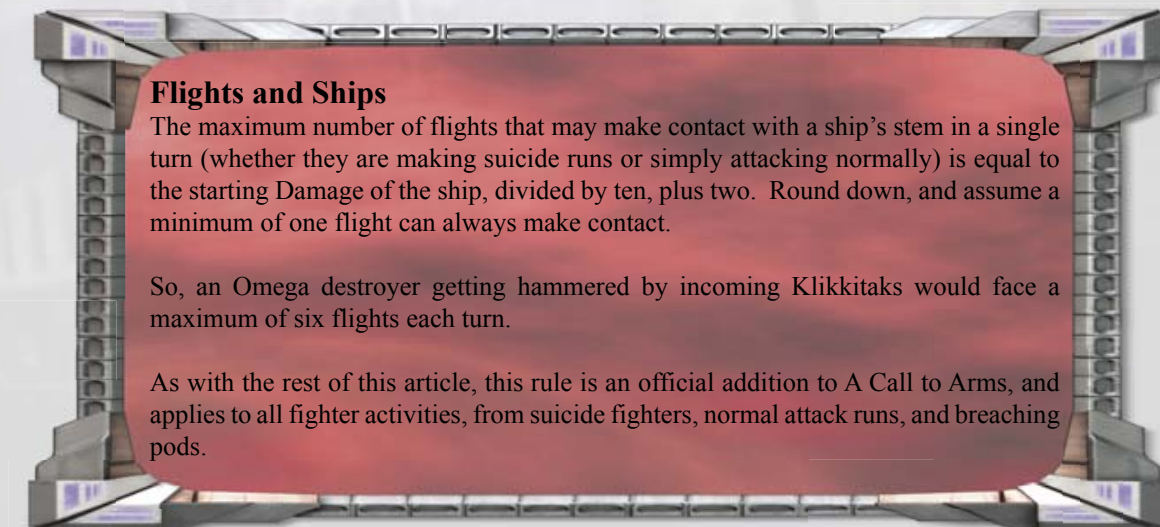
The following forms the entire fleet list for the Gaim Intelligence.

Priority Level: Patrol

Breaching Pod Wing (4 flights)
Klikkita Wing (6 flights)
Stak-class scout

Priority Level: Skirmish

Sataaka-class gunship
Shuuka-class queen light cruiser



Flights and Ships

The maximum number of flights that may make contact with a ship's stem in a single turn (whether they are making suicide runs or simply attacking normally) is equal to the starting Damage of the ship, divided by ten, plus two. Round down, and assume a minimum of one flight can always make contact.

So, an Omega destroyer getting hammered by incoming Klikkitaks would face a maximum of six flights each turn.

As with the rest of this article, this rule is an official addition to A Call to Arms, and applies to all fighter activities, from suicide fighters, normal attack runs, and breaching pods.

Priority Level: Raid

Shaakak-class queen cruiser
Skrunnka-class assault ship
Stuteeka-class war carrier

Priority Level: Battle

Shrutaa-class queen ship

Priority Level: War

Sluuka-class grand queen

Fighters

Flights of smaller craft may be purchased separately and used as units in their own right.

Some ships are noted as carrying one or more flights of fighters on board. One or more of these flights may be deployed as normal at any time before or during the battle and do not cost anything extra – the cost of these flights is included in that of their parent ships.

A Klikkita flight may convert itself into a Klikkitak flight in any End Phase, whether or not it has been launched or not from its parent ship. Once converted into a Klikkitak, it may not change back.

Gaim Intelligence Fleet Special Rules

The following special rules apply to all Gaim Intelligence fleets.

Pilot Drones: Gaim carriers are fully capable of manufacturing fighters and breeding the drones to crew them at an accelerated pace. All Gaim ships will automatically replace all their fighters and breaching pods at the end of every campaign turn.

The Queens: Every Gaim fleet must be led by at least one Queen ship (of any type). The Queen ship of the highest Priority Level will be the Ruling Queen, and only one ship of this type may be present in the fleet. Queen ships of a lower Priority Level (Sub-Queens) have no such limit. Ruling Queen ships receive a +1 bonus to Crew Quality.

Every ship in the fleet will have the same Crew Quality as the closest Queen that is within 12”.

Dynamic Squadrons: Gaim fleets are not required to create squadrons before a scenario begins. Instead, any ships that fulfil the requirements of becoming a squadron (such as being within 6” of one another) may automatically be declared a squadron at the start of the Movement Phase. They may continue to act as a squadron throughout the scenario, or be disbanded in any End Phase.

Protect the Queen: The Queens represent the most important ships in the fleet. If a fleet loses all of its Queens, every ship will immediately suffer a -4 penalty to Crew Quality and the fleet will have its Initiative reduced to -3. In addition, a Queen ship will provide double the normal number of Victory Points for an enemy.

Gaim Intelligence Initiative: +3

Breaching Pod

Capable of transporting a platoon of assault drones across the war zone and on towards an enemy ship, breaching pods are dangerous vehicles to deploy but a clever Queen will balance the risk with the potential to keep an enemy on the back foot. Photon Cutters allow the breaching pod to cut through metres thick armour plating once latched onto the hull of a target, gaining entry for the drones carried on board.

Speed: 6

Turns: SM

Hull: 5

Damage: -

Crew: -

Troops: 1

Dogfighting: -

Craft: -

Special Rules: Breaching Pod, Dodge 5+

In Service: 2168+

Patrol (Wing)



Speed: 14

Turns: SM

Hull: 3

Damage: -

Crew: -

Troops: -

Dogfighting: +1

Craft: -

Special Rules: Dodge 2+, Fighter

In Service: 2251+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Plasma Bolt	2	T	1	

Klikkita Light Fighter

Patrol (Wing)

Small but possessing a powerful plasma reactor subsystem, the Klikkita is crewed by a single drone. Super agile and utterly expendable, Klikkitas are kept dormant in their motherships on massive racks until activated. When released, they create a swarm that is almost impossible to penetrate. If threatened by larger vessels, the Klikkita can overload its reactor, turning it into an extremely powerful crewed missile.

Klikkitak Crewed Missile

Special

Once the Klikkita overloads its reactor, it becomes a deadly weapon, a missile crewed by a drone who has no thought but to give its life for the Queens. Known as the Klikkitak in this configuration, the drone's only thought is to guide its craft through heavy fire in order to directly impact into the hull of an enemy warship.



Speed: 9
Turns: SM
Hull: 4
Damage: -
Crew: -
Troops: -
Dogfighting: +0
Craft: -
Special Rules: Dodge 4+, Fighter
In Service: 2251+

* If a Klikkitak moves into contact with an enemy ship, it will launch an automatic attack at the end of the Movement Phase, after all Anti-Fighter dice have been rolled. This attack will use 1 Attack Dice, and have the Double Damage, Precise and Super AP traits. It will ignore Interceptors. Once the attack has been performed, the Klikkitak is removed from play and may not be regained by use of the Fleet Carrier trait.

Sataaka-class Gunship

Skirmish
A common fighting vessel in Gaim fleets, the role of the Sataaka is to provide a forward screen behind the fighter fleets, intercepting any enemy capital ships that roam too close to the Queens. It is well armed for such a slight vessel.



Speed: 9
Turn: 2/45°
Hull: 5
Damage: 22/5
Crew: 29/6
Troops: 6
Craft: 1 Klikkita flight
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 4, Interceptors 1
In Service: 2262+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Photon Bomb	20	T	2	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
Gatling Laser	10	F	4	Beam

Shaakak-class Queen Light Cruiser

Raid
A mid-ranged warship, Shaakaks are often deployed in small makeshift squadrons to support a single Shrutaa, though they will also be found leading small strike forces against the enemies of the Gaim. Heavily defended and usually well supported, tackling a Shaakak can be a tricky proposition.



Speed: 6
Turn: 1/45°
Hull: 6
Damage: 38/4
Crew: 40/5
Troops: 9
Craft: 12 Klikkita flights, 2 Breaching Pod flights
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 8, Carrier 5, Flight Computer, Interceptors 4, Jump Engine, Lumbering
In Service: 2252+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Photon Bomb	30	T	4	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
Photon Bomb	30	F	4	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading

Shrutaa-class Queen Battleship

Battle

Most commonly seen commanding Gaim war fleets, the Shrutaa is a solid warship, built to protect the Queen inside as she directs the entire battle. Its place is not at the frontline, however, as the Shrutaa relies on its swarming fighters and long-ranged photon bombs to keep enemies at bay.



Speed: 5

Turn: 1/45°

Hull: 6

Damage: 72/14

Crew: 120/28

Troops: 12

Craft: 16 Klikkita flights, 4 Breaching Pod flights

Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 8, Carrier 6, Fleet Carrier, Interceptors 5, Jump Engine, Lumbering

In Service: 2258+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Photon Bomb	40	T	6	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
Photon Bomb	40	F	6	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading

Sluuka-class Grand Queen (Shrutaa Variant)

War

A heavily upgraded Shrutaa hull, this grand queen is one of the original vessels of the Gaim fleet, and has survived many conflicts and wars. Able to weather attacks from multiple opponents, the presence of a Sluuka in a Gaim fleet signifies an objective the Intelligence will stop at nothing to achieve.

Speed: 4

Turn: 1/45°

Hull: 6

Damage: 72/14

Crew: 165/36

Troops: 18

Craft: 24 Klikkita flights, 6 Breaching Pod flights

Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 8, Carrier 8, Fleet Carrier, Flight Computer, Interceptors 6, Jump Engine, Lumbering

In Service: 2264+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Photon Bomb	40	T	8	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
Photon Bomb	40	F	8	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading

Heavy Laser	Gatling	18	F	6	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Laser	Gatling	18	A	2	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Laser	Gatling	18	P	4	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Laser	Gatling	18	S	4	Beam, Double Damage

Shuuka-class Queen Light Cruiser

Skirmish

Young Queens rarely have the opportunity to command fleets of their own and are instead usually used to support older Queens in managing over-sized fleets. Occasionally, one or more Shuukas will be seen leading a small expeditionary force into enemy territory.



Speed: 6
Turn: 2/45°
Hull: 6
Damage: 19/4
Crew: 28/6
Troops: 6
Craft: 6 Klikkita flights
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 6, Carrier 3, Flight Computer, Interceptors 2, Jump Engine
In Service: 2256+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Photon Bomb	20	T	2	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
Photon Bomb	20	F	2	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading

Skrunnka-class Assault Ship

Designed to batter through defences and launch shuttles filled with vicious assault drones, be it at an enemy ship or enemy-held world, the Skrunnka is tough and can weather the most devastating attacks. It lacks a wide range of offensive weaponry, leading the Queens to wield its legion of assault drones as they would any other ranged system.



Speed: 8
Turn: 1/45°
Hull: 5
Damage: 38/7
Crew: 50/10
Troops: 16
Craft: 2 Klikkita flights, 8 Breaching Pod flights
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 6, Carrier 3, Interceptors 2, Jump Engine, Shuttles 8
In Service: 2255+

Raid

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
Heavy Gatling Laser	12	F	4	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Gatling Laser	12	A	2	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Gatling Laser	12	P	2	Beam, Double Damage
Heavy Gatling Laser	12	S	2	Beam, Double Damage

Stak-class Scout

Patrol

Often the first sight a visitor to Gaim space will be greeted with, the Stak is used to routinely patrol the border of Gaim worlds. In wartime, groups of Stak will work together as they cross into enemy held systems, cataloguing defences and fleet compositions, hammering at enemies with its gatling laser if forced to engage.



Speed: 10
Turn: 2/45°
Hull: 4
Damage: 8/2
Crew: 18/4
Troops: 3
Craft: 1 Klikkita flight
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 2, Scout, Stealth 5+
In Service: 2252+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
--------	-------	-----	----	---------

Gatling Laser	8	F	2	Beam
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Stuteeka-class War Carrier

Raid

The largest warship without a Queen in the Gaim fleet, the Stuteeka is weakly armoured and in need of constant protection. However, its massive hangers house racks upon racks of Klikkitas, ready to launch within minutes and overwhelm the enemy in sheer numbers.



Speed: 6
Turn: 2/45°
Hull: 4
Damage: 50/14
Crew: 68/16
Troops: 9
Craft: 16 Klikkita flights, 2 Breaching Pod flights
Special Rules: Anti-Fighter 6, Carrier 8, Interceptors 3, Jump Engine
In Service: 2261+

Weapon	Range	Arc	AD	Special
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Photon Bomb	30	T	4	AP, Energy Mine, Double Damage, Slow-Loading
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Campaigns: Refits and

Other Duties

Gaim Intelligence Fleets use the following tables for Refits and Other Duties when playing campaign games.

Gaim Intelligence Refits

2d6 Refit

- Advanced Jump Engines:** The ship gains the Advanced Jump Engine trait, so long as it already possesses the Jump Engine trait.
- Adaptive Weapons Mount:** Choose one weapon system. It immediately changes to a Turret firing arc.

2d6 Refit

- Super Bomb:** One Photon Bomb weapon system gains the Super AP, Double Damage and Slow-Loading traits.
- Advanced Sensor Arrays:** The ship gains a +1 bonus to any attempt it makes to target an enemy with the Stealth trait. This may only be applied once.
- Long Bomb:** One Photon Bomb weapon system gains a +50% bonus to its Range.
- Heavy Bomb:** One Photon Bomb weapon system gains 2 Attack Dice.
- Integrated Sub-Drone Network:** Whenever the ship loses a trait, roll a dice. On the roll of a 4 or more, the trait is retained.
- Reinforced Hull:** Add +10% to the ship's Damage score but reduce Speed by -1.
- Supercharged Thrusters:** The ship gains a +1 bonus to its Speed score.
- Extra Hanger:** The ship immediately gains two flights of fighters (or two extra flights if it already possesses fighters).
- Neo-Queen:** The ship has an embryonic Queen on board. If the fleet loses all of its other Queens, this ship will not have its Crew Quality reduced. All other penalties apply as normal.

Gaim Intelligence Duties

2d6 Other Duty

- 2 **Contact Made:** A diplomatic mission to the local Raiders has paid off well. You may immediately add one Raiders ship (or wing) of your choice of Skirmish or lower Priority level to your fleet roster.
- 3 **Power of the Intelligence:** During the next Campaign Turn, you may force a re-roll when either determining the scenario or points value of *one* battle.
- 4 **Now You See Me...:** This ship has been conducting scouting exercises all over the system, forcing other fleets to chase it as it gathers crucial information. You gain a +2 bonus to your Initiative for the next Campaign Turn.
- 5 **Accelerated Drone Construction:** The drones of this ship are dedicated to the building of a new vessel. The RR points of any one ship bought as a reinforcement in this Campaign Turn are halved (round up).
- 6 **Upgraded Drones:** A new strain of drone is being experimented with on this ship. All flights of fighters launched from this ship increase their Dogfight score by +1.
- 7 **Hive Mind:** Knowledge and technical ability travels fast in the Intelligence. Choose another ship in the fleet. You may immediately roll on the Refits or Other Duties table for it, without causing it to expend XP Dice.

2d6 Other Duty

- 8 **Hand of the Queen:** The drones on this ship have a direct and unbreakable link to their Queen. They gain a permanent +1 bonus to their Crew Quality score so long as a Queen is on the table. If all Queens are destroyed in a battle, this ship's Crew is immediately reduced to 0. This may only be applied once.
- 9 **We Will Fix It!:** Flooded with signals from the Queens, the minor drones on this ship begin extremely rapid repairs. All Damage sustained by this ship is immediately repaired.
- 10 **Diverting Raid:** Launching a lightning strike, the ship strikes at the heart of an enemy, causing him to draw ships away from his main force. Choose another player's fleet. In its next battle, it will have one less Fleet Allocation Points available.
- 11 **Superior Strategic Position:** A routine patrol uncovers a Strategic Target previously thought to be worthless. Immediately generate a new Strategic Target on the campaign map and mark it down as being under your control.
- 12 **Assistance Rendered:** A timely rescue mission to an allied ship in distress is well rewarded. You may immediately add any one ship of your choice of Skirmish or lower Priority Level to your fleet roster. This ship may be chosen from Earth Alliance, Narn, any League, or ISA fleet lists but it may not come from a fleet that you are currently fighting against in the campaign.

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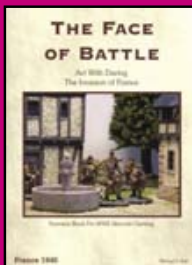
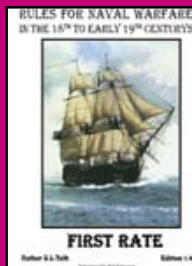
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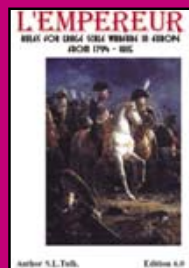
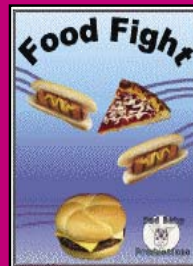
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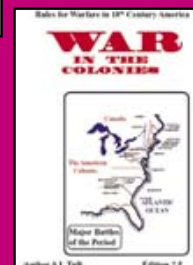
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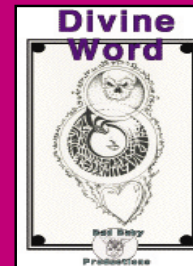
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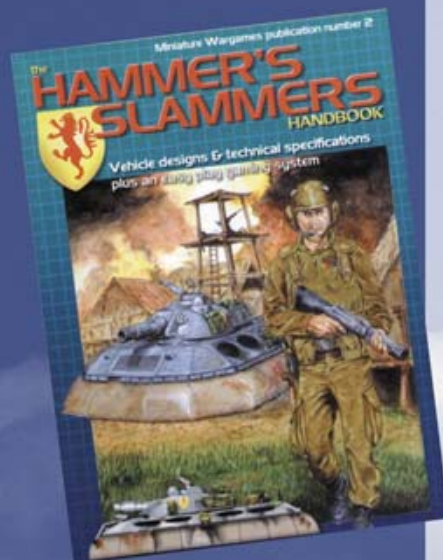
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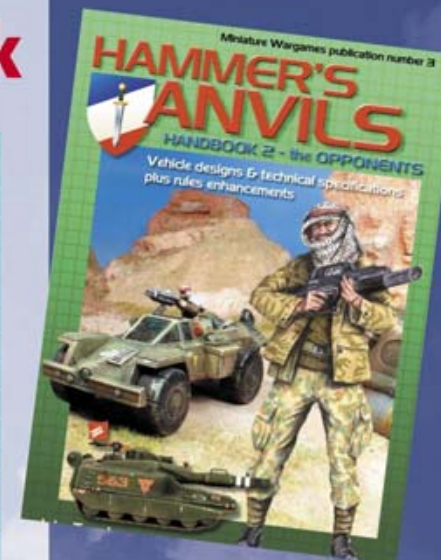
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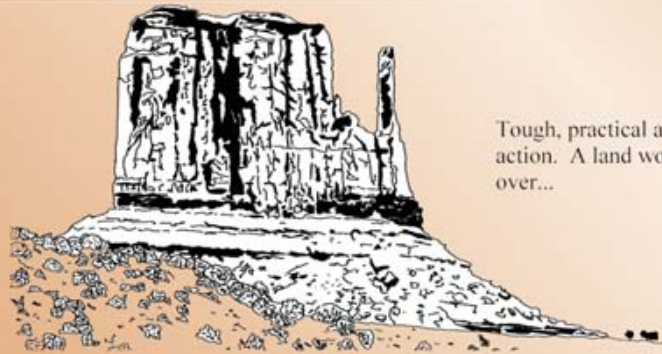


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The logo for Hawkmoon, featuring the word 'HAWKMOON' in a stylized, gothic font with a small hawk head integrated into the letter 'H'. It is set against a dark, textured background.

Ichthus of the Nazarene-Chapter IV of Ichthus for Life

By Richard Ford

The logo for Hawkmoon, featuring the word 'HAWKMOON' in a stylized, gothic font with a small hawk head integrated into the letter 'H'. It is set against a dark, textured background.

Steam rose from the stallion's hide as it strained under the command of its rider. Hot breath streamed from the horse's nostrils leaving a visible trail in the early morning light. Nezzether drove his mount onwards mercilessly. The old man resembled the Grim Reaper himself atop the glistening animal, his thin arms and gaunt face all that was visible beneath his dark mud splattered robes. As he closed in on the town ahead he looked over his shoulder, checking his wake. The trail was too clear, any pursuer would easily be able to track him. The Necromancer cursed harshly, sending flecks of spittle rolling down his chin. He had little time left but he would need a contingency in case his pursuers caught up. The townsfolk would have to suffice.

Shrew darted in and out of the shadows. The morning chill stung his short, bare legs but he knew his exertions would soon warm them. Gatham's market began early and Shrew knew that he had to begin even earlier if he was to benefit from the rich pickings available.

He felt something was amiss even before he rounded the corner to the town square. A kind of silent buzzing hung in the air, the kind that heralded a storm. Turning the corner Shrew froze as he took in the deserted square. Surely this could not be right, surely he was not so early that he had beaten all the stallholders to market?

As he gingerly paced across the cold flags he noticed that some of the stalls were already half set up. The fruit stall was empty but a barrel of apples sat unattended at its side and Hobart the fruit seller was nowhere in sight. Bisby the fishmonger's stall smelt pungent and alluring as usual but it appeared he had abandoned his only means of income to thieves like Shrew.

A sudden noise from a nearby alley made Shrew start. He silently crept towards the noise, using all his skill to avoid being seen or heard. As he looked around the corner towards the source of the noise his jaw slackened at what he saw. An old man in filthy robes was arguing with Bisby the fishmonger. Behind the pair were the rest of the market traders, all standing stock still, their eyes staring and vacant.

'Calm yourself,' crooned the old man, though Bisby was having none of it.

'What have you done to them?' yelled the fishmonger, 'you're a witch, the militia will have your head!'

Bisby turned back towards the market and Shrew saw it to be a fatal error. The old man produced a curved dagger from beneath his robes as soon as Bisby turned his back. Before the fishmonger could walk two strides the old man pounced. With a strength that belied his seeming frailty he plunged the dagger into Bisby's back. The fishmonger froze, a look of bemusement on his face. As he stared forward a sudden trickle of blood ran from the corner of his mouth. Shrew

was sure Bisby was staring straight at him, his eyes pleading for some kind of help. Another second passed and the fishmonger slumped forward, the dagger still protruding from his bloodstained back.

Shrew made to leave. He had seen enough and did not wish to risk being discovered. As he tried to turn he felt his legs suddenly stiffen. Panic began to rise from the pit of his stomach and he looked around desperately for help.

'Come here boy, you won't be harmed.'

Hearing the voice was like listening to a grating millstone and a soothing lyre all at the same time. Shrew felt the irresistible urge to obey the voice, to abandon his plans for escape and walk towards the old man. Looking up he saw the aged crone was staring at him, the piercing eyes shadowed beneath ancient brows.

'Come my friend, I have a little favour to ask.'

Without hesitation, doubt or apprehension, Shrew walked forward, eager to fulfil the wishes of his newfound friend...

Flight to Gatham

Nezzether has fled towards Gatham and the party must pursue him, little knowing that he has left yet more surprises in his wake.

Background & NPC Motives

On his way to the Sword of Babel (which he located well before travelling to the underground monastery), Nezzether has stopped off at the town of Gatham. In case any of his pursuers survived his summoning of the zombie horde he has laid one more trap to cover his escape. Using his most wicked enchantments the Necromancer has bewitched a number of townsfolk with a Hypnotism spell, causing them to fall under his thrall for a limited period of time. These unfortunates faithfully await the party just south of Gatham.

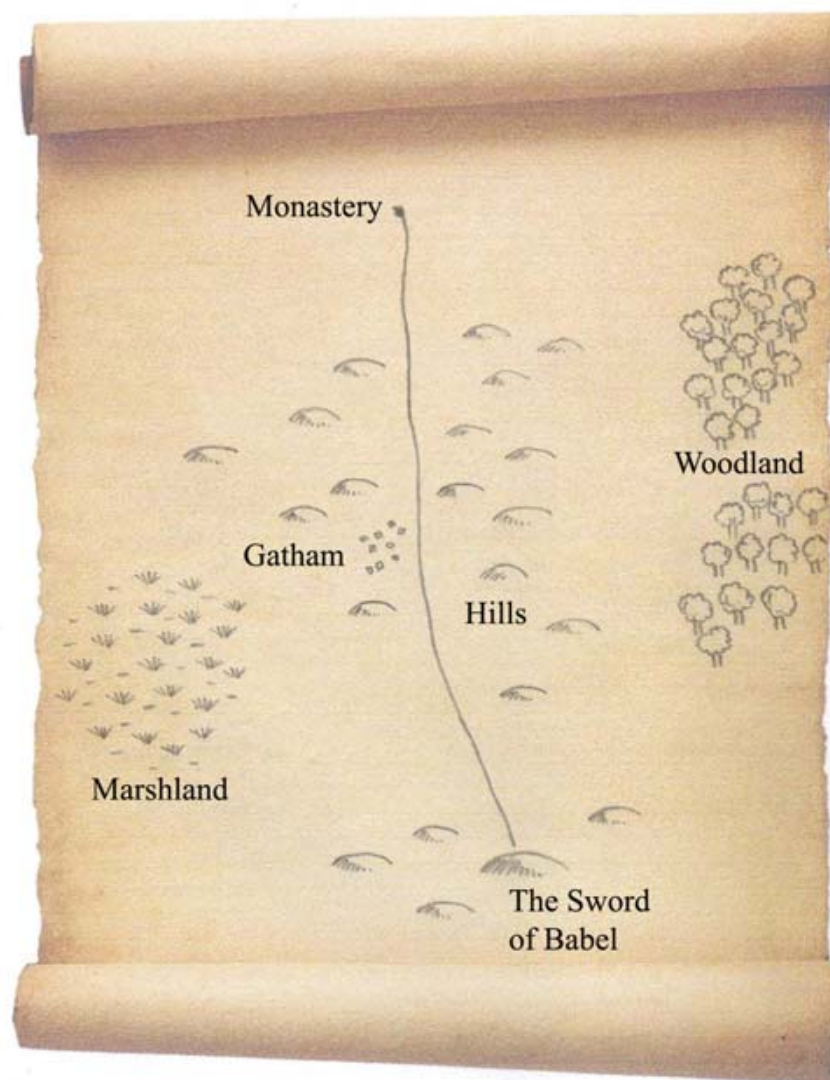
What Happens

The party should be hot on Nezzether's heels. If they have any sense they will have taken some of the Granbretanian horses, if they do not have mounts of their own. The map they found in the monastery is easy enough to follow and the path it shows to the Sword of Babel's location will take them close to Gatham itself.

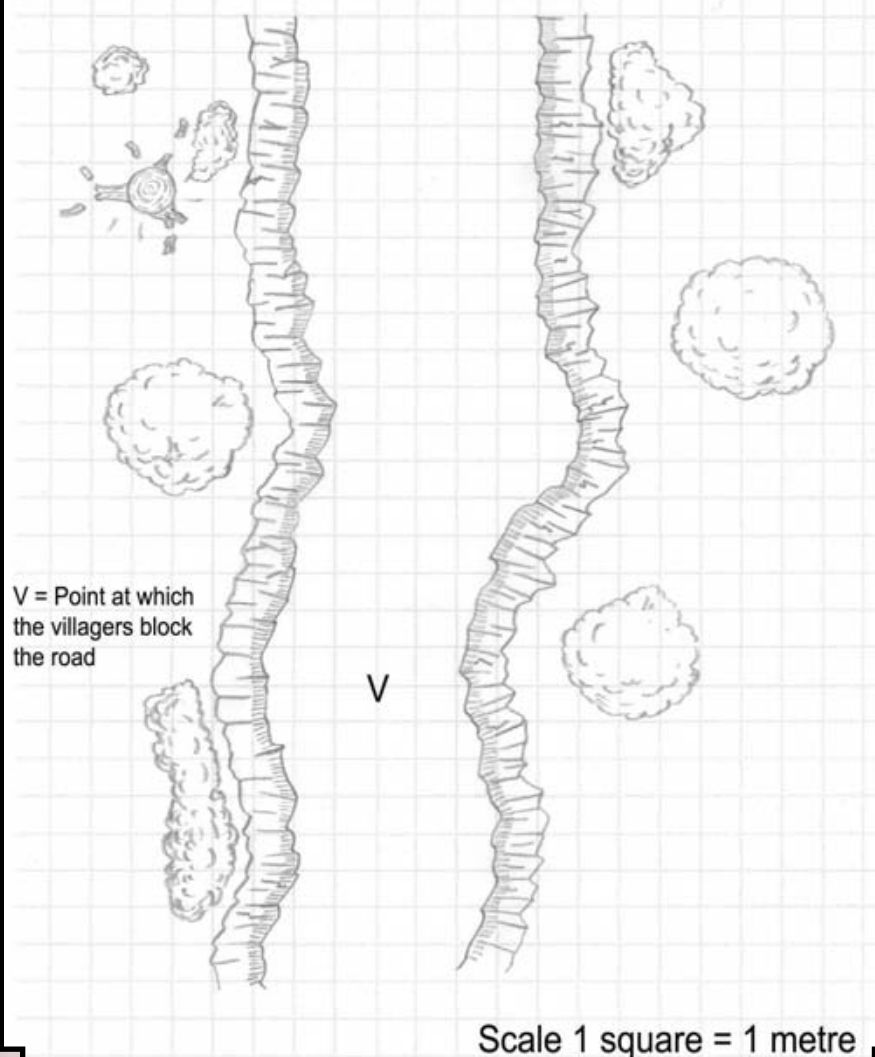
As they veer south after passing the town the road will lead into the hills. After some time travelling the party will suddenly find their way barred.

You slow your pace a little as you see something blocking the road ahead. In the distance you can barely make out the shapes of several figures. They are crowded together and immobile, seemingly mesmerised by something. As you draw closer you see the figures are simple townsfolk, all from different walks of life, all standing stock still in the middle of the road. Smithies, farmers, seamstresses, even small children block your way forward and your every fibre screams at you that something is amiss.

The Map from the Monastery



The Road South



At this point the party can choose to leave the path and skirt this living obstruction although this may cost precious time. A Tracking Skill Test will show that Nezzether has definitely passed this way but taking a diversion into the hills may cause the party to become disorientated and lose their way. Should they choose this option they will eventually find the path again (but make the party work for it) but will only reach the Sword of Babel after Abbassyn has been summoned (go straight to **Face the Demon**).

If the party choose to confront the townsfolk they will find that a simple greeting is met with silence. Nezzether has provided his victims with simple instructions: should anyone try to pass they should be stopped; should anyone enquire about him they should be killed immediately. Therefore, if the party ask whether the townsfolk have seen Nezzether they will be set upon by the incensed crowd amidst cries of 'Protect the Master!' If the party simply try to push their way past, the townsfolk will restrain them until the party fight back.

Obviously the party should be discouraged from killing the good people of Gatham, they are the innocent victims of a foul Necromancer after all. Killing them may not be avoidable, though it will damage the party's reputation beyond repair.

After the party's encounter with the townsfolk, Nezzether's spell will slowly wear off. The victims of his enchantment will remember what they have done but will not understand why, some may even retain an unshakeable affection for the strange old man who spoke to them so kindly earlier in the day. If the party fought back and wounded or killed any of them it will be reported to the authorities without delay.

Alternatives

The party once again have the option of reporting back to Castle Brass before pursuing Nezzether. This will have a good and a bad option. Obviously they will have back up when facing the townsfolk of Gatham, as Count Brass will provide a unit of Kamarg Guardians

to accompany them. The Guardians will restrain the villagers long enough for the party to escape and carry on their pursuit. However, the delay will provide Nezzether enough time to summon Abbassyn (go straight to **Face the Demon**).

Skipping Gatham altogether is also a viable option. The party may wish to ignore the map they find at the monastery and take a direct route to the Sword of Babel. If this is the case they may or may not reach Nezzether in time to stop the summoning. Test the party's powers of orientation to the full, should they pass they will catch up with Nezzether just in time, otherwise Abbassyn will be waiting...

NPCs

Possessed Townsfolk

The townsfolk of Gatham are a usually friendly breed. They live on a kind of frontier between the civilisation of the south and the relative lawlessness of the north. This has bred a hardiness within them coupled with a temperate, outgoing nature. Nezzether's victims however share none of this for the time being. They will act as automatons until activated by a passer by and then will strike. Due to the mixture of profiles what follows is an average. Feel free to adjust this as you see fit.

For statistics for the townsfolk use the Peasant on page 139 of *Hawkmoon the Roleplaying Game*.

The Summoning

Nezzether now has all the components he needs to resurrect Abbassyn but can the party stop him before he does?

Background & NPC Motives

Having reached his goal with the ingredients for his diabolical spell, Nezzether has readied himself for the effort to come. Before the party arrive, the Necromancer will have meditated and flayed his body with thorny branches to discipline himself for the trials ahead.

The Sword of Babel is atop a hill, skewered into the ground. Only six feet of the sword is visible and those stumbling on it by chance would think it a stone monument rather than an ancient holy weapon. Wreathed in vines and other flora the huge weapon blends into its surroundings and would be almost invisible if one did not know where to look.

Usually Nezzether would prepare the ground for the summoning but such was his haste that he does not have the candles, salt or iron bars one would normally prepare before casting such a spell. Besides this Nezzether does not believe he needs to be protected against the master he has served for most of his life.

Without thought to his own or anyone else's, safety he will begin his conjuration...

What Happens

The following will take place as Nezzether casts his spell. You may have the party arrive and interrupt Nezzether at any point you see fit. Obviously if the party are too late Nezzether will finish his spell before they arrive and Abbassyn will be ready and waiting.

An unearthly mist descends over the hills as though blanketing the wicked deed to come. Before the huge

stone sword kneels Nezzether, the back of his robes lacerated and torn and his back bleeding from a hundred tiny gashes. His arms are splayed outwards, his right hand grasping the Ichthus so tightly that blood runs in rivulets from his palm. Before him lays the Cross of Septimus, the lead bound resting place of a once great hero, soon to be defiled.

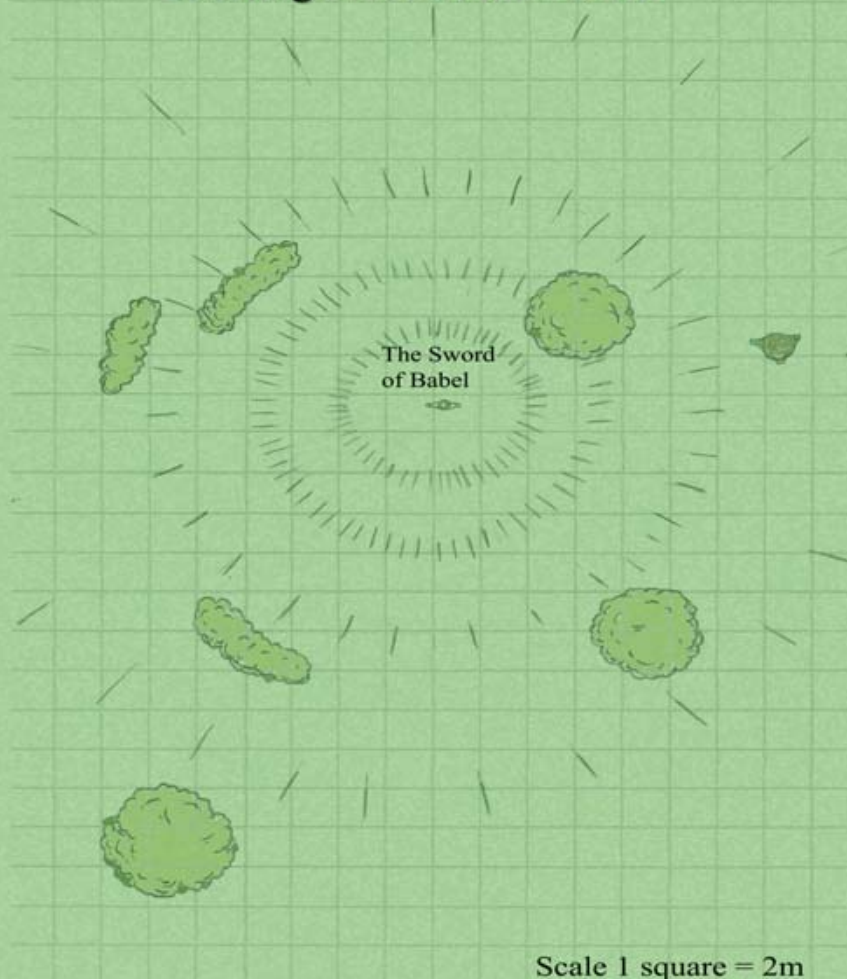
The hill is silent but for Nezzether's incessant mumbling, a mumbling which slowly gains volume. As the ancient litany grows louder the air around the hill somehow begins to chill, the mist growing thicker with it. Nezzether's words are now painfully audible in the cold air.

'...soter, uiou, theou, christos, iesous, soter, uiou, theou, christos, iesous...'

Repeated over and over again. At first this seems to have no other effect than to fill the atmosphere with a pall of tangible dread until suddenly the Sword of Babel begins to shudder. The huge stone weapon shivers as though some unseen force beneath the ground had grabbed the blade and were pulling itself upwards. The vines and shrubs growing up the blade and wrapped around the hilt wither as though ten years had passed in an instant.

Nezzether slowly lifts his head, the ancient face a mask of concentration. His incessant chanting carries on, never wavering or breaking its rhythm. After grasping the heavy lead cross laid out before him, the Necromancer slowly stands, his knees trembling slightly with the exertion. As he approaches the Sword of Babel it continues to shake, sods of earth at its base churn and writhe, something is yearning to rise, something hidden deep, something that is not meant to be resurrected.

Resting Place of the Sword



Flipping open the face of the cross the old man stands facing the stone monument. Still grasping the Ichthus in his bloody hand he reaches inside and grabs a handful of Septimus' ancient remains. Still reciting his canticle he throws the ashes at the Sword of Babel. Again and again he reaches in, defiling the Cross of Septimus and the memory of the great hero of the Tragic Millennium. Again and again he bathes the Sword of Babel in the remains of its final wielder.

In response, the sword's quivering subsides. It seems calmed by the ashes as they bathe the blade and hilt. Soon the sword is still and even the air seems to calm itself, no longer filled with tension and anticipation.

Nezzether empties the cross of its contents and ceases his chanting. He staggers back, dropping the now useless lead cross at the base of the sword. The Ichthus still digs into his palm and he slowly raises it to eye level. Tears well in the old man's eyes and he suddenly seems bereft. With a snarl he hurls the Ichthus aside and drops to his knees, weeping uncontrollably.

Before the first tears from his eyes hit the ground Septimus' ashes begin to dance. The grey powder that now peppers the Sword and lies scattered on the ground moves with a strange vigour. Nezzether suddenly realises what is happening and staggers back his jaw slack and wide. The ashes lift from the ground and begin to swirl. At the same time a distant howling rises like that of an enraged animal or maybe it is the force of the wind. The swirling grows and intensifies as does the hideous whine. Within the vortex of ashes two figures seem to solidify. One is that of a hideous winged beast, the other dressed in the garb of a warrior. Both are locked in vicious combat, clawing and hacking at one another. Eventually the demon is victorious, casting down the warrior who explodes in a grey mess.

The vortex subsides, as does the howling and Nezzether is left standing alone once more. This time though he does not weep, this time he stands in triumph and waits.

Where the Sword of Babel meets the earth sods of dirt billow up once more. The dirt accompanied by a thick tar that oozes out and congeals into a massive black blob. Nezzether drops to his knees and kisses the ground as the black gelatinous mass begins to rise up and take shape. The tar steadily takes form, huge arms, muscular legs, powerful black wings and that face, so malevolent and wicked. Finally the beast opens its eyes and surveys the world for the first time in a thousand years. Abbassyn the Corruptor, Lord of the Black Light, Keeper of the Dark Faith, Wielder of the Sword of Babel, walks in the lands of men once more...

By spreading his blood upon the Ichthus, Nezzether is defiling its purity. This, along with reading the Litany of the Ichthus backwards, summons the spirit of Abbassyn from its infernal resting place. To give Abbassyn form, Nezzether spreads the ashes of the demon's conqueror on the Sword of Babel. Thus reversing the defeat and giving Abbassyn's spirit the power to take solid form.

As the forms of Abbassyn and Septimus fight amidst the vortex of ashes the characters will see that the image of Septimus resembles the party member selected to be his reincarnation. When Abbassyn finally rises this player will feel weakened and fearful (causing them 1D6 CON damage).

Alternatives

Depending on whether the party reach Nezzether in time there is a chance they can stop the

Necromancer before he completes his spell. If they manage to attack or subdue Nezzether before he spreads Septimus' ashes on the Sword of Babel the summoning will be broken and Abbassyn will be unable to rise.

If Isabella still accompanies the party you may choose to deal with her in one of two ways depending on the finale you want. She may side with her father, unable to resist his power and either protect him as he finishes his spell or complete it herself (as the party restrain Nezzether, Isabella picks up Septimus' ashes and flings them against the Sword). On the other hand she may attack Nezzether without warning, furious at having lived a lie all her life.

The Awakening

If the party are too late to stop the summoning Abbassyn will rise and he'll be in a bad mood...

Background & NPC Motives

Abbassyn is in a weakened state having just taken on material form. However, he is still a formidable opponent, more than a match for most humans. There is a way the party can despatch him but it will be rather unexpected.

Nezzether having now completed his task will await his reward but may receive rather more than he bargained for...

What Happens

The huge ape-like demon will rise up, flexing the sinew of his muscles and spreading his leathery

wings. If Nezzether is still alive and the party have revealed themselves, he will beseech his master to destroy those that would intrude on Abbassyn's rebirth.

Combat against Abbassyn will be difficult but not impossible, particularly if the party have gained allies along the way. Abbassyn is quite vulnerable and his energy low but he is powerful in attack. He will wrench the Sword of Babel from the ground and go about slaying his enemies immediately.

The quickest and easiest way for Abbassyn to be taken down is if he faces Septimus' reincarnation. This battle should be played up for drama, with Abbassyn recognising his nemesis and flying into a fiery rage. Unable to resist a second chance at defeating his ancient enemy, the demon will concentrate on attacking Septimus reborn and ignore his other assailants. This battle should be of epic proportions with mighty blows being swung on both sides. If the Septimus player is struck a Major Wound, read the following:

Abbassyn lifts you into the air as you fight for breath, skewered on the huge stone blade. The demon smiles at you, rapturous in victory over his age-old enemy, his teeth black, his breath fetid. Your blood runs in a shallow river down the sword's blood gutter and trickles onto Abbassyn's giant hand. There is a sudden hiss and a stench of burning. Through delirious eyes you see steam rising from the demon's hand where your life's blood has touched it. Abbassyn howls in agony, shaking his arm desperately trying to release the sword but his grip is unbreakable. You feel the sword pulse with raw energy as your blood purifies the ancient weapon. The demon's howl rises to an ear piercing scream as the irresistible force of purity you

have spilled on the sword courses through his body. Light, whiter than any you have ever seen shines from his mouth, nose and eyes. His face cracks open, then his chest, revealing more light. As you close your eyes against its intensity you feel yourself fall to the ground, still pierced by the solid stone weapon. When you open them again Abbassyn and his sword are gone, dissolved by the pure energy within you.

The party member will now be dying through blood loss (despite their purity destroying Abbassyn will not heal them). The rest of the party must act quickly to save them. If none have the idea of using the Ichthus then one of their NPC allies will.

Having successfully dealt with Abbassyn the party are now free to return the Ichthus to Castle Brass.

Alternatives

There are several ways to deal with Nezzether at this juncture. Obviously the party can simply kill him and have done with it, which would probably give them the most satisfaction. There is also the option of having Abbassyn kill the Necromancer, the old man having served his purpose. The party may wish to capture Nezzether and return him to Count Brass, in which case you may have him escape at a later date and search for revenge. You may wish to have him escape as the party fight Abbassyn, in which case he will shadow the party, a constant thorn in their side in future adventures.

There is always the chance that the party will not wish to face a huge malevolent demon and instead, erring on the side of caution, will flee screaming into the night. In this case Abbassyn will be free to

roam the countryside until he gains enough power to use the Ichthus and complete his diabolical plans. If the party steal the Ichthus before they escape, Abbassyn will hunt them to the ends of the earth to retrieve it.

NPCs

Abbassyn - Greater Demon

Abbassyn epitomises evil. He needs no rhyme or reason for his deeds, in his own mind he is all powerful and nobody may question his motives. Years of banishment to a planar limbo have made him even more twisted and he will stop at nothing to remain on Earth. Despite this, seeing his ancient nemesis will drive him into a rage whereby he will forget his personal safety if it means destroying Septimus a second time.

When Abbassyn is summoned he will be severely weakened (the following profile reflects this). The demon is confused and may well lash out at the first thing that moves, including Nezzether. Until he has regained some of his strength his spell casting abilities will also be severely impaired and he will not be able to use them for several days.

Characteristics: STR 20, CON 20, DEX 20, SIZ 25, INT 30 POW 25, CHA 20

Skills: Athletics 100%, Dodge 70%, Influence 100%, Lore (History) 90%, Lore (Military Tactics) 150%, Lore (World) 120%, Perception 90%, Persistence 100%, Resilience 150%, Survival 150%

Sorcery: All 50%

Armour & Hit Points

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	8/8
4-6	Left Leg	8/8
7-9	Abdomen	8/9
10-12	Chest	8/10
13-15	Right Arm	8/7
16-18	Left Arm	8/7
19-20	Head	8/8

Demonic Hide: -0% Skill Penalty

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage / AP
Sword of Babel	120%	3D8 / 9

Special Rules *Combat Actions:* 4, *Strike Rank:* +25, *Damage Modifier:* +1D8, *Movement:* 6m

Out of the Frying Pan

After successfully despatching Abbassyn the party will now be in possession of the Ichthus. Unfortunately an old acquaintance may delay them.

Background & NPC Motives

Count Guntha (if he still lives) will have tracked the party from the Monastery of Septimus. Now accompanied by two Black Knights he is hell-bent on retrieving the Ichthus since it has now become apparent that Alcardy has failed. Still desperate for a cure to his ailments he will now stop at nothing to complete his mission and will take full advantage of the costly encounter the party have just faced.

What Happens

As the party travel back towards Castle Brass, Guntha will choose the right time to hatch his plot, preferably before they have had a chance to use the Ichthus' healing properties to restore themselves. The party will meet him on the road and Guntha will explain that he was sent by Count Brass to see how the party have progressed. After ingratiating himself in the party he will then decide which method is best to achieve his ends. If the party are severely weakened by their encounter (i.e. have not used the Ichthus to fully restore themselves) Guntha will take the direct approach and attack. After meeting the party he will disappear, soon returning with his Black Knight allies. Before the party can enquire who these two strangers are, Guntha will demand that they hand over the Ichthus or die! Obviously after coming so far the party should be at least a little apprehensive before handing over their prize. The ensuing battle should be vicious and neither Guntha nor the Black Knights will flee or surrender until they have wrested the Ichthus from the party or lay dead in pools of their own blood.

If the party are at full strength, Guntha will have to use his cunning to steal the Ichthus. He will request that they allow him to accompany them on their journey back to Count Brass and will pick his moment. If during the journey the party suggest that Guntha use the Ichthus to heal his leprosy he will refuse. He knows full well that the Ichthus will not heal a man with a dark soul such as his and if it is suggested he will avoid the subject. If Guntha and the party are getting close to Castle Brass and there has been no opportunity for him to steal the Ichthus, the stricken noble will resort to his plan B. Using a potent sleeping draught, Guntha will attempt

to drug the party and steal the Ichthus. There is a chance however, that one or more members of the party will resist the draught. When all are camped for the night Guntha will offer to provide them all with his own blend of herbal tea. There may be some who refuse anything from Guntha so hideous is his affliction and they will also go un-drugged. The drug is as follows:

Name: Sleeping Draught

Type: Ingested

Delay: 5 Rounds

Potency: 78

Effect: Induces sleep

Duration: 2 hours

Once the party have been drugged Guntha will take the Ichthus and run or call his dark allies to despatch any of the party who are still conscious.

After Guntha and the Knights have been dealt with, the party will be free to return the Ichthus to Count Brass with no further incident.

Alternatives

If the party decide to stop off in Gatham on their journey back, Guntha will intercept them there. The Black Knights will not accompany him into the town but instead wait for him outside. They tend to shy away from built up areas, preferring the concealment of forests and other isolated areas. Guntha will stay with the party until they leave the town, choosing to strike when he is close to his allies. For the purposes of this adventure Gatham is an unremarkable town and the party will not run into anything dangerous there, unless of course they slew the townsfolk in the section **Flight to**

Gatham in which case the town's militia will want a quiet word.

If through his cunning or strength of arms Guntha succeeds in stealing the Ichthus he will return it to the Black Knights immediately. The Knights have no pressing plans for the Ichthus, which gives the party plenty of time to hatch a plan for its retrieval.

NPCs

Black Knights

Guntha's allies are extremely deadly. Not only are they well versed in the martial arts and swordsmanship but they know something of the black arts too. Clad from head to foot in black armour the knights are silent and mysterious. They say very little to Guntha, considering him something of a bumbling idiot, though they tolerate him for the good of their mission. The Black Knights appreciate the need for secrecy on their mission to retrieve the Ichthus and will therefore not intervene or reveal themselves unless absolutely necessary. Their orders are simple: aid Guntha in his retrieval of the Ichthus; do not return without it. They will obey these orders to the letter, whatever the cost.

Characteristics: STR 14, CON 13, DEX 12, SIZ 14, INT 14 POW 14, CHA 12

Skills: Athletics 40%, Dodge 50%, Lore (Military Tactics) 50%, Riding 40%, Survival 40%

Sorcery: Boost 60%, Ignite 55%, Neutralise Magic 60%

Armour & Hit Points

D20	Hit Location	AP/HP
1-3	Right Leg	6/6
4-6	Left Leg	6/6
7-9	Abdomen	6/7
10-12	Chest	6/8
13-15	Right Arm	6/5
16-18	Left Arm	6/5
19-20	Head	6/6

Plate (suit): -42% Skill Penalty

Type	Weapon Skill	Damage / AP
1H Sword	65%	1D8+1D2 / 4
Target Shield	50%	1D6+1D2 / 8

Special Rules *Combat Actions:* 2, *Strike Rank:* +13, *Damage Modifier:* +1D2, *Movement:* 4m

Threads

This section details the possible finales and further adventures you may wish to use for Ichthus of the Nazarene.

The party successfully return the Ichthus

If you wish to conclude the adventure and tie up all its loose ends then you should have the party return the Ichthus to Count Brass and he will deal with it accordingly. As a final chapter you may wish to decide what the nobles do with the Ichthus (destroy it, hide it or harness its power for good) and have the party present when they make their decision.

If the nobles decide to hide the Ichthus it will be spirited away and the party will never see it again. Should it be destroyed, a ceremony will take place

that will include all of the nobles. Should they choose to harness the power of the Ichthus it will be taken away and examined with representatives of each major country present.

For all intents and purposes the party will never see the Ichthus again and their reward for their diligence and bravery will be the gratitude of the nobles. Count Brass in particular will remain a powerful ally of the party.

Betrayal by the Nobles

There is a chance that one of the nobles might decide to take the Ichthus and use it for their own aims. When the party return to Castle Brass they will be greeted as heroes but will soon be met with more tribulation when the Ichthus goes missing once more. Any of the nobles may be to blame but all will have different motives for the theft.

If Duke Manuel decides to take the Ichthus it is only because he wishes to use its powers for healing. Dieter Von Rechtsburg will wish to have the Ichthus to increase his power and status. He will defend the item with his life and the party will be hard pressed to retrieve it from him. The Mermians will wish to experiment with the Ichthus and draw as much power from it as possible. If they steal the Ichthus they will disappear underground, somewhere in Europe. The Knights of Aragon will take the Ichthus back to their King in Espanya and beseech him to use it in the battle against their many enemies.

You may wish to run this conclusion as a kind of mystery, with the party investigating each noble to uncover the thief.

Abbassyn on the Loose

If the party fail to destroy Abbassyn at the climax of the adventure he will now be roaming the land planning his next step towards global domination. The demon is in a temporarily weakened state but it will not take him long to regain his strength.

Hopefully the party will have managed to steal the Ichthus and made their escape. If this is the case, Abbassyn will be hot on their heels, hell bound on reaping his revenge and reclaiming the Ichthus. The party should be able to reach Castle Brass before Abbassyn finds them and you can then stage a battle between the Kamarg and a very annoyed, Greater Demon.

Should the party flee, leaving Abbassyn the Ichthus he will have the object of his desire and be in a very advantageous position. It will not take Abbassyn long to corrupt the Ichthus and the party will need to reclaim it before the demon has a chance to grow in power.

Nezzether's return

Towards the end of the adventure, Nezzether may make a dramatic escape. Should the party then succeed in their mission to destroy Abbassyn and avert a catastrophe, the Necromancer will be out for revenge. Secreting himself in remote places the Necromancer will set about gathering new followers around him after the destruction of his Guardians. He will do everything in his power to exact a bloody vengeance on the party, plaguing them at every turn, whilst he also plots to raise Abbassyn once more.

The party would do well to destroy him and save themselves the trouble of facing Abbassyn for a second time.

Gatham's Vengeance

If the party harmed any of Gatham's townsfolk in their pursuit of Nezzether there will be all hell to pay. A bounty will be raised on their heads and any popularity they had will be lost.

The Black Knights

The mysterious Black Knights may be further involved in one of two ways. If the party managed to overcome Guntha and his armoured companions then the order of Black Knights will be after their blood. They will hunt the party in search of vengeance for the deaths of their brothers (although the death of Guntha means relatively little) for deep is the fraternal bond within the Order of Black Knights.

Alternatively, should Guntha escape with the Ichthus the party will be forced to pursue him and retrieve the artefact. There will be little chance they can track and catch him before he reaches the Black Knight's base and they will therefore have to launch a surprise attack. As soon as Guntha delivers the Ichthus he will be disposed of in a most gruesome manner – the Black Knights have little time for worthless lackeys – leaving the party to deal with the well-armed and armoured contingent of mystical warriors.

Isabella Turns

After helping the party defeat her insane father, Isabella may have another turn of faith and seek the Ichthus for her own ends. She is distrusting of the European nobles, particularly Count Brass. When the party are about to deliver the Ichthus to the Count she will strike and take the Ichthus (although after all she and the party have been through together she will not wish to harm them). It will then be up to the party to retrieve the Ichthus once more but this time without harming the thief.

On the other hand you may wish for Isabella to simply turn murderously against the party in revenge for their 'murder' of her father. In this case the party may have no other choice but to kill their former ally.

Abbassyn the Corruptor

Lord of the Black Light, Keeper of the Dark Faith, Wielder of the Sword of Babel

Little is known of Abbassyn's origins. It is said he has travelled widely throughout the Multiverse for millions of years, building his powers through devious and backstabbing means. Although all demons are said to be cunning and self serving Abbassyn seemed to excel, even whilst possessing relatively little power.

His earthly name is thought to have been derived from Latin, though the origin of its meaning has been lost. Abbassyn is said to be an amalgamation of the following: *Ab*, meaning 'from', *Basio*, meaning 'kiss' and *Synodus*, meaning 'fish'. The demon's interest in the Ichthus and the power he could

potentially draw from it have been inextricably linked with the fish aspect of his name but this has never been confirmed.

By destroying his demonic brethren or turning them to his will Abbassyn slowly grew in strength. During his younger years a war was struck up between the powerful Greater Demons on another plane. As battles were waged throughout the Multiverse he sat back and watched as his enemies destroyed themselves, only ever rearing his head to cause yet more rifts and feuds. Whispering his poisonous words in the ears of the powerful, Abbassyn gained the trust of his Masters until the time was right for him to destroy them. Throughout the time of his rise from obscurity to might, Abbassyn gained the title of 'Corruptor'.

When the devastating conflict was over, Abbassyn had become a potent force; wicked and wise. He set about gaining followers and starting his own foul religion that spread across the Multiverse into many worlds.

After centuries of recruitment Abbassyn had enough acolytes to follow his new religion and make his move: domination of all the Multiversal realms. These 'Followers of the Dark Faith' would be his key to victory.

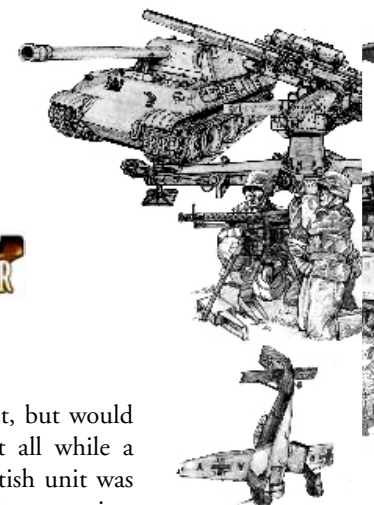
Abbassyn has since been trying to spread his contagion across worlds and would have succeeded had he not been banished into limbo by Septimus for a thousand years. Once he is free, Abbassyn fully intends to continue the spread of his cankerous influence throughout the Multiverse.



HEROES OF THE DAWN

A BATTLEFIELD EVOLUTION BATTLE REPORT

MATTHEW SPRANGE AND NICK ROBINSON



Leaning from the open cargo door of the Dakota, Lieutenant John Melville glanced down at the gloomy French countryside. Just minutes away from their target, he knew the German army was down there somewhere, waiting for him. His old school chum, Lieutenant Michael Randall had gone missing after a German advance in this area, and the Resistance had fed back intelligence to the Red Devils that British servicemen were being held prisoner in a bombed-out village, waiting to be shipped back to Germany. It had to be Mike!

He turned back into the cargo plane and felt the tense atmosphere of his men, the fixed stares, and the nervous fidgeting. Sergeant Boswell gave him a grim smile from beneath his bushy moustache, and Melville nodded. Checking his Sten gun one more time, he waited patiently for the pilot to announce they were over the village. Time to do Gerry a bit of no good, and rescue some friends into the bargain...

RESCUE!

After the disastrous performance of my Commandos in last month's battle report, we decided to give the Brits a chance to regain some honour. Nick would take on the role of the Germans, and this time I would try my hand at the Red Devils – the British Paratroopers! The idea would be to free a few of the Commandos captured by the German forces. Just the kind of mission the Paras are suited for!

THE MISSION

We decided to try a completely new scenario this time, fitting with the background behind our story – it is always worth spending a few minutes deciding why your forces are fighting and what they might be trying to achieve in the wider scheme of the war, as this makes your soldiers far more than faceless fodder. Heroes might arise from your ranks, and you can chart the progress of a platoon or company throughout the war.

The German Grenadier force would be set at 1,000 points, but Nick would be forced to split his army in two, and would only start with the smaller force on the table. The Paratroopers, in turn, would have 750 points, and deploy their entire force by parachute on the first turn. Both forces could only choose from their Command, Squad and Support Assets – no Armour or Aircraft!

We would also be using the Night-Fighting advanced rules until Turn 4, when dawn would break.

The Grenadiers would set up first, no more than 12" away from four prisoners we had placed within some ruins. They would not be allowed to take any actions at all until either the British caused them to make a Reaction or until Turn 4, whichever came sooner – they are not expecting any attacks this far behind the front line, and are taking it easy after their vicious scrap with the Commandos.

The rest of the Grenadiers would only be allowed to enter from their table edge the turn after the British have been detected, either by forcing a Reaction or by having dawn break. Even then, each unit would need to roll a D6 at the start of every turn, needing a 5 or more to appear.

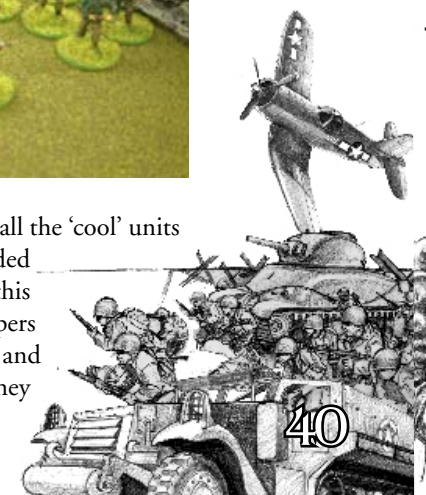
The four prisoners formed their own unit, but would not be permitted to take any actions at all while a German unit was within 6", unless a British unit was also within that range. They are being held at gunpoint, but the German forces may not attack them until they have taken an action.

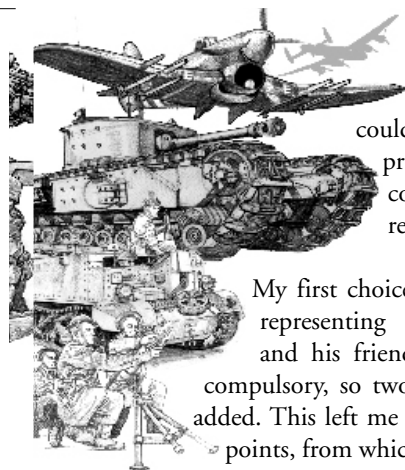
Victory would be decided by the number of prisoners free at the end of the battle. Four free prisoners would result in a major victory for the British, two or three a minor victory, and one a draw. If no prisoners are freed, then the day will belong to Germany!

BRITISH PARATROOPERS



Matthew: After getting caught up in all the 'cool' units available to the Commandos, I decided to go for a much more regular force this time. It was clear that the Paratroopers would need to hit the Germans fast and hard, knock out as many units as they





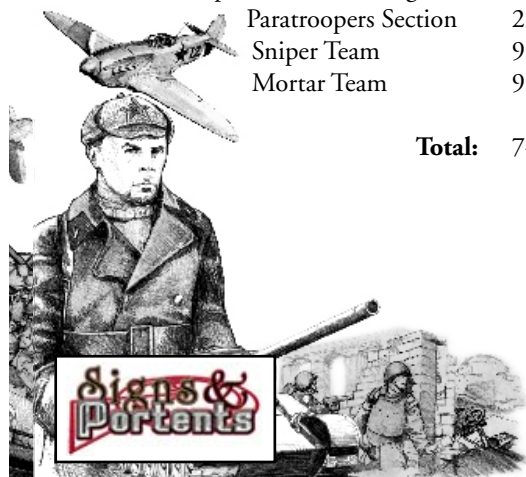
could and begin spiriting the prisoners away before Nick could overwhelm me with reinforcements.

My first choice was a Command Section, representing Lieutenant John Melville and his friends. Two Squad Assets are compulsory, so two Paratrooper Sections were added. This left me with a little more than 200 points, from which I could choose a couple of Support Assets. The Bren or MMG Support Teams were very attractive, especially as I had played a battle the previous weekend where MG42's had been dominant. However, I decided to play a slightly more tactical game, with a Sniper and a Mortar Team. Both would be deployed further back than the main rescue sections, lending support to the attack and then cover for the retreat – I would also have to remember not to shell my own prisoners!

As a final touch, I swapped out the Lee-Enfields of one the main fire team of one section with Sten guns. The initial fighting was likely to be close and bloody, and the additional short-ranged firepower was going to come in handy. The other section would hang a little further back, either acting as a reserve if the first took heavy losses in their assault, or providing support with the Bren gun armed fire teams for the retreat.

Command Section	90 points
Paratroopers Section (Sten guns)	230 points
Paratroopers Section	230 points
Sniper Team	95 points
Mortar Team	95 points

Total: 740 points



GERMAN GRENADIERS

Nick: A thousand points in total allows a pretty impressive force to be used if there are no armour or aircraft.

The smaller of the split forces (just) included a Grenadier squad, a Volksgrenadier squad, two medium machine squad support choices and a mortar for a total of 490 points. By splitting the grenadier squad I would be able to take maximum advantage of all the terrain within my deployment zone. These should prove more than tough enough to hold back the paratroopers until my reinforcements in the form of Force B to arrive.

The Volksgrenadiers and grenadiers would provide the staying power, whilst the mortar and machine guns would take up defensive positions that should make it very difficult for Matthews troops to succeed in their mission.

I started with a command squad that was lacking its second team. This cost a mere 35 points, but to these three brave men I added the ability to call on heavy artillery and a 250/1 halftrack. This gave me a nice flexible unit that, when it arrived, had the ability to flush out any tough enemy units.

To support the command squad I decided to take two more Grenadier squads. These tough troops would come on in separate teams as reinforcements meaning I had a very good chance of enough troops arriving to turn the battle in my favour.



Force A

Grenadier Squad	160 points
Volksgrenadier Squad	80 points
Medium Machine Gun	90 points
Medium Machine Gun	90 points
8cm Mortar	70 points



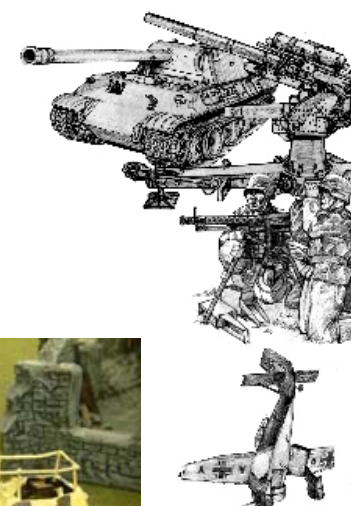
Force B

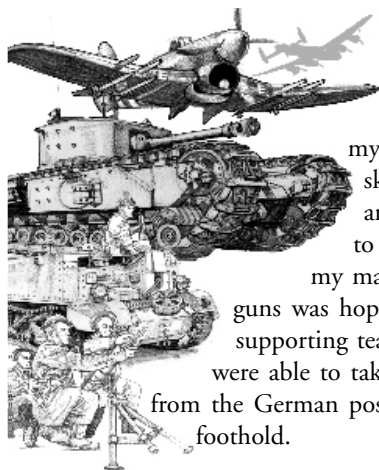
Command Squad	185 points
Grenadier Squad	160 points
Grenadier Squad	160 points

TURN ONE



Matthew: Well, the battle started off with the drops not going quite as planned. A fierce wind was blowing





across the village, pushing my units off course. Being the skilled parachutists that they are, the Red Devils managed to correct for this slightly, but my main assault section with Sten guns was hopelessly out of position. The supporting teams fared a little better, and were able to take position far enough away from the German positions in the ruins to get a foothold.



Nick: According to the scenario rule my troops could only start to act as a result of enemy action or when daylight arrived. So my troops were all standing around smoking cigarettes and poking fun at the soon-to-be-executed commandos, and there was nothing else they could do this turn.



as they launched their attack against a Grenadier squad hidden in the nearby woods.

The Grenadiers, terrified at the sound of the sudden gun fire, sprinted away from the angry Brits – right into the teeth of the Command Section, who had broken out of the cover provided by several large bomb craters. Their Sten guns and rifles chattered away, dropping two Grenadiers.

Meanwhile, the mortar team opened up with a wild shot, dropping it neatly into the shattered church, but barely wounding the Grenadiers taking cover inside, even as the 'reserve' section moved up to the intact building.

As the German forces gradually realised they were under attack, they mobilised, and their own mortar proved deadly accurate on its first shot, causing devastating losses on the reserve section as a shell dropped among them. Desperate to avoid more shelling, they dove into the building, but their Bren fire team suffered even worse as a 42 from inside the ruins revealed itself, ripping through them.

The Grenadier machine gunners inside the intact building were still firing hurriedly, not having had time to set up their 42 properly, but the bullets still proved telling, as the Corporal of the assault section succumbed to their fire. However, his squad mates avenged him well as their SMGs peppered the building at very short

range, killing the machine gunner and his loader.

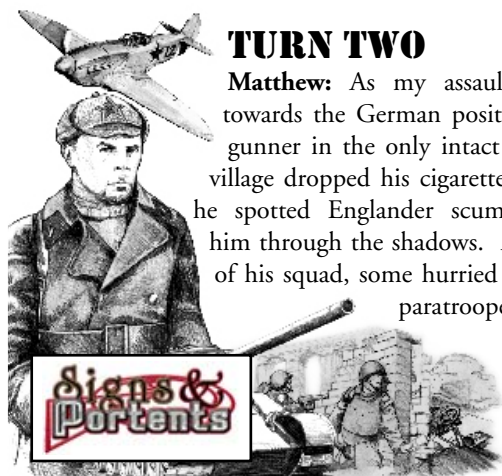
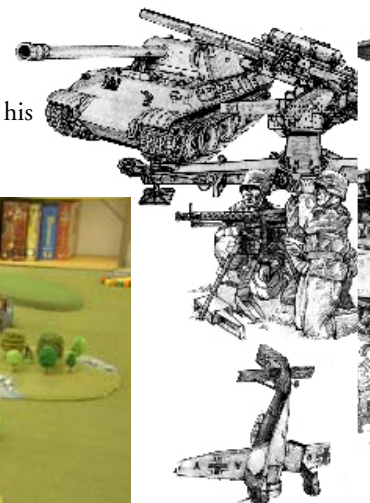


Nick: My team of Grenadiers in the woods were the first to come into contact with the enemy, and retreated from their exposed position deeper into the woods as the paratroopers advanced. As they advanced again my MMG let rip, getting rid of two of the paratroopers. The Grenadiers did not get away without casualties, however, as the flanking command squad took down two of their number.

It was then my turn. The mortar proved extremely effective, reducing one British section by more than half, whilst the MMG whittled down the other large section to just four, but they took down the gunner and loader. This left just the SMG armed third member of the team able to use their second action, he charged down upon the previously mortared section, killing another one of them.

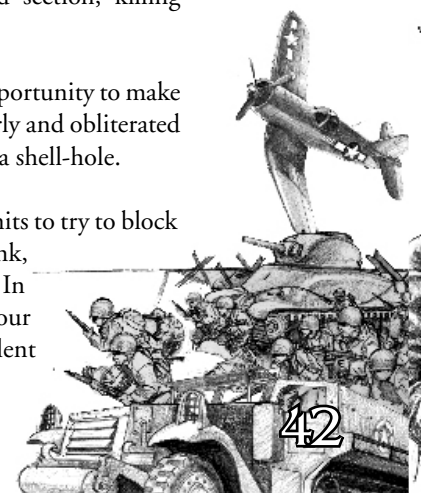
My other MMG team now had the opportunity to make a difference, so I set up the gun properly and obliterated the three man Bren section hiding in a shell-hole.

I now began to move the remaining units to try to block the British advance upon my right flank, since that was where the threat was. In all a good first turn, I had lost just four men to eleven paratroopers, an excellent ratio!

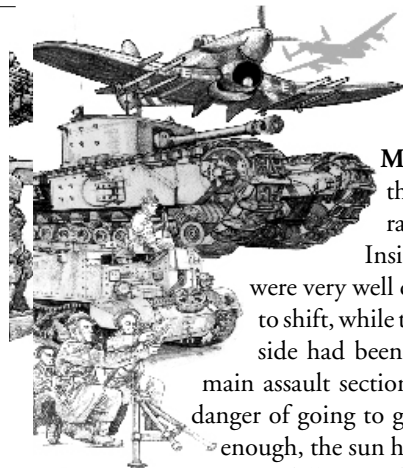


TURN TWO

Matthew: As my assault section crept towards the German positions, a machine gunner in the only intact building in the village dropped his cigarette in alarm when he spotted Englander scum hurrying past him through the shadows. Alerting the rest of his squad, some hurried shots catch two paratroopers off guard just



42



TURN THREE

Matthew: I began to realise that my original plan was rapidly being dismantled.

Inside the ruins, the Grenadiers were very well dug in, and proving difficult to shift, while the losses on the paratroopers side had been heavy. Added to that, my main assault section was now leaderless and in danger of going to ground! If that were not bad enough, the sun had now arisen, and my force was in full view of the defenders.



Trying to wrest victory from the teeth of imminent disaster, the assault section gathered their courage and charged into the woods to give the Grenadiers lurking inside a taste of good old British cold steel! With knives and the butts of their Sten guns, the paratroopers laid their enemies out cold, and took the woods, while they surveyed the rest of the battlefield, wondering how best to proceed.

Lieutenant Melville was leading by example, and he crossed the remaining ground to the ruins, gaining entry – I had my foothold, and the prisoners were just yards away!

The Grenadier mortar team inside were surprised by their entry,

but responded quickly, killing the Lieutenant and his Sergeant before they had a chance to find adequate cover. When the Volksgrenadiers flanked the remains of the Command Section, the firefight was brief but final. My foothold in the ruins had been repelled with great efficiency.

Elsewhere, things were going even worse. My sniper lined up on the gunner of the 42 in the ruins, but succeeded only in giving away his position. A hail of fire from the machine gun put an end to his war. He was avenged by the Bren team in the hilltop woods, who raked the ruins with fire at extreme range, finally silencing the German machine gun for good. The mortar team had the same idea, but they misjudged their target somewhat, landing a shell very close to the prisoners, killing one outright! The fact that he also took three Grenadiers with him was of little comfort.

To top all that, the German reinforcements began to arrive in the form of two fire teams, one of whom promptly wiped out the remains of the assault section. If Lieutenant Melville had been alive, he might have thought seriously about calling off the operation at this time- however, in his stead, I decided to give it one more turn before conceding, hoping for a miracle.

Nick: Reinforcements were now due to start appearing, not the command squad, but two machine-gun armed teams of Grenadiers did arrive. I would not bring these into play until I had to.



Matthew's killing of one of his own commandos was a good step in the right direction for me. My two units that had been most heavily engaged were wiped out on Matthew's turn and he had men inside the main building. This had to change.

I used the Volksgrenadiers to take care of the enemy command section inside the building, whilst my reinforcements dealt with the remnants of the British assault section. The other reinforcements managed to whittle down one of the mortar squad as well.

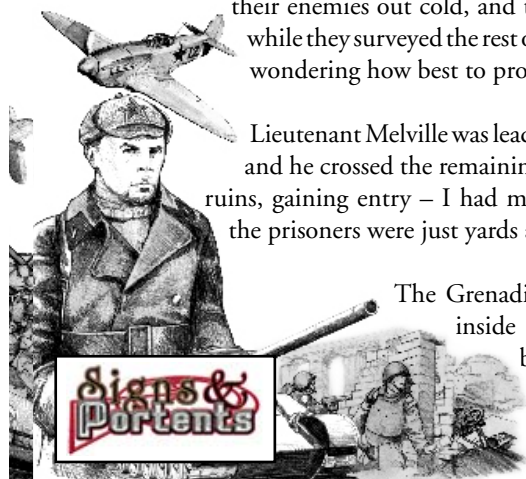
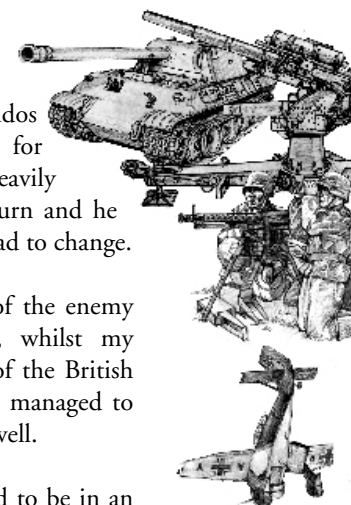
Turn 3 had gone well and I know seemed to be in an excellent position. Another ten rescuers and one of the prisoners were dead, for the loss of nine defenders. But Matthew was rapidly running out of troops and with my two squads of reinforcements I had actually ended up with more men at the end of the turn that I had started with!

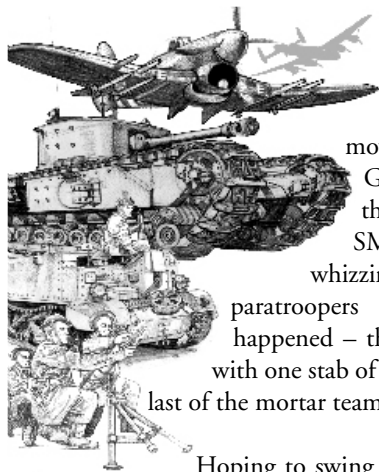
TURN FOUR

Matthew: Okay, this was the make or break turn. If I had another turn like the last, I might not even get a chance to concede, as my force would very likely be wiped out completely!



My 'reserve' section, few in number as they were after the mortar attack, were now promoted to assault status, and dashed from the intact building to the





ruins. It was a foolhardy move, as the leader of the Grenadier mortar team had them cold as he raised his SMG and opened up. Bullets whizzing past their heads, the paratroopers charged and my miracle happened – they avoided every shot, and with one stab of a long knife, finished off the last of the mortar team!

Hoping to swing the odds in my favour, and figuring the commandos could take whatever was thrown at them, my own mortar team shelled the ruins, hoping to catch a group of Volksgrenadiers out. The idea mostly worked, with body parts flying all over the place, but some of them belonged to yet another commando. This was getting ridiculous – half the prisoners were dead, and all at my own hands! Frankly, it was lucky that Air Assets had not been permitted in this game, or I might well have been dropping 500 lb. bombs on their heads...

By this time, the commandos had decided they had had enough. Seeing the reserve section just outside the ruins, they broke free of their bonds (having cleverly been rubbing the ropes against jagged stonework through the night), and leapt on the two Grenadiers that blocked their root to freedom. Bringing the men down, they sprinted out of the ruins for open ground!

The shout that the prisoners had escaped rang out across the German forces as they moved to try and block the commandos. The two remaining paratroopers of the reserve section decided, heroically I thought, to stay behind and cover the retreat of the commandos.

Nick: The escape of the commandos was a bit of a blow. Matthew had done just enough to get them off and running. I had another team of Grenadiers turn up as reinforcements and managed to take



out another of Matthew's mortar section. Other than that the turn was all about trying to get my troops into a position to intercept the commandos and the occasional (very bad) round of shooting.

I decided to take no notice of casualties from now on as it is not so much fun when it is mainly your troops doing the dying!

TURN FIVE

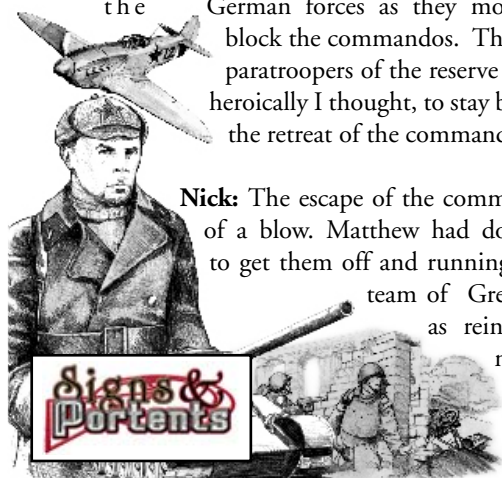
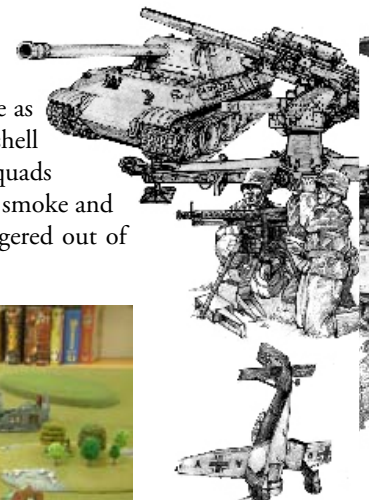
Matthew: Leaping out from behind the ruins, the two paratroopers sprayed the Volksgrenadiers with fire as the Germans tried to take position in the woods. Inflicting heavy losses, they managed to completely stall the advance, but ultimately paid for the attempt with their lives.

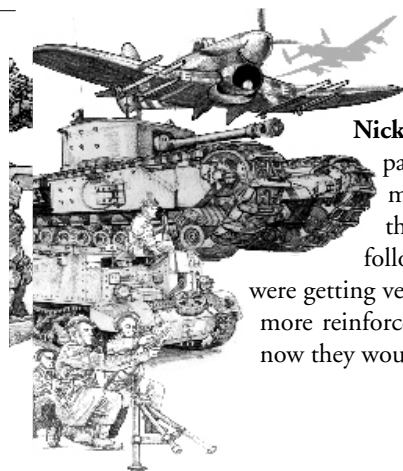


My mortar team finally proved as accurate as the Germans' own had been, landing a shell square on top of one of the reinforcement squads that had just entered the battle. After the smoke and dust had cleared, just one Grenadier staggered out of the small crater.



No more reinforcements arrived but, ominously, the sound of a halftrack began to grumble out from the Germans' rear lines. Trouble was coming, and a halftrack was exactly what my commandos did not need right now. They sprinted across the open ground in front of the ruins, heading towards the cover of another broken building that my sniper team had set up within.





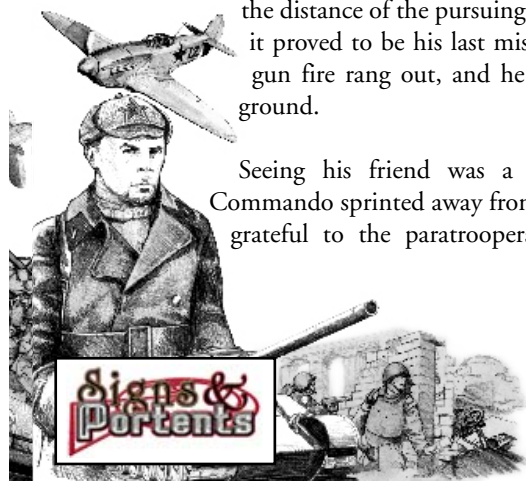
Nick: Ouch. This turn was painful as the British stymied my attempts at stopping them. More manoeuvring followed but the commandos were getting very close to freedom! And no more reinforcements, even if they arrived now they would be too late.



Turn Six

Matthew: Breathing heavily with the exertion, the commandos were literally running for their lives. Shots flew past their heads as they ducked and weaved between what little cover was around them, but they were almost safe behind the line created by the mortar and Bren gun fire team. One looked over his shoulder briefly to gauge the distance of the pursuing Grenadiers, and it proved to be his last mistake. Machine-gun fire rang out, and he dropped to the ground.

Seeing his friend was a goner, the last Commando sprinted away from the battlefield, grateful to the paratroopers who had lost



so much in rescuing him. One machine gun just moved into range and opened up, but only one of the commandos was brought down, allowing the second to use his reaction to escape off the board. Game over!

A COSTLY VICTORY

Matthew: A draw! And a very close game to go with it!

The battle had started very badly for me, with my paratroopers being wrong-footed in their deployment and caught out by Grenadier units inside cover – infantry in cover can be very difficult to shift in this game! Their losses were horrendous, and Nick had been able to throw me out of the ruins once before I could launch another successful attack (though, to be fair, I had only managed to get a four man Command Section inside, hardly an overwhelming force against the defenders).

I had been ready to concede at the end of turn three, but I hate giving up, so I plodded on, hoping something would occur to me. When the mad rush by my last section actually worked (charging a guy armed with a submachine gun behind cover – those two paratroopers were utterly bonkers!), I knew it was my last chance to spring the commandos out. I had hoped to be able to surround the commandos with paratroopers after neatly clearing the ruins of Germans but, in the end, it was the commandos themselves that had to do a lot of the work.

After that, it was a dash back across the table, trying to avoid the fire lanes Nick had created with his hideous, hideous 42's, knowing that any minute his own command squad, mounted on the back of a machine gun-armed halftrack, could arrive and effectively end the game with a single hail of fire. There was no way my commandos would have been able to evade that.

As it was, some lucky shots from Nick right at the end of the game turned it from a minor victory for the British, to a draw. We had managed to rescue one of the commandos, but it had cost more than half a platoon of men. I just hope that guy invents a better mousetrap after the war, or pioneers space flight, or something...

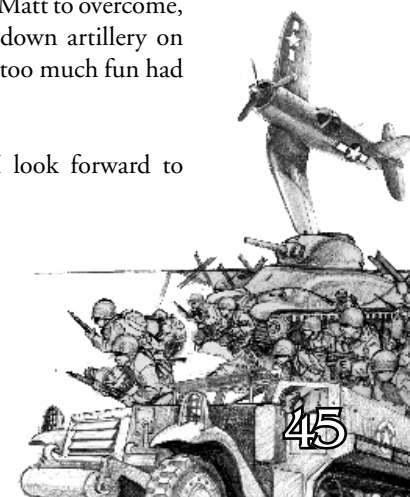
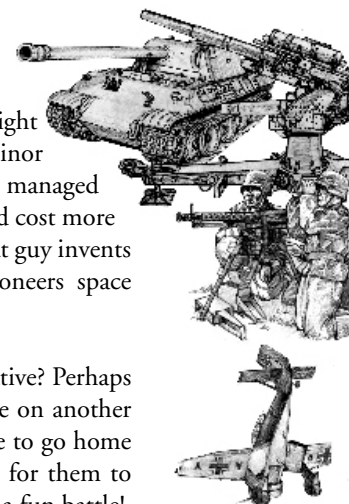
Still, where to go next with our little narrative? Perhaps this small force will be called upon to take on another mission, or maybe they will get the chance to go home to Blighty – a game with a C-47 waiting for them to board while Germans advance sounds like a fun battle!

SLIPPED THROUGH OUR FINGERS!

Nick: I thought it was all over by turn three and then I had to really work hard in order to get the draw. An unusual scenario, but an enjoyable one. Although if my command squad had turned up it would have been all over...

Overall my deployment was very sound, with the troops able to support one another efficiently and it took an act of real desperation on Matt's part to eke out a draw in the end. Looking back I would probably have swapped the command squad's artillery for upgrading the Volksgrenadiers to regular Grenadiers – the extra flexibility of being able to split the teams would have, almost certainly, proved too much for Matt to overcome, but I just wanted to be able to call down artillery on Matt's head – it would have been just too much fun had I had the opportunity!

This was another good game and I look forward to more battles in the future!





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THE MEREKHN



As a taster for the forthcoming *Cults of the Young Kingdoms*, we present for you here the Mereghn, a secretive and clandestine group of information-brokers and assassins at large throughout the Young Kingdoms. This article describes the Mereghn in-depth, offers a range of new Advanced skills and defines assassins as a profession for Elric of Melniboné adventurers.

THE MEREKHN

'Common assassins are easily employed, particularly in Bakshaan,' Elric pointed out softly.

– *The Stealer of Souls*

The 'most dispensable members of the community' is Elric's view of assassins and whilst it is easy for any man with a predilection for murder to set himself up as an assassin, there are those who consider what they do to be not only *essential* but *indispensable*. The Mereghn are one such group; however this is not mere guild of hired murderers but an entire network, secretive and manipulative, brokering information and dealing in death when the price is right.

The Mereghn flourish throughout the city states of Ilmiora. Originating in Bakshaan they are influential in Ilmar and Karlaak and have even extended their operations into Vilmir. Overseas the Mereghn's influence is not as extensive but the Mereghn have spies and agents everywhere, meaning that an assassination

contract that needs to be fulfilled in Aflitain can be administered as easily as in Bakshaan.

GODS/PANTHEON



The Mereghn are unaligned with any Higher Power, although individuals may belong to any cult they choose. If the Mereghn have any particular leanings, it is towards Chaos, although they will equally serve Law, if the price is met.

PURPOSE AND HISTORY

The name, Mereghn, comes from the Low Speech word for information: *mereghn'iagn*. Ultimately, information is what the Mereghn deal in, because knowledge and information is power. The Mereghn make it their business to absorb gossip, rumour, secrets, contracts, political deals and machinations, treachery and any kind of news that can be traded. They do this through maintaining a large network of informants, spies and eavesdroppers who are paid to feed what they see, hear and learn up through the network to the Mereghn's shadowy Council of Nine. The Council of Nine then takes great care to check and verify what it learns so that the information can be priced and then sold to those who would pay to have it. Because the Mereghn's network is so extensive, people approach it with the aim of finding specific news or disseminating it. As long as it is paid and its terms met, the Mereghn is happy to collect, share and spread information.

An inevitable part of the Mereghn's work is assassination. Its assassins range from the lowly hired thugs Elric alludes to; simple daggers-for-hire with little wit and absolutely no social capital, through to cunning, clever, incredibly competent killers who spend weeks, months and sometimes years planning a particular assassination. The Mereghn can supply an assassin of any level of competence; it all depends on who is to be killed and how much one is prepared to pay for it. Such is the Mereghn's reputation for secrecy, discretion and excellence, kings, queens, generals and high priests contract its services. The Mereghn *never* betray who has contracted them and they always complete a job. If they cannot, then the full fee is refunded, with no questions asked.

The Mereghn's roots are in the failing Bright Empire, when the Young Kingdoms began to truly assert themselves in the northern continent. Bakshaan and Ilmar were under Melnibonéan rule and these Dragon Princes and Ruby Throne Prefects subjugated and terrorised the humans under their control in a bid to avert the wars and rebellions being witnessed in the south, under the direction of Queen Eloarde and Earl Aubec of Lormyr. Galvanised by what was happening in the south, the Ilmiorans knew that attempting to overtly rebel would be met with apocalyptic force by the Melnibonéans. Instead, a slow, crafty war needed to be waged – one that would undermine Melnibonéan rule as well as challenge its confidence. The Ilmioran rebels centre in Bakshaan, thus began to build



information that could be used against Melniboné; the rebels colluded with and then informed against their Imrryrian masters, sowing seeds of discontent in sometimes innocuous ways but all the time eroding Melnibonéan belief that it needed to hold onto its northern territories whilst, in the south, its empire was melting away.

The tactic succeeded and although battles were fought against the Dragon Lords, the rebel forces were well informed about every aspect of their enemy's habits. When Melniboné finally retreated from the northern continent it was a victory not for arms but for mis-information, dis-information, mis-direction and the application of subtle intelligence to undermine confidence and commitment. As the Bright Empire retreated to Imrryr, those who had led this battle decided that they did not want to relinquish the power they had accumulated. In those turbulent days of the early Young Kingdoms, humans warred with each other in a bid for supremacy. The Mereghn emerged as key players in these city-state wars, being able to control the political outcome to their own advantage through the self-same tactics employed against Melniboné.

The Mereghn developed self-sufficiency in this period, known as the War of Words and Tongues and the organisation as it is known today came into being. Informants, spies and assassins were organised according to usefulness, connections, ability and discretion. The Council of Nine developed a complex code to ensure secrecy amongst those members privileged to know who they really worked for and to create the labyrinthine hierarchy that ensures information moves freely but no one truly knows where it goes and how it is used. The

Mereghn is therefore as much an ideal and a modus-operandi as it is a physical group. It is exceedingly wealthy but its wealth is distributed, hidden and often invested in legitimate enterprises. Its members may or may not know that they form part of the Mereghn network. It has safe-houses, meeting places and training facilities but all carefully hidden or masked so that legitimate, day to day activities can run alongside the true purpose of the Mereghn's physical assets.

The leaders of the Mereghn, the Council of Nine, never meet together. They are known to each other and to no one else. Those who work for the Council are most likely unaware of who they serve, even though they might know they are, themselves, Mereghn. Not that anyone would be foolish enough to try to unmask the Council of Nine: the Mereghn's roots are so deep, its abilities so finely honed, that anyone wanting to unravel the nature of the Mereghn would simply disappear, with nothing – not even a corpse – being left as a tantalising strand for someone else to pick at.

In a twisted way the Mereghn are honest and honourable. All services are open to negotiation and a central tenet of the organisation is a fair service at a fair rate. If a prized agent is captured, the Mereghn offer a fair ransom for his return – or the promise of sinister retribution if he is not. If a commission cannot be completed in a specific time, then the contract is cancelled and monies refunded. The Mereghn are scrupulously thorough and realistic in their logistics: if they say a job cannot be done, then they are usually right. If one of their number is murdered or tortured, the perpetrators are made to pay with their own blood and usually in grisly and inventive ways, thereby

reinforcing the message that the Mereghn *will not be messed with*. Conversely, those who assist the Mereghn, even unwittingly, are rewarded well and in ways that ensure the Mereghn cannot be readily identified as being behind the reward.

Beliefs

Whilst individual beliefs are impossible to quantify, the general guiding principles of the Mereghn are:

- * Knowledge is power
- * All information has a purpose
- * All information has value
- * Everyone can be manipulated
- * Everyone has a price
- * All prices are negotiable
- * Life, like knowledge, is a commodity

Mereghn are unsentimental about what they do. Political and religious boundaries mean nothing to them and no single power, be it mortal or supernatural, is unassailable. If contracted to do something, the Mereghn inevitably find a way. If they cannot, they do not take the contract and give their reasons why.

Note that the Mereghn do not control organised crime – although assassination and some forms of extortion are clearly within their province. The Mereghn do not control prostitution or gambling and take no cut of the earnings of those who serve the Mereghn but are involved in organised crime. Indeed, the Mereghn broker information that might be of value to the few organised crime syndicates that operate in the Young Kingdoms but the Mereghn are more akin to an independent secret service rather than the Mafia.

MEMBERS

The Mereghn are extensive but support five ranks:

- * Invisibles
- * Signatures
- * Journeymen
- * Savants
- * Councillors

Invisibles

One cannot apply to join the Mereghn. If the Mereghn wants someone, *they* will approach *him*. Very often recruitment is *invisible*; that is, a Mereghn agent is completely unaware of whom he works for. These invisible members form the vast bulk of the Mereghn network and include most of the informants supplying the Mereghn with information. Invisible informants come in all shapes and sizes; street-beggars, drunks, prostitutes, orphans, petty-criminals, thugs, small-time blackmailers, gamblers and so forth. Such agents equate to the lay-members of the Mereghn.

Invisibles are unaware of their status or presence within the Mereghn organisation. Despite this, they do receive certain benefits: see *Benefits* below.

SIGNATURES

Signature members are those who know that they work for the Mereghn and are aware of the level they occupy in the organisation. These tend to be skilled individuals who have displayed competence and loyalty in their given area. Signature members may have been promoted from the ranks of the Invisible

members or recruited directly. Signature members also include administration and support functions, such as trainers, armourers, quartermasters, transportation providers and so forth. They equate to the Mereghn's initiates.

Signature members are invited to become a formal part of the Mereghn if they fulfil the following conditions:

- * One Mereghn skill at 90%+, a second at 70%+ and a third at 50%+.
- * Have contributed information or services unknowingly at least twice in the last two years
- * Occupy a social position or move in social circles, deemed of interest to the Mereghn (high society; upper ranks of a cult; high-ranking guilds and so on).
- * Are prepared to swear a blood-oath to the Mereghn and receive the Mereghn Rune.

The blood-oath and receipt of the Mereghn Rune are fundamental and comprise of the two parts of the signature. The blood oath is simple: an agreement to keep all work and activities of the Mereghn an absolute secret and to accept death as a just punishment for betrayal.

The Mereghn Rune is a compact sealing the oath. The rune is nothing more than the word *mereghn'iagn* written on a small sliver of parchment, which must be swallowed. Swallowing the rune is the act of 'Taking the Signature'. It has no magical significance and does not initiate any form of Pact but it does seal the person into the formal membership of the Mereghn.

JOURNEYMEN

Journeymen are the acolytes of the Mereghn. They are responsible for recruiting Invisibles and Signatures and are thus expected to have built-up their own network of contacts and informants. Journeymen both carry out assignments and issue assignments to others. They are always responsible and accountable for their actions and the actions of their network. Thus, Journeymen must verify information supplied to them, when it needs verifying and if someone they have chosen for a contract fails, then the Journeyman is held accountable.

To become a Journeyman, the following conditions need to be met:

- * One Mereghn skill at 110%+, a second at 90%+ and a third at 70%+
- * Low Speech at 20%+
- * Have developed a network consisting of at least 8 Invisibles
- * Have completed a major assignment successfully for the Mereghn
- * Demonstrated complete loyalty to the Mereghn (abstracted through making a successful Influence test at -40% to the roll)

Journeymen receive a stipend from the Mereghn in recognition for their services. See *Benefits*, below.

SAVANTS

Savants are the captains of the Mereghn. They are responsible for a network of Journeymen and are expected to co-ordinate the flow of information and

the fulfilling of contracts but are not expected to undertake the work personally. A city usually contains three or four Savants and they are usually known to each other but do not meet. Savants report to the Councillors.

Becoming a Savant requires the following conditions to be met:

- * One Mereghn skill at 130%+, a second at 110%+ and a third at 90%+
- * Low Speech at 50%+
- * Have completed four major assignments as a Journeyman successfully for the Mereghn
- * Have achieved a position of social status useful to the Mereghn in a legitimate capacity
- * Demonstrated *continued* loyalty to the Mereghn (abstracted through making a successful Influence test at -40% to the roll)

Savants receive a stipend from the Mereghn in recognition for their services. See *Benefits*, below.

Councillors

Council of Nine. The Nine Councillors control all Mereghn activity. There is one Councillor for each of the nine city bases of operation: Aflitain, Bakshaan, Dhakos, Gromoorva, Ilmar, Jadmar, Karlaak, Old Hrolmar and Raschil. They are known to each other but do not meet. Communication is conducted using messages transported through Savants and Journeymen and occasionally, magical or sorcerous means. Despite being named for cities, the Councillors co-ordinate the work of the Mereghn for a whole country or region. All

information comes to them and they decide how it will be used and what price is set against it. Assassinations must always be ratified by a Councillor who then chooses the Savant who shall then co-ordinate the resources with his Journeymen and their Signatures.

Becoming a Councillor is purely dependent on a vacancy becoming available. A new Councillor is chosen from the very best Savants by the remaining Councillors. Candidates must travel to meet with each remaining Councillor, passing through a variety of Journeymen and Savants who each assess the potential new Councillor, before the face to face meeting with each Councillor. The process can take months to complete but once the candidate has met with the Councillors (perhaps the only time he will ever do so, face to face), the Council meets and decides on the new Councillor. Naturally, the unsuccessful candidates are sworn to absolute secrecy regarding their meetings and are rewarded financially for their efforts.

The new Councillor, once appointed, must move to the region for which he is responsible. He is then in full control of that region's activities and receives income equal to 25% of all revenue his region generates from contracts and so forth. He is expected to communicate constantly with the other Councillors, especially when he comes into possession of information that will be of particular interest to the whole Mereghn network and if a contract he is responsible for needs to be put into action in another Councillor's territory.

Councillors are all, without a fault, dedicated to the Mereghn utterly. They occupy positions of incredible influence and power and are party to secrets that

may be of Multiversal importance. A Councillor has to demonstrate constant tact and subtlety in his dealings and be capable of administrating the network of Mereghn operatives within his region firmly and capably.



Duties

The principal duty of all Mereghn is to gain and broker, knowledge. All additional activities are considered secondary. Knowledge is the lifeblood of the Young Kingdoms and with it, used in the right way, the Mereghn can make kings and cause the fall of empires. All Mereghn are on the look-out for information, no matter how small or insignificant it seems. Much of what they hear and see is never used but when information is put to work, the Mereghn ensure it reaps the maximum profit.

Every Mereghn agent is expected to watch and listen. Memory techniques are taught to enable perfect recall of conversations, faces and actions. Every detail is observed; from clothing worn through to small skin imperfections and particular mannerisms. When a Mereghn Journeyman recounts something he has seen it is possible to see the self-same scenario in the mind's eye exactly as the Journeyman witnessed it.

Invisibles

Invisibles are expected to just report what they see and hear, nothing more. Perfect clarity is not expected but honesty is. Those who control Invisibles – Signatures and Journeymen – are trained to detect lying. Invisibles are visited regularly by the Mereghn agents who control



them and are coached, rather than instructed, to find out something in particular or simply questioned, subtly, on what they know. They receive a generous payment in coin or something that is important to them but it is never ostentatious or over-generous. A starving beggar might receive a handful of coins and a flask of wine; a young serving lad or lass might receive a generous tip when they serve food or ale. Their presence and ubiquity is their key strength; their anonymity and invisibility a purposeful asset.

Signatures

Once brought into the fold, Signatures are expected to do whatever is asked of them: spying, blackmail, extortion, seduction, kidnapping, assassination. They are expected to follow instructions explicitly, having committed them to memory. They are not expected to question or deviate from a plan. Signatures are doers. They receive the support of the Mereghn network through the Journeyman and other Signatures who are brought in to assist.

If a task fails, they are expected to make a fast, invisible escape. If they are caught, they are expected to remain silent and betray nothing.

Signatures are also expected to build-up and cultivate a network of Invisibles to support the Mereghn network. If they receive information that requires verification, they are expected to do so themselves. Every Signature must liaise discreetly with his Journeyman on a regular basis, to exchange information and receive instructions.

Some Signatures spend years doing nothing except leading a normal life; yet if one day, they are ordered to take part in something momentous, there must be no argument.

Journeymen

Journeymen co-ordinate Signature activities and also lead special assignments. They are expected to act as the mid-level conduit for information, resources and activities, helping to plan and execute Mereghn business as required.

Journeymen meet with their controlling Savant regularly, if only to facilitate information transfer. Journeymen also take responsibility for finding trainers and experts to assist Mereghn activities, even if these people are completely unaware of their role in training Mereghn agents.

Savants

Savants act as counsel to the Councillor for their region. They also assist in creating and executing Mereghn policy, assessing special mission feasibility and co-ordinating local resources (including Journeymen) for executing Mereghn business. Savants handle all high-level Mereghn communications and are responsible for ensuring the tightest possible security for Mereghn activities in a particular area. When the Mereghn need to make their presence felt in an overt way, Savants act as the ambassadors and mouthpieces for the Council of Nine.

Benefits

The benefits of Mereghn membership can be vast although the risks are considerable. No Gifts or Compulsions are attached to Mereghn membership but the benefits available at each active rank are as follows:

Invisibles

- * Regular payments, in small sums and usually paid through the expected channels (a handful of coins into a begging bowl; a generous tip to a servant or inn-keeper, for example) of up to 500 Bronze per year.
- * Clandestine protection from those who might abuse or threaten the Invisible. If a Signature or Journeyman learns that one of his Invisibles is being exploited or mal-treated, he makes arrangements for the offender to be punished.

Signatures

- * Annual stipend of 1,000 Bronze.
- * 1% share of the value of any mission or assassination contract they take part in.
- * Cost of equipment and mission expenses met by Mereghn exchequer.
- * Training in three Mereghn skills (see below) provided free of charge (skills begin at base value) and training in other skills at half normal rates.

Journeyman

- * Annual stipend of 5,000 Bronze.
- * 5% share of the value of any mission or assassination contract they take part in.
- * Decent, discreet property in an appropriate location.
- * Cost of equipment and mission expenses met by Mereghn exchequer.
- * Training in a further Mereghn skill (see below) provided free of charge (skills begin at base value) and training in other skills at half normal rates.
- * Access to Mereghn-financed legal advice, where required.

Savants

- * Annual stipend of 10,000 Bronze.
- * 10% share of the value of any mission or assassination contract they take part in.
- * Excellent, discreet property in an appropriate location, equipped with household staff.
- * Cost of equipment and mission expenses met by Mereghn exchequer.
- * Training in a further Mereghn skill (see below) provided free of charge (skills begin at base value) and training in other skills at half normal rates.
- * Access to Mereghn-financed legal advice, where required.

The rank of Councillor is likely to be beyond most adventurers but benefits are double to triple those of Savants (depending on the Councillor's expertise).

Retribution

One cannot choose to leave the Mereghn. Anyone who decides to leave the organisation without the approval of a Councillor will be hunted under an assassination contract by their old colleagues. All Mereghn benefits are, of course, forfeit and the Mereghn will do everything in its power to advise against and silence, any members who turn rogue.

Politics

The Mereghn refrain from involving themselves directly in politics unless there is a clear agenda that needs pursuing – in which case, they pursue it ruthlessly and to their own advantage. The Mereghn's key aim is to maintain and perpetuate its position (and knowledge) but without becoming the sole agency of any one state. It has no interest in the Eternal Struggle unless such forces pose a direct threat to its own position – in which case it adopts an appropriate strategy of allegiance.

Internally, Mereghn politics are confined to the Council of Nine. It has been known for Councillors to disagree on a strategy and for an internal feud to arise, with local Mereghn agents used to fight the battle; however such a situation has not arisen for at least 30 years. Generally, the Mereghn refrain from placing those with entirely selfish interests in positions of internal power and influence, relying on those who cherish the key Mereghn cause above individual gain.

Relationships

The Mereghn maintain all manner of affiliations with those who can serve their cause. It has connections with most of the major cults and of course, in courts and governments, although these connections are always discrete and deployed with subtlety. Curiously, it is Chaos that has the greatest suspicion of the Mereghn, whereas Law sees the value of maintaining the Mereghn on their side; thus, the Lawful cults and churches are more predisposed towards the Mereghn's activities and do, when the need arises, make use of their particular skills and knowledge.

Special Notes:

Mereghn Skills

The following special, Advanced skills are available to Mereghn agents as part of their rank benefits.

Forgery (INT+DEX)

The skill of producing expert replicas of documents and texts. Time and materials are the two crucial elements of the Forgery skill and penalties to the test are imposed according to the complexity of the document in question. However, a successful Forgery test results in a replica that will pass for the real thing if no detailed scrutiny is applied to it. A critical success renders a copy that is virtually indistinguishable from the real thing.

GAMBLING (INT)

The ability to understand and play games of chance, including calculating odds, keeping one's composure under high stakes and noticing when someone is cheating or when a game has been rigged.

IMPERSONATION (INT+CHA)

The ability to replicate the voice, accent and mannerisms of someone else which, when coupled with Disguise, allows the Mereghn to impersonate another person accurately. For someone else to see through the impersonation, they must make a successful Perception test, opposed by the Impersonation skill. However, that person must have some underlying suspicion before the opposed test is called for.

INSIGHT (INT+POW)

Insight is the ability to read a person's verbal and non-verbal behaviours and signals to determine their motives and state of mind. Insight is used to determine if someone is telling you a lie or to determine how someone feels about a particular situation. It is distinct from the Perception skill, since it is used to detect subtle expressions of character and attitude, rather than tangible effects that can be assessed through general observation alone.

LORE (CIPHERS) (INT)

The Mereghn use many different codes and ciphers to protect their communications from prying eyes. This skill

tutors the character in the codes used by the Mereghn so that they can render information – be it written or verbal – into a code that can only be understood by a fellow Mereghn. The skill also allows the user to attempt to decipher intercepted codes from others.

MEMORISE (INT)

The ability to use a variety of memory tricks and approaches to commit names, faces, events, sequences and process to memory perfectly. If the Memorise skill is failed when a Mereghn agent is observing something, it requires a second, successful Memorise test to recall it in adequate detail. Otherwise, recall is always accurate.

TORTURE (INT+DEX)

This skill is used to torture victims into parting with information. Torture need not be physical; it can be emotional and psychological. To resist the torturer's efforts, the victim needs to succeed in an opposed Resilience test, if the torture is physical and Persistence if the torture is psychological or emotional.

The following skills are taught to Mereghn agents through approved trainers and mentors:

Acrobatics, Athletics, Courtesy, Influence, Lore (Plant), Lore (World), Mechanisms, Perception, Seduction, Stealth, Streetwise, Survival, Dagger, Garrotte, 1H Sword, Sling, Bow, Blowgun, Throwing Star.

New Profession:

Assassin

Assassins are killers for hire. They make their living through the amoral task of murdering for money. A good assassin does not care who he kills and never questions why the contract has been placed. He dispassionately assess the risks, clarifies the opportunities and then carries out the contract emotionlessly before disappearing into the night or the crowd, perhaps taking pride in a difficult job well-done.

Some assassins are simply thugs for hire who genuinely enjoy dealing in death. They employ little finesse and constantly take the kind of risks that invite capture or retribution. These common murderers can be found in any of the dingy inns and taverns lining the shadier harbour quarters of cities like Ilmar, Bakshaan and Raschil.

Others, the true masters of the art, view each contract as a challenge in its own right. Care is taken to assess all the risks, plan the killing down to the last detail and use every trick available to avoid detection and capture. The best assassins take weeks in painstaking preparation and leave no evidence of their presence (unless they wish to). Killing may or may not give them pleasure but ultimately the entire enterprise is viewed as a complex project that must be approached with the same critical and clinical eye as the best general preparing to win his next battle.

CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Civilised, Mariner, Noble

Regions

Ilmioran City States, Dharijor, Jharkor, Filkhar, Pan Tang, S'aleem (Unknown East – see the *Elric of Melniboné Companion*)

Basic Skills

Dagger +10%, 1H weapon +10%, missile weapon (bow, blowgun, sling, for instance) +10%, Stealth +5%, Perception +5%

Advanced Skills

Choose one from: Craft (Poisons), Disguise, Mechanisms, Streetwise, Survival

Optional Rule: MEREKHN ASSASSIN

If the character is from one of the Ilmioran City States there is a chance he is part of the Mereghn. Use the following process to determine if he is and if so, to what degree.

- * Roll 1D100. If the result is equal to or less than INT+CHA, then the character is a Mereghn assassin. A normal success means he is a relatively low-level operative, being handed relatively straightforward, unglamorous contracts. He is an Invisible but may be approached to become a Signature. He generally has one Contact and one Informer (see below)

- * If the 1D100 roll was a critical success, then the character is one of the Mereghn's Signature Assassins; that is, he is part of the Mereghn elite and is *automatically* an initiate of the organisation.
- * Mereghn assassins are permitted to take one additional Mereghn skill from those provided in the Mereghn Skills section, above. If the skill chosen is a Basic or Weapon skill, then it is at a +10% bonus. If the skill is an Advanced skill, it is at its base starting percentage
- * The Mereghn character must decide on the names of three Contacts – the people who regularly brief him and provide him with details of his next job. These contacts *always* operate under a code name and may come from any walk of life. The character should agree with the Games Master how each contact makes contact and where meetings take place.
- * The Mereghn character can also choose 1D3 Informers. Informers are lower-ranking Mereghn informants operating at street level. These informers provide rumours and information on a wide variety of areas. Contact with the informer is always discreet and the Mereghn character must pay for the information he needs. The Informer always has a Streetwise skill of 30+3D20%. The character must always protect the safety of his Informers, especially where information they provide is used in a sensitive contract.



Abandon Ship! - Survivors in Victory at Sea

by David Manley

Us wargamers are, on the face of it, a fairly callous bunch. Ships which are sunk are lost with all hands; tanks explode killing all within. There are no survivors. Fair enough, you might say; the tank or ship concerned is no longer a fighting unit and can be ignored as far as the rest of the game is concerned and in many cases I would agree with that statement. However, to ignore them completely is to ignore a whole spectrum of possible scenario ideas. I included rules for survivors in my 'Schnellboot' and 'Action Stations' WW2 coastal forces rules and their inclusion seemed to be quite popular. Players were faced with situations where, for example, their flotilla commander's boat was shot out from under him. In a 'normal' game that would be the end of it but with the survivor rules in play an extra dimension was added, as players tried valiantly to save their stricken crews from under the noses of the enemy. Having seen the system work for WW2 coastal forces games I decided to expand the idea and devised a set of rules for use with "General Quarters". However, the approach is just as valid for "Victory at Sea" and if anything, is easier to accommodate since VAS keeps track of crew casualties.

This variant is compatible with both original VAS and the modifications arising from "Order of Battle"

Catastrophe!

At some point during a game, it is almost certain that the crew of at least one ship will have good cause to evacuate their vessel. This

is usually heralded by blankets of smoke, deafening explosions, dramatic jets of water and big holes in the bulkheads. The time they have available to make their escape depends on the 'Mode of Loss (MoL) of the ship. MoL is expressed as one of three basic rates, which I shall call Long Term, Short Term and Catastrophic Failure.

Long Term Failure occurs when the crew have sufficient time to carry out an orderly evacuation. Examples are slow floods, most fires or contamination of a submarine's interior by some toxic agent. Contemporary examples are the abandoning of the *Achille Lauro* due to fire or the evacuation of 'Red October' due to a faked radiation leak in Tom Clancy's novel. In this case all those or at least a very high proportion of those aboard are assumed to have escaped. In VAS terms this mode of loss occurs when a ship is abandoned and scuttled but could otherwise remain afloat (this would be pretty rare in a straightforward tabletop game but would be a factor in a campaign game where a very slow or immobilised ship could be scuttled to save her crew and allow a task group to continue at higher speed). The ship model remains on the table. Crew can be taken off to another ship directly.

Medium Term Failure occurs when the crew have a fairly limited time to escape. Examples are the loss of the final damage point resulting in rapid loss of structural integrity and buoyancy. In this case the chance of escape is quite good. The ship model remains on the table but is

sinking. Roll a D6 at the start of each turn. The ship sinks on a roll of 5 or 6. Crew can be taken off to another ship directly all the time that the ship is still afloat. Once it sinks all remaining crew take to the water.

Short Term Loss occurs when the ship is lost in a short space of time (e.g. sufficient damage is caused to sink the vessel in a single turn). A typical example is the *Coventry* in the Falklands. In this case the chance of escape is moderate. In VAS terms this occurs whenever the ship's last damage point is lost as the result of a critical hit (except Vital Systems – 6). The ship model is removed at the end of the turn in which the last damage point is lost and the crew take to the water.

Catastrophic Failure occurs when the ship is consumed by an unexpected, instantaneous disaster. Typical examples are magazine explosions (such as the loss of the *Hood*) or sudden capsizes. In this case the chance of escape is very low. In VAS terms this is ship loss due to a Vital Systems – 6 Critical Hit – Catastrophic Explosion.

Abandon Ship!

When a ship sinks roll 2D6 to determine the percentage of crew parties that have managed to make it over the side and into the water or into boats, life rafts and carley floats.

Table 2 - Survival Rates											
Die Roll	1 or less	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	12+
% Survivors	100	95	85	70	50	35	15	10	5	2	0

The die roll is modified as follows:

+4	Ship MoL is Catastrophic	+1	Civilian ship
+2	Ship MoL is Short Term	+3	Submarine on the surface (except Long Term)
+0	Ship MoL is Medium Term	+6	Submerged submarine with no escape system
-3	Ship MoL is Long Term		
		-2	Elite crew
-1	Good Weather (sea state 1-3)	-1	Veteran crew
+1	Poor Weather (sea state 6-7)	+1	Conscript crew
+3	Bad Weather (sea state 8+)	+2	Green crew

Note that the roll for survivors should be made as soon as the decision to abandon ship is made. As stated above when a ship is in a sinking condition but has not yet sunk the crew can be taken off directly to another vessel

Examples

- 1) A submarine is depth charged and sunk (Catastrophic). Modifiers are +4 for mode of loss, +6 for a submerged submarine with no escape system. Total modifiers are +10, so there are no survivors.

- 2) A cruiser is sunk by dive bombers after a long engagement. MoL is Medium Term. The crew is Veteran, giving a -1 modifier. A 6 is rolled, modified to 5, so 50% of the crew get off.

There are Men in the Water!

This section is more appropriate for campaign games. It can be omitted for simple tabletop games. Once the survivors have taken to the water their ordeal has just begun. Depending on the local conditions there is a chance that additional fatalities will occur. Every half hour roll 2D6. The score is the percentage of crew parties that expire in that period. Die rolls are modified as shown below.

-5	Good Weather (sea state 1-3)	+1	Air temperature below 10°
+1	Poor Weather (sea state 6-7)	+3	Air temperature below 0°
+2	Bad Weather (sea state 8+)	+2	Shark infested waters
		+2	Sinking occurs close to rocky shore
-3	Survivors in open lifeboats		
0	Survivors in water or Carley floats		
+1	per day in water		
+1	per 3 days in lifeboats or liferafts		

Away Scrambling Nets!

Now that the survivors are in the water in lifeboats or are in a ship, which is rapidly taking on water. Time to effect a rescue. Survivors can be picked up in various ways, grouped together as:

- Picked up by ships boats
- Picked up from the water by a rescue ship (scrambling nets etc.)
- Picked up by sea plane

Boats

Making a rescue by ships boats is a time consuming task. Assuming a standard 6 minute turn, the rescue ship must slow to about 5 knots to launch boats, after which it will take 1 turn to lower boats. The boats will then move into the area of the survivors (assume 4 knots / 1" for boats with oars, 8 knots / 2" for powered boats). The boats must remain stationary for 1 turn to pick up survivors, then transit back to the rescue ship and spend 1 turn either being recovered or transferring survivors via scrambling nets. Assume each boat can recover 1 crew party.

Direct Rescue

This involves driving the rescue ship into the area of survivors, coming to a complete stop and pulling them directly from the water. It is assumed that a typical warship can recover 2 crew parties per turn whilst stopped but with a minimum time stopped of 2 turns (10-12 minutes). During this period the rescue ship is, of course, quite vulnerable.

Seaplanes

Similar to ships boats, this section covers large patrol aircraft such as Catalinas and Sunderlands. Use normal rules for launch, transit, landing (for seaplanes) and recovery. The numbers of survivors which can be accommodated is small; only 1 crew party can be accommodated in a seaplane.

Direct Transfer

If the ship is sinking slowly the survivors can be taken off directly. This involves the rescuing ship coming alongside and heaving to. Survivors can transfer to the rescue ship at a rate of 3 crew parties per turn.

Capacities

Obviously there are limits to the number of survivors who can be accommodated on board a rescue ship. This will vary depending on the time taken to transit to a safe port for transfer ashore, local weather conditions and so on. As a guide a ship can carry up to twice the number of crew parties as passengers.

Personalities

These rules come into their own when personalities are considered, in particular the Admirals or Captains whose roles the players are assuming. The percentage number of survivors is used as a percentile die roll when determining the fate of personalities. For example, if 60% of a ships crew escape the sinking the Captain has a 60% chance of survival. If 2% of the crew

expire due to exposure in a half hour period there is a 2% chance the Captain is one of them and so on. This rule should be of particular use in campaigns where players would wish to rescue particularly successful 'player characters'

Aircrew

A similar system can be used for aircrew from crashed aircraft. If a plane is shot down or otherwise lost roll on table 2 to determine the proportion of the crew who survive to parachute into the sea (if there are only one or two crew use the resulting percentage value as the roll, for each crew member to survive, similar to personalities). Once they are in the sea, treat as normal survivors

Conclusion

It is certain that the use of these rules will add to the complexity of the game that is being played. However, they will add somewhat to the realism as players may (or may not?) feel obliged to mount rescue operations. The effect will be increased if scenario victory conditions specifically include bonuses for considering those poor unfortunates in the water.



Stirring Dara Happa



Lawrence Whitaker talks about how the Dara Happa Stirs campaign book, coming soon, came into being.

When I joined Mongoose in March 2007, I was sent a production schedule listing all the books for the year that I was due to write. Now, there is very little (i.e., none) briefing attached to most titles but this is not usually an issue: the title says it all. *Elric of Melniboné*? Yep, that's my forte. *Dragonewts*? Yes – a book on everything dragonewtish. Then there, lurking at the bottom of the list, months and months away, was *Dara Happa Stirs*. 'I'll worry about that nearer the time,' I thought.

So I waited. Then, eventually, October dawned and I realised I still had to think about what to include in a book called *Dara Happa Stirs*. A sourcebook? A splatbook? A campaign? All sorts of choices but the most daunting prospect was: this *has* to reflect one of the key lands of Glorantha, in all its glory. I've dabbled in Glorantha off and on for around 20 years but never in Peloria; never in Dara Happa. I suddenly found that I knew next to nothing about this place. In desperation (almost) I turned to Jeff Richard.

Now Jeff is an arch-Gloranthan scholar. 'Oh you can have a ball there,' he said. 'But talk to Greg Stafford. He's done so much work on the place he may have some firm ideas on what you should do,' So I did. I talked to Greg.

'Gee, well, what do *you* think the title suggests?' He said, somewhat archly. Umm – rebellion? Intrigue? Unrest? 'Yeah, all that. Tell you what, read *Glorious ReAscent of Yelm* and *Fortunate Succession* and that'll give you some ideas.'

I have had both of these books for a while but admit that I had only ever glanced at them. They are... dense works of extraordinary detail concerning myth, history and empirical chronology. They are not game books, like, say, *Griffin Mountain* or *Pavis* but a scholarly articulation of how Greg perceives the history of Dara Happa. There is stuff in there that seems contradictory, incomplete and perhaps, just too obscure to be of relevance to all but the most ardent Gloranthophile. Yet I started reading, flicking through the chronologies, until I arrived at the Second Age and there, summarised in just a few short paragraphs, was the story of a hero, Karvanyar, who liberated Dara Happa from the EWF.

This is where it became obvious. 'Greg, this book has to be about Karvanyar,' I said. 'It has got to be about Dara Happa booting out the Golden Dragon.'

'That's right,' Greg said. 'But I wanted you to realise that for yourself.'

Armed with GRoY and FS (these two acronyms became central to the project), I went back to Jeff. 'Cool idea,' he said. 'And you know what? The Pergammon Museum in Berlin has a permanent exhibition on ancient Babylon. If you're going to do this, you need to see the Pergammon stuff.' Within a few days, I found myself on a plane bound from Luton to Berlin, to spend a weekend with Jeff and his fiancé Claudia, to brainstorm ideas and visit the Pergammon.

Nothing can prepare you for what the Pergammon holds. Its Hellenic temple is awe-inspiring enough but the real prize is, without a doubt, the full Ishtar gate taken from ancient Babylon, which is Dara Happa's inspiration. Jeff and I wandered through this incredible, living, exhibition, discussing the architecture, the iconography, the little trophies and relics brought out of the Euphrates basin and talked constantly about how an entire campaign could be created from what we were seeing. We photographed tons of things; we studied much more. We bantered and exchanged ideas, rejected about half of them and then exchanged more. Back at Jeff's place we sat down and brainstormed for an entire afternoon and evening about the shape this campaign was to take. I took notes in a notebook bought in the Pergammon gift-shop and filled dozens of pages with these ideas and scraps of paper that Jeff scribbled over. Steadily a detailed campaign emerged and as it did so, its scope began to hit me. The page count for *Dara Happa Stirs* was 96 page but there was no way I could tell the story I wanted to tell in just under a hundred. I emailed Matthew Sprange from Berlin and suggested we make this *two* books, with the campaign split into five-year chunks.

'Hmmm, perhaps but what if we make it a 160 page book instead?' Matthew suggested. So that was that.

Writing began in earnest in early November, after I'd digested GRoY and FS and the reams of notes Jeff and I had prepared. There was other reading too: *Enclosure*

magazine (a Glorantha fanzine from the mid-90s, which details Alkoth, Dara Happa's earth-bound Hell) and a whole heap of material old friends like Simon Bray, Neil Robinson and David Dunham had sent me. Writing continued throughout November and into December which is, traditionally, a Month of No Writing for Mongoose's writers. During that time Jeff and I exchanged over 100 emails, Skype chats and Google Instant Messages about the developing campaign. The same was true with Greg. Ideas were floated, trashed, rewritten, re-ordered and revised. Greg and Jeff provided such a huge amount of input and accepted a huge amount of my own ideas, that, by the time I was ready to submit the manuscript to Nick Robinson (the project's editor), I think it is fair to say that all three of us felt that we had a *definitive* work on Dara Happa.

I sent some of the chapters of the scenario out to various friends for playtesting. Carl Pates, another long-standing friend, Gloranthaphile and long-time Elric collaborator, playtested the first of the scenarios and came back with some superb additions to the NPCs. I ran part of the Alkoth scenario at the Furnace convention where the youngest player, Katherine Ives, was just 12. She knew nothing about Glorantha but out of all the characters in that playtest, she was the one who helped piece together the clues, deal with various rituals in the right way and came out of the scenario having had a wonderful time. That says a lot about Katherine but I think it says a lot more about the appeal Glorantha can have across the generations.

It's now April 2008 and Nick has just sent me the proofs for the book. Not only does it look better than I had imagined, I have to say that the art is *staggeringly* good. Andrew Dobell, Javier Martinez, Claudio Pozas, Tony Parker and Phil Renne have done a phenomenal job of rendering Dara Happa authentically, drawing upon Babylonian and Mesopotamian art to really represent what I saw in the Pergammon and similar iconography in GRoY and FS. Hats off to those guys – they have done a superb job. The book looks and feels, exactly as it should and I thank them warmly. Nick, too, deserves praise, for championing the book, pestering for clarifications and revisions and producing something that looks so good.

Dara Happa Stirs is one of the biggest roleplaying projects that I have undertaken. It was probably the most complex just due to the sheer amount of subject matter and atmosphere that needs to be conveyed. Its both sourcebook and campaign book and really, it could *still* have made two volumes, even at its extended length of 160 pages (which climbed to almost 200). Is it any good? Well, I am really proud of it but the real test is out there, with RuneQuest and Glorantha fans. There are people in the wider community who know far more about Dara Happa than I ever will and I am sure that there is a lot of stuff where people will say to themselves 'Hmmm. Yes... not how I envisage it...' and 'Oh Yelm – that's just *wrong*...' Ultimately, that is a danger with any Gloranthan book and especially one that tackles such a dense subject as Dara Happa. All I can say is that Glorantha's creator, Greg Stafford, had

a huge and personal hand in this project and if Greg disagreed with it, then it got changed or dropped.

What I do hope is that most people will buy this book and be inspired by Dara Happa, just as I found myself being inspired by it. I hope they find they have a book that provides not just many hours of enjoyment in playing the Karvanyar campaign but also in designing their own scenarios set in Dara Happa that will slot in and around those in the book. I also hope that *Dara Happa Stirs* creates many variant outcomes: *Your* Dara Happa *Should* Vary. Whatever happens, I've stirred Dara Happa and now its over to you...



Malice Avenged

The Minbari War of Chastisement

By Alan Oliver



Introduction

These are three linked scenarios that are intended to be played in sequence, as the forces that survive one scenario will be there in the next.

These scenarios deal with elements of the Minbari war of Chastisement against the Centauri Republic that started in the Dorac system early in the year 2271.

The nature of hyperspace navigation plays a major part in shaping the campaign. There is a single unrestricted jump route between Centauri and Minbari space, connecting the systems of Batan in the Centauri Republic and Tarellen in the Minbari Federation.

This benefits the Centauri as they have restricted all of the jump routes that connect Batan to other systems deeper in the Republic, probably due to their ancient fear of the Minbari.

The Minbari are at a disadvantage as Tarellen is directly connected to Minbar itself, as well as being a major Minbari colony, so it puts their capital within easy reach of Centauri ships.

The Centauri started out on the defensive and kept the fighting on the Minbari border, while the Minbari put pressure on the Interstellar Alliance to allow them to attack through neutral and Narn space, widening the front of the war. This would have serious implications for the Narn later in the war.

At the start of the war it is only the Centauri Republic, Minbari Federation and Interstellar Alliance that are involved. However it would take little for the Narn to become involved in the war and if the Drakh openly sided with the Centauri this would bring the Earth Alliance and Abbai Matriarchate into it very quickly.

The Minbari are after a rapid and punitive war against the Centauri, seeking to cause significant damage to their military as a punishment for attacking Minbari ships. The Centauri also want the war to finish quickly, as they have nothing to gain from a protracted war against their strongest neighbour. The Interstellar Alliance did not wish to become involved in an aggressive war against the Centauri, however as the Minbari ships were lost defending ships of the Whitestar fleet they can hardly sit back and watch their allies facing potential peril. There was also a strong undercurrent of aggression among many of the rangers against the Centauri, who had openly been designing ships specifically to counter the Whitestar fleet.

The Nature of War

It is a fact of hyperspace that attacking forces cannot be stopped at a boarder but can simply bypass the boarder systems and penetrate deeper into enemy space. This means that there are no front lines; instead it is a matter of probing enemy space for targets of opportunity.

These will vary depending on the nature of the war and the objectives of the fleet involved. If the focus of the war is economic, these will be under defended economic targets. This is most often civilian shipping, interstellar

trade being the basis of most interstellar economies. Fixed production or trade facilities also make good targets but are more likely to be defended.

If the war is to attack the military strength of the enemy, these will be fleets smaller than the attacking fleet or at least fleets that can be engaged with some hope of victory. Also military support elements such as repair docks, munitions factories and other military facilities will become targets if left undefended.

However sometimes the war is about body-count, such as the many wars between the Centauri Republic and the Narn Regime or the entire Dilgar war and then targets of opportunity are civilian populations without sufficient ships to defend them.

The Minbari are seeking to punish the Centauri Republic for its actions and so are looking to destroy its military, both the Centauri fleet and it's infrastructure. The Centauri however start by simply trying to make the war too uneconomic for the Minbari Federation to continue with, so start by attacking economic targets; however they are the only race that has recently used mass drivers against civilian populations, so there is the potential for them to shift to attacking the Minbari population as a whole.

Any ship in hyperspace has to come close to the beacon of one system before they can lock on to the beacons of the jump routes that lead from that system. The owner of the system will often place ships in hyperspace to try and spot enemy ships or fleets trying to do this. If the attacking forces

all operate under stealth then slipping past these defenders is more likely but still not certain, while the use of a scout to monitor the jump beacon makes this more difficult.

The Centauri Republic, being somewhat paranoid as a people, makes extensive use of restricted jump routes. These operate beacons that are heavily encrypted, making them impossible to lock on to without the appropriate codes. These codes are changed regularly during hostilities, however a breach of this code does enable enemy forces to navigate these restricted jump routes for a time, until the codes are changed again at least.

Reserves waiting in hyperspace are also commonly used. There are three types of location in hyperspace where these reserves can wait and each has different implications. Simplest is to have them sitting in hyperspace close to the beacon of a specific system, allowing them to respond almost instantly to hostilities in that system. However this does limit them to responding only to attacks in the one system. They are also likely to be detected by any enemy coming close to that beacon, stealth and scouts playing their parts as always.

Secondly they can sit on a jump route between two systems, locked on to the beacons of both systems for added security. It is good because they can respond to hostilities in either system, although it will take them a little time to do so. However ships following the jump route from one system to the other are likely to spot them in passing, again affected by stealth and scouts.

The third option is to go off into deep hyperspace, retaining lock on to a single beacon. Here they are unlikely to be discovered, however they can only respond to hostilities in a single system and it will still take them time to respond.

Having had a look at how wars are fought, time to get down to the action.

A Daring Rescue

Rangers operating inside the Centauri Republic had been charged with acquiring the codes for the Centauri restricted jump routes. Word got out that one of the rangers had succeeded but she was now trapped on Immolan III. A rescue mission was prepared, with Rangers Fordice and Soloman to command the task force dispatched to rescue her.

The plan was simple, the Ranger would steal a Centauri fighter and wait, the rescue task force would jump into the system and open a window in the defences around Immolan III. When she sees this she would launch from the planet and land on one of their ships, then they would get the hell out of there.

The only complication is that Immolan is a major fleet base for the Centauri and there was a large fleet of ships sitting at anchor in the system. While they would not be ready for combat instantly, giving the rescuers a window of opportunity to get the ranger out of there, they might have to face a large Centauri fleet. The task force was selected from fast and powerful ships, the hope being that that they would have the punch to rescue the Ranger and perhaps even do some damage to the Centauri fleet along the way.

Even once they have rescued the Ranger they are not out of the woods yet. Surviving ships of the Centauri fleet are likely to follow so the alliance have arranged for ships of the Narn Regime to be in Quadrant 37 to meet the Alliance ships when they exit hyperspace. It is hoped that the Centauri will not fire on Narn ships out of fear of bringing their other large neighbour into the war.

Interstellar Alliance Fleet

These are mainly the ships previously assigned to the Interstellar Alliance squadron, with Minbari survivors

of the battle of Dorac replacing the destroyed Brakiri contingent.

Whitestar Gunship *Dawn Bringer*, Commanded by Fordice, Crew Quality 6 2 Whitestar fighters
Whitestar Gunship *Odysseus*, Commanded by Soloman, Crew Quality 5 2 Whitestar fighters

Drazi Fireraptor Battleship *Star Destroyer*, Crew Quality 5 1 Sky Serpent and 4 Star Snake flights

Minbari Neshatan Gunship *Might of the One*, Crew Quality 5

Minbari Teshlan Fast Cruiser *Rapid Response*, Crew Quality 5 1 Nial flight

Minbari Leshath Heavy Scout *Vanishing Dreams*, Crew Quality 6 1 Flyer flight

Ipsa War Globe, Crew Quality 4

EA Marathon Advanced Cruiser *EAS Achilles*, Crew Quality 4 2 Thunderbolt Starfury flights

EA Marathon Advanced Cruiser *EAS Hector*, Crew Quality 4 2 Thunderbolt Starfury flights

Centauri Republic Fleet at Anchor

These ships are not active at the start and will have to activate during the scenario under the special rules below.

1st Squadron:

Adira Royal Battleship *Emperor Mollari*, Crew Quality 6 6 Rutarian flights

Octurion Battleship *Emperor Corleoni*, Crew Quality 5 4 Senti flights

Maximus Frigates *Shield 37* and *Shield 41*, Crew Quality 4 each

2nd Squadron:

Liati Advanced Cruiser *Emperor's Assassin*, Crew Quality 6
2 Rutarian flights
Liati Advanced Cruiser *Emperor's Will*, Crew Quality 5
2 Rutarian flights

3rd Squadron:

Dargan Strike Cruiser *Count Elvis*, Crew Quality 4
2 Rutarian flights
Dargan Strike Cruiser *Countess Gynari*, Crew Quality 4
2 Rutarian flights

4th Squadron:

Primus Battlecruiser *Prince Balari*, Crew Quality 5
2 Razik flights
Primus Battlecruiser *Prince Camalari*, Crew Quality 4
2 Razik flights
Primus Battlecruiser *Prince Dovestis*, Crew Quality 3
2 Razik flights
Maximus Frigate *Shield 42*, Crew Quality 4

Centauri Republic Picket Fleet

With so many ships sitting at anchor in the system, the Centauri fleet has a number of squadrons of lighter ships on picket duty in the system. They are there to engage any attackers and buy time for the major fleet elements to activate.

1st Picket Squadron:

3 Demos Warships, *Striker 03*, *10* & *69*, Crew Quality 5, 3 & 3

2nd Picket Squadron:

3 Demos Warships, *Striker 22*, *24* & *61*, Crew Quality 5, 3 & 3

3rd Picket Squadron:

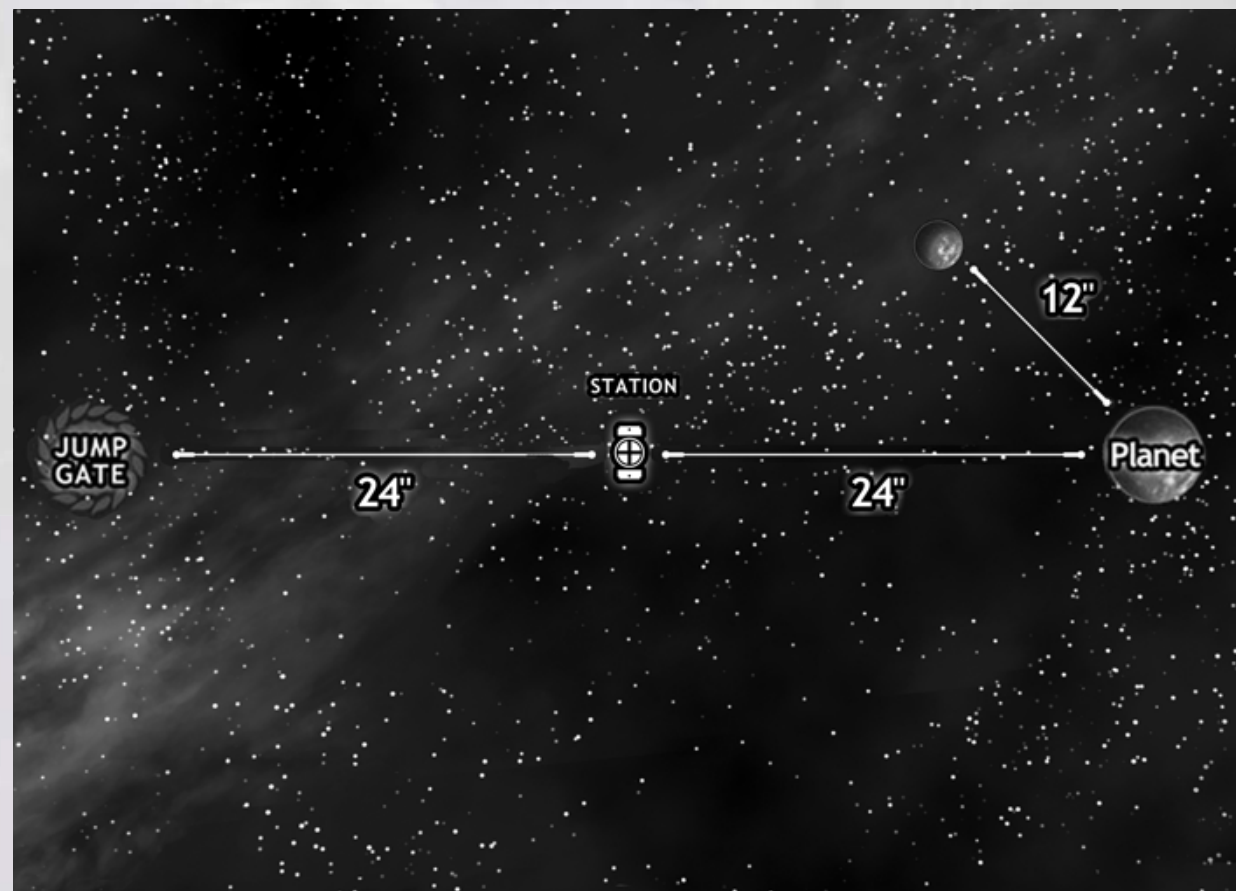
Darkner Fast Attack Frigate *Frightful*, Crew Quality 4
2 Kutai Gunships *109* & *123*, Crew Quality 3 & 2

4th Picket Squadron:

Darkner Fast Attack Frigate *Vicious*, Crew Quality 5
2 Kutai Gunships, *128* & *135*, Crew Quality 3 & 2

Corvan Scout *Silent Witness*, Crew Quality 5

Corvan Scout *Hidden Camera*, Crew Quality 4



Pre-Battle Preparation

Set up as per the map provided, add clusters of density seven asteroids to taste but none would be between the planet and the jump gate.

The station is a civilian supply station and dock, which would not be a legitimate target for a force under Interstellar Alliance command.

The ships at anchor are deployed as follows;
2 of the squadrons are deployed in orbit around the planet, one is in orbit around the moon and one is deployed at the station. The Centauri player will record in secret which squadron will be where before the Interstellar Alliance player chooses where to open his jump points.

The picket squadrons are deployed as follows;
1st picket squadron are deployed anywhere within 6" of the top long table edge.
2nd picket squadron are deployed anywhere within 6" of the bottom long table edge.
3rd picket squadron are deployed anywhere between the jump gate and the closer short table edge.
4th picket squadron are deployed anywhere between the planet and the closer short table edge.
The two scouts can be deployed anywhere on the table.

The Interstellar Alliance fleet has to enter from hyperspace, either using the jump gate or through their own jump points. However remember that they have to escape back into hyperspace to win, so preserving ships with charged jump engines is essential.

Scenario Rules

The ships at anchor are not expecting combat so are sitting at minimal readiness. Until they can activate they are under the following restrictions. They may not move, perform special actions, fire or launch fighters. The following traits will not

operate until the ship activates; anti fighter or advanced anti-fighter, command, dodge, escort, fleet carrier, Gravitic energy grid, interceptors, scout, shields or stealth. Only those ships that have activated within a squadron may use the Crew Quality of other ships in the squadron, so activation rolls are rolled on its own Crew Quality.

Activation is attempted in the end phase and requires a Crew Quality check at difficulty nine. On the first turn of the battle all that the Interstellar Alliance fleet can do is open jump points, which will give the Centauri fleet one round of activation rolls before they start taking fire from the enemy fleet. Activation rolls are secret, the first that the Interstellar Alliance player will know of an active ship is when it fires or moves. If an active ship performs an all stop special action, the player does not have to declare which ship is doing so, so that the surprise can be maintained.

Active ships may break squadron with inactive ships in order to enter the battle more quickly.

The Ranger will take off from the planet surface on any turn, at the choice of the Interstellar Alliance player. To escape successfully she must land her fighter on a ship capable of carrying fighters, and that ship must exit to hyperspace.

Game Length

The game will continue until all of the Interstellar Alliance ships have either re-entered hyperspace or been destroyed.

Victory & Defeat

A successful rescue of the Ranger is a victory for the Interstellar Alliance, however this will be modified by the amount of ships lost and the damage done to the Centauri fleet. Certainly if playing the follow on scenario,

damage to the Centauri fleet at anchor will be critical to future survival. While a lone ship escaping with the ranger would still be a victory, it may prove a Pyuric one.

The Centauri were not aware of the significance of the fighter launching from the planet, they believed this was a strike aimed entirely at their vulnerable fleet. Victory for them is to preserve most of their ships at anchor, even if this means sacrificing the picket squadrons. If all four squadrons remain combat worthy, that is an outstanding win for the Centauri, if less than a full squadron remains combat effective, that is a serious defeat for them.

Interstellar Alliance Tactics

If the fighter launches while there are still ships around the planet there is a chance that it will get picked off by something. Therefore the squadrons in orbit have to either be destroyed while inactive or drawn away from the planet to allow the fighter to launch safely. While the fighter is not significant to the Centauri as a victory condition, they may still take a pop at it if you give them an easy shot.

Use of the jump gate to enter the battle will preserve the jump engines on some of your ships to allow them to escape. Use of a single jump point for multiple ships will also leave more ships with charged jump engines. Nearly half of your fleet has advanced jump engines, which allows you to engage the enemy on the turn of your arrival and it is in these early turns that you can do the most damage.

The Liati, Dargan and Adira are all more vulnerable while inactive, so should be targeted before activation if possible.

The set up of this battle assumes that the follow up scenario will be played, so you will want to do as much damage to the ships at anchor as you can. The picket squadrons are

not your main concern, although if they get in the way then go ahead and kill them. In general you are better off spreading the damage around the enemy ships, making them all more vulnerable in the next battle rather than just killing off one or two.

Centauri Republic Tactics

You have to hope for good rolls to activate ships quickly as this will determine how much of a struggle this battle will be.

Do not play possum with the Liati or Dargan, as both squadrons rely upon active defences. In particular the Liati will only get a dodge if they have moved that turn, so cannot bring their defences online at the last minute. The best squadron for this sort of sneakiness is the Primus squadron, as these ships are tough enough to take a hit in order to lure the enemy into range.

Remember that the picket ships are entirely expendable. This means you should get them in close against ships that have little defence against explosions so that when the enemy vaporises them, which they will, you will be doing the enemy more damage.

Historical Note

This proved to be an incredible victory for the Interstellar Alliance. Fordice's fleet devastated the ships riding at anchor, with the *Dawnbringer* destroying the *Emperor's Will*, *Count Elvris*, *Prince Dovestis* and *Emperor Corleoni* on its own. Of the four squadrons of ships at anchor the only ships to survive were the *Emperor Mollari* and *Shield 42* and the latter was crippled.

The Liati squadron made a huge tactical error in trying to lure the whitestar gunships

into range by remaining stationary when they activated, which made their destruction a formality.

However the Interstellar Alliance did not escape entirely unscathed. The *Hector* lost power and drifted into close range with the *Emperor Mollari*, which sealed its fate rather quickly. The Ipsha War Globe was badly damaged in early exchanges with the Primus squadron, and was then hunted down by the surviving picket ships and destroyed, although its explosion did finish off the 3rd picket squadron as well.

Most of the other ships in the alliance force took some damage, and the *Star Destroyer* came away from the battle heavily damaged, although still functional.

Out of the Frying Pan

With the outstanding success of the rescue operation at Immolan III, ranger Fordice's reputation within the fleet soared to new heights. However the mission was not over yet. As they fled from Centauri space to their RV with the Narn fleet they picked up signs of ships in pursuit; not just Centauri ships but powerful ships of the Drakh fleet as well. Finally the enemy were showing their true colours.

Fordice's task force reached Quadrant 37 with the Centauri and Drakh close behind them. They only have a few minutes to get into position before the Centauri and Drakh turn up.

Note: this is a big battle, well suited to teams of players to speed up game play.

Interstellar Alliance Fleet

Use the ships that survived A Daring Rescue for the Interstellar Alliance fleet in this battle. The Whitestar

Gunships will have self repaired all damage done to them. Each ship will have been able to repair five non-vital critical hits and will be able to spend experience dice to perform emergency repairs.

Narn Regime Fleet

The Narn are always willing to support the Interstellar Alliance, even more when it is against the Centauri, so they have sent heavy reinforcements to the system. Many hope that the Centauri will be stupid enough to engage them, allowing them to enter the war. If they do then the Narn will punish them for the mistake.

Command squadron:

G'Tal Command Cruiser *G'Kar*, Crew Quality 6

G'Quan Heavy Cruiser *Na'Toth*, Crew Quality

5 2 Frazi flights

Bombardment Squadron:

G'Quonth Attack Cruiser *Fist of the Ka'ri*, Crew Quality 5

2 Dag'Kar Missile Frigates, *Ranged Fire & Fire for Effect*, Crew Quality 3 & 4

Centauri Hunter Squadron:

G'Quan Heavy Cruiser *Centauri Hunter*, Crew Quality 5 2 Frazi flights

G'Quan Heavy Cruiser *Emperor's Bane*, Crew Quality 4 2 Frazi flights

G'Quan Heavy Cruiser *Primus Breaker*, Crew Quality 4 2 Frazi flights

Centauri Fleet

The surviving ships from the squadrons at anchor in A Daring Rescue should be used in this scenario, although badly damaged ships do not have to be used. Each ship will have been able to repair five non-vital critical hits

and will have been able to expend experience dice on emergency repairs. Crew damage however will remain.

Drakh Fleet

The Centauri fleet also has available a small fleet of Drakh, however these do not have to be committed to the battle. They are either kept in hyperspace as a reserve or not used at all. If they do take part in the battle, then this will be the first time that the Drakh have openly fought alongside the Centauri and this will have implications later.

- 2 Dra'vash Cruisers, Crew Quality 5 each
- 1 Ria'vash Strike Cruiser, Crew Quality 4
 - 1 Kama're Scout, Crew Quality 4
- Ma'cu Carrier, Crew Quality 5
 - 4 Riastor Heavy Raiders, Crew Quality 5 each
- Ma'cu Carrier, Crew Quality 4
 - 2 Riastor Heavy Raiders, Crew Quality 4 each
 - 2 Sa'ria'stor Light Raiders, Crew Quality 4 each
- Ma'cu Carrier, Crew Quality 4
 - 4 Sa'ria'stor Light Raiders, Crew Quality 4 each

Pre-Battle Preparation

The battle takes place in open space, the only item in the area is the system jump gate. The Narn and Centauri deployment areas are at opposite ends of the table and are 48" apart.

The Narn fleet sets up in their deployment area first. Then the Centauri ships are set up in their deployment area. The Alliance fleet are then deployed anywhere within the Narn deployment area. The Drakh ships enter through jump points at any point from turn one onwards.

Scenario Rules

If the spy was rescued in the previous battle the Interstellar Alliance player must secretly record which ship she is currently aboard. At the end of the scenario her location must be revealed. She can pilot fighters, so can transfer from one ship to another by fighter under the normal rules of launching and recovering fighters. There is nothing to stop other fighters being launched from one ship and landed on another to mislead the Centauri. If she does move by fighter transfer during the battle, this has to be noted as well.

The Narn command and bombardment squadrons are commanded by seasoned and level headed captains, who are under orders not to bring the Narn Regime into the war if it can be avoided. They will not fire on the Centauri ships unless the Centauri have fired on Narn units. However the Centauri Hunter squadron are all crewed by Narn who have reasons to particularly hate the Centauri and they will open fire on Centauri ships without provocation.

Both Narn and Interstellar Alliance rules of engagement allow their ships to fire on Drakh ships without warning or delay. Likewise if the Drakh have entered real space then they intend violence towards the Interstellar Alliance so have no restrictions on their fire.

The Centauri will generally be unwilling to fire on the Narn ships and start a war on another front and their main objective is to destroy the alliance ships but tactical necessity may require them to fire on the Narn ships for their own defence. The exception to this is the Admiral commanding the *Emperor Mollari*, who is under the control of the Drakh and will deliberately seek to engage the Narn in order to bring them into the war, assuming that the Adira Royal Battleship survived the previous engagement.

Game Length

The battle will last until one side has achieved victory or for 15 turns.

Victory & Defeat

This will be different for each of the fleets involved.

Victory for the Interstellar Alliance at a strategic level is the survival of the ship that carries the ranger from Immolan III. At a tactical level the defeat or withdrawal of the Centauri forces and the destruction of the Drakh fleet is a victory.

For the Narn Regime to be forced to enter the war, a Narn ship must be destroyed by Centauri fire. For the campaign to continue, the spy has to survive. Therefore victory is the destruction of a Narn ship by Centauri fire and the spy's survival.

Victory for the Centauri would be the death of the spy carrying the access codes for the Centauri restricted jump routes, destruction of the Minbari and Interstellar Alliance ships and no Narn ships destroyed by Centauri fire, which would have a chance of keeping them out of the war.

Victory for the Drakh is simple, more of the Alliance and Narn ships destroyed than Drakh ships, Narn becoming involved in the war against the Centauri. The survival or otherwise of the Centauri ships is not important to the Drakh in the slightest, however if the *Emperor Mollari* survives then they still have an admiral in their pocket.

Interstellar Alliance Tactics

This will depend on how much damage you did to the Centauri in the Immolan system. If you were as successful as Fordice and destroyed most of the Centauri ships, then this engagement should be relatively simple. If you were not that successful you will have to rely on the Narn picking up the slack.

The Centauri have to come after your ships, so if you fight from behind the Narn ships, the Centauri will either have to ignore them, giving the anti-Centauri squadron a free shot at close range or engage the Narn ships which brings the Narn Regime into the war, something of a win-win situation.

Ensuring that the spy survives is a major priority for your fleet. The use of one or two of the toughest remaining ships as decoys is certainly advisable. One way might be to have a damaged ship hanging well back away from the fighting, forcing the Centauri to go chasing after it in case she is aboard. Another is to play the fighter shell game, moving fighters from one ship to another to create confusion.

Narn Tactics

You need the Centauri ships to destroy one of your ships for the Regime to enter the war, so you have to be aggressive with the anti-Centauri squadron. Get into the Centauri players face with these ships and force him to engage them. The command and bombardment squadrons will be manoeuvring for advantageous position till the first shot is fired, after which they too can engage the Centauri and give him more reasons to kill a Narn ship.

While politically it is advantageous for the Interstellar Alliance ships to fight from behind the Narn ships, tactically you will want to keep the range open. You massively outrange most Centauri ships with

your heavy laser cannon, energy mines and Ion torpedoes and even have the range advantage over the Drakh. These weapons are also effective against the Gravitic Energy Grid of the Drakh ships, either doing too much damage from each weapon for it to stop or having a good chance to cause critical hits.

The Drakh could easily appear behind your ships, which is going to be a problem for you as almost all your ships are lumbering, so getting turned round to engage them would be a problem, better to leave them to the more agile Alliance ships. This however relies on the alliance having enough ships left after the battle at Immolan III.

Centauri Tactics

Will obviously depend on how many ships survived the slaughter at Immolan III and which ships they are. However you will have to decide from the outside whether you will be using the Drakh and brining other nations into the war later, engaging the Narn and bringing them into the war or both. If you have the forces to destroy the Interstellar Alliance ships without needing the assistance of the Drakh and can manage to not destroy any Narn Regime ships, you will have a significant advantage in the following scenario, even if you fail to kill the scout in this one. However be aware that the *Emperor Mollari* will be trying to destroy Narn Regime ships even if the rest of your fleet is not.

The other alternative is to engage the Narn from the start and make maximum use of the Drakh, on the basis that if you can kill the spy in this scenario, then you win the next by default.

Your fleet has the shortest ranged weapons and you start off a long way from the enemy ships, so if you had to charge the open ground you would take significant damage before you could respond in any meaningful

way. However there are the Drakh, who if used will be jumping into combat before you can close the range and engage the enemy ships. So despite being the first ships deployed you may be acting as the reserves in this battle.

Drakh Tactics

This assumes that the Drakh are committed to this battle at all.

You have two groups of ships, the cruisers and the carriers. It will take the Ma'cu at least a turn to launch their raiders if they perform a scramble special action and the carriers are not that tough as battle priority ships go so it may be worthwhile bringing the carriers in closer to the Centauri lines to give them a chance to deploy their babies. Remember that if they have launched their raiders, the Ma'cu are effectively free, so become expendable.

The cruisers are perfectly capable of jumping in at close range to the enemy and if possible you want the two Dra'vash to arrive with targets in front and behind them, to get the most out of their heavy neutron cannon.

Get the Kama're scout launched as soon as possible, you will need it against the Minbari ships if they survived the previous scenario, which does seem likely.

The Sa'ria'stor raiders are Accurate, which makes them the perfect ships to go hunting any Whitestar Gunships that may have survived. This can be a rude surprise for the rangers if they have not been paying attention in Drakh briefing lectures.

If the Drakh are deployed at all, then this will give the Interstellar Alliance additional ships in the following scenario. They should be used exclusively to engage the Narn, allowing the Centauri to concentrate on the Interstellar Alliance ships and thereby avoiding the Narn Regime entering the war.

Historical Note

The only Centauri ship to arrive at the battle was the *Emperor Mollari*, which destroyed two ships, the *Achilles* and the G'Quan *Na'Toth* and was the last hostile ship in the system. However it took a bridge hit early in the battle and could not escape and was eventually destroyed by a massive barrage of fire from all the surviving Alliance and Narn ships.

With only the *Emperor Mollari* in action, the Drakh were forced to commit their own ships to the battle, which had ramifications later.

The Sa'ria'stor got a moments glory when they were able to line up on the *Dawn Bringer* and gave it a bloody nose, however ultimately they were too small to survive for long under the fire of the Whitestar Gunships and the Minbari.

The Drakh cruisers were all destroyed, the Ria'vash before it could even fire. The other two cruisers did savage the anti-centauri squadron, destroying the *Emperor's Bane* and doing near 50% damage to both the *Centauri Hunter* and *Primus Breaker*. They also finished off the *Star Destroyer*, which had been badly mauled in the previous battle but had still gone down fighting; it was the *Star Destroyer's* Solar Cannon that destroyed the Ria'Vash in one shot.

With the loss of the Ria'vash before it could launch the Kama're scout, the Drakh found the stealth of the Minbari squadron to be a nightmare to overcome and this allowed the *Might of the One*, supported by both the other ships, to close the range on the Ma'cu carriers and rip them apart. Even the *Vanishing Dreams* was getting up close and personal with the Drakh light units, cutting up raiders with fusion cannon broadsides.

The Narn bombardment squadron and the command cruiser *G'Kar* came through the battle

with no damage. It was the second volley of energy mines from the bombardment squadron that finished off the Dra'vash cruisers.

Finally both Fordice and Soloman survived the battle with their ships intact, although somewhat short on crew. Further glory was heaped on both them and the Minbari commander, whose aggression in combat was a surprise to many who were used to the normally self controlled Minbari.

After this battle Ranger Fordice was given the option of going straight back into action or requesting shore leave for his squadron. While he and Soloman were perfectly ready to go back to the fray, the rest of the squadron needed time to recover so reluctantly Fordice had to take some shore leave. This allowed the surviving ships of the squadron to receive refits, get repairs and replenish their crew levels.

Shore leave

While Fordice and his remaining command were taking some well earned shore leave the war itself was stepping up a gear.

Now that Drakh ships had been openly committed in support of the Centauri fleet several new governments pledged forces to the war. The Earth Alliance, which was already providing limited support as a member of the Interstellar Alliance now got really into the war, out for blood against the Drakh and their Centauri puppets.

From the other side of known space the Abbai Matriarchate dispatched a dozen of its new Juyaca dreadnoughts to support the war against the Drakh and Centauri alliance. These were commanded by young ship mothers, specially trained to command the dreadnoughts and to fight aggressively rather than defensively.

The Narn, well they finally had a chance to do what they love doing most, kill Centauri. The actions of the Centauri at Quadrant 37 had brought them into the war but they had needed little persuasion.

So the Minbari war against the Centauri now had the support of the Interstellar Alliance, Earth Alliance, Narn Regime and Abbai Matriarchate and their forces encircled the Centauri Republic.

However things were not all going against the Centauri. Their fleet had been growing in previous years, with much of their vast economy devoted to building their military up to heights not seen since the glory days.

They now had the support of the Drakh, who while unpredictable allies when fighting on the defensive, could and were beginning to strike deep into the territories of all those races hostile to the Centauri. Drakh raids against worlds deep in Minbari protectorate and Narn colonies meant that the full weight of these fleets could not be used against the Centauri, as every system and trade route had to be protected.

That Centauri economic advantage was also being put to work hiring whatever mercenary ships could be found and Ipsha, Drazi, Hurr and even Brakiri mercenary units were starting to appear alongside the Centauri fleets.

Lastly they had other allies, hidden in the background, that were yet to make an appearance in open combat. Rumours of black ships spitting purple beam, the likes not seen for almost a decade, were being whispered in the bars and ready rooms of their enemies.

As for the task force under Ranger Fordice, a few changes were taking place. Both he and Ranger Soloman continued to command the new Whitestar Gunships that they had commanded for the first time at Immolan.

They still had the support of the Minbari squadron, now covered in glory and refitted with the latest in cutting edge technology during their shore leave. These ships were now among the most heavily modified in the whole Minbari fleet.

The new additions to his task force start with the bombardment squadron that had protected them in Quadrant 37. These are under the command of War Commander G'Lias, a veteran of the war of return, the shadow war and the punitive war against the Centauri, when the Narn and Drazi had attacked Centauri Prime. He is a very experienced, if somewhat old, Narn captain with a flare for using energy mines and a level enough head to be given command of a bombardment squadron.

Then there is the new squadron of a pair of the latest model of Omega Heavy Destroyer, *Vanguard* and *Vanquish*, fresh from the Orion shipyards. Commanded by Captains Marshal and Blakemore, these two ships are designed to operate together as a single unit and are due to be joined by a Command Omega when it finally clears the slipway.

Lastly they have been joined by Ship Mother Kara Liata and the Juyaca Dreadnought *Holy Fire Unleashed*. Kara Liata is one of the new breed of Abbai ship mothers, trained from the outset for command of one of the new offensive dreadnoughts. She is young, righteous and aggressive in battle and has an almost religious hatred for the Drakh.

Right up the Centre

This scenario can only take place if the spy from A Daring Rescue also survived Out of the Frying Pan. If the Centauri were able to kill

the spy, then this whole offensive could not happen and victory goes to the Centauri by default.

Shore leave never lasts as long as any commander would like and soon Fordice had new orders. His task force was to play a part in the largest operation yet mounted by the Alliance against the Centauri and big as his task force might be, it would only be playing a small part in the greater plan.

Phase one of this plan involved taking and holding three systems on the borders of Centauri space, to allow more forces to attack deeper systems and to engage more of the massive Centauri war machine. The Narn would attack the anchorage at Immolan, the Minbari would attack Batan and the Centauri ships massed there, while an alliance fleet would take the Beta 3 system.

Phase two of the plan would involve the Minbari using the restricted jump route from Batan to Beta 2 and an Earth Alliance and Minbari task force using the restricted route from Beta 3 to Gorash.

Phase three would involve Minbari, Narn and Alliance fleets attacking Centauri Prime itself. It was hoped that this would be sufficient to drive the Centauri from the war and leave the different governments free to concentrate on the Drakh menace.

Fordice's orders were, of course, to go straight up the middle and take Beta 3. Military intelligence on Beta 3 indicated four different types of unit, any of which might be there but no definite information on what would be there.

Firstly there were the traditional heavy warships of the Centauri fleet, battlecruisers, battleships and carriers, probably with lighter ships in support. Second was the possibility of modern fast and lethal Centauri cruisers, ships like the Liati and the Dargan, supported by small and fast ships. The third option, which with information

received from Captain Takahashi of the *Indestructible* seemed quite likely, was the presence of mercenaries of one type or another. The last option is that the Drakh may have actually committed some ships to the defence of Centauri space, although this was considered the least likely option.

Interstellar Alliance Fleet

The Interstellar Alliance fleet uses the surviving ships from the previous scenario, all of which will have been fully repaired and restaffed and will have been able to buy refits with Experience Dice.

The Narn ships from Out of the Frying Pan will also be committed to this battle if the Narn Regime has entered the war. This will only have happened if a Narn ship was destroyed by fire from a Centauri ship during the last scenario. The Narn ships will have had full repairs and time to refit, as with the Interstellar Alliance ships.

The following forces are added to the Interstellar Alliance fleet only if the Drakh openly fought alongside the Centauri Republic forces in the previous scenario.

Omega Destroyer *EAS Vanguard*, Crew Quality 4
4 Firebolt Starfury flights
Omega Destroyer *EAS Vanquish*, Crew Quality 4
4 Firebolt Starfury flights

Juyaca Dreadnought *Holy Fire Unleashed*, Crew Quality 5
2 Kotha flights

Centauri Fleets

Presented here are four options, the Centauri player can select two of these to be present in the system and a third which will be waiting in hyperspace as a reserve, which is available from turn three.

Old School fleet:

Balvarin Carrier *Lady Amathu*, Crew Quality 3

4 Sentri flights, 4 Razik flights

This ship is old and in poor repair, and is now mainly used as a training carrier.

Maximus Frigate *Shield 50*, Crew Quality 4

Centurion Attack Cruiser *Death before Dishonour*, Crew Quality 5

Centurion Attack Cruiser *Final Act*, Crew Quality 4

These two ships are used as penal assignments within the Centauri fleet and are often given high risk assignments.

Vorchan Warships *Cunning*, *Underhand*, *Devious* and *Treacherous*. Crew Qualities 4, 3, 4 & 3.

New Order fleet:

Liati Advanced Cruiser *Emperor's Blade*, Crew Quality 4

2 Rutarian flights

Dargan Strike Cruiser *Count Romari*, Crew Quality 4

2 Rutarian flights

Dargan Strike Cruiser *Countess Romari*, Crew Quality 5

2 Rutarian flights

Balvarin Carrier *Lady Norveena*, Crew Quality 4

8 Rutarian flights

Maximus Frigate *Shield 51*, Crew Quality 3

Mercenary fleet:

Hurr Gunship *Jagged Edge*, Crew Quality 5

3 Ipsha warglobes, operating as a single squadron, Crew Quality 4 each

Drazi Stormfalcon *Blazing Cannon*, Crew Quality 4

1 Sky Serpent, 2 Star Snake flights

Drakh fleet:

Ma'cu carrier, Crew Quality 4

4 Ria'stor heavy raiders

Ria'vash strike cruiser, Crew Quality 5

Sa'ria'stor light raider

Ria'vash strike cruiser, Crew Quality 4

Sa'ria'stor light raider

Sa'dravash light cruiser, Crew Quality 5

Ria'stor heavy raider, Crew Quality 6

2 Kama're scouts, Crew Quality 5 each

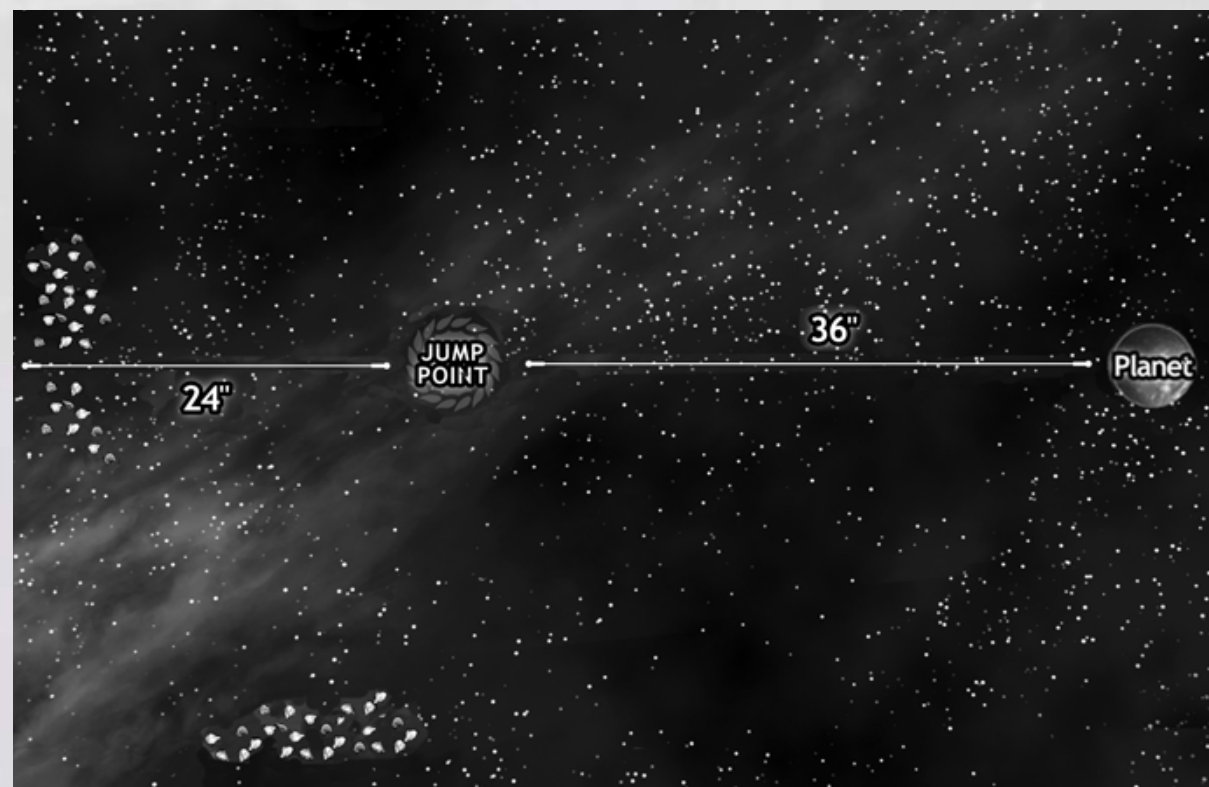
Pre-Battle Preparation

See attached map for setup of table (the rough shapes are asteroid fields). The asteroid fields in the system are

unusually dense, density ten for navigation purposes and can easily conceal ships hiding within them.

The two fleets selected to start in the system are deployed anywhere on the table, and some can be deployed concealed within asteroid fields, see the scenario rules for details.

The *Vanishing Dreams* enters on turn one from any table edge, selected before the Centauri deploy their forces, but exact position chosen after the visible ships have been deployed. The rest of the Alliance fleet enter from hyperspace from turn one onwards, and can make use of the jump gate.



Scenario rules

The density of the asteroids means that any ship sitting stationary in an asteroid field from the start of the battle will only be detected by a scout scanning for them, which requires a Crew Quality check difficulty nine.

The mercenary fleet is likely to break and run rather than fight to the death, they are mercenaries after all. The Drazi and Hurr ships are likely to withdraw or surrender if crippled or reduced to skeleton crew, while the Ipsha squadron will withdraw if two ships are crippled or a single Warglobe is destroyed.

Game Length

The game will last until one side has no functioning ships remaining on the table or for 10 turns.

Victory and Defeat

Victory conditions are simple, with victory going to the fleet that controls the system at the end of the game. For added kudos the Alliance player will want to keep as many of his ships in fighting trim as possible so that they can participate in the later phases of the plan.

Alliance Tactics

While you will not know which of the fleets will be waiting for you when you go to the system, the Centauri player will be using three of the four options listed, so you will need to know what you will do against each of them. The mercenary fleet is the most powerful; however it will not fight to the death. If you encounter it then you will be well advised to attack it quickly and drive it off.

One difficulty you face is that you are using the survivors of several battles, rather than a task force designed from the ground up for this mission. How much your squadron has been

reinforced will depend greatly on events in the previous scenario. You might have to make this attack with a tiny force or you may have such superiority of numbers that the only victory that the Centauri commander can hope for is an honourable death.

Centauri Tactics

The old school fleet is the weakest of the four, lacking any ships that can take it on the chin from the powerful alliance fleet. The mercenary fleet has the most firepower but has a glass jaw as the ships will not fight to the death for you. The Drakh fleet is the most advanced and with the advanced jump engines that they carry they will make an excellent reserve, attacking from hyperspace on turn three. The new order fleet are dangerous and ships like the Dargans would be excellent concealed in the asteroids, where their stealth will be improved.

The only scouts available to you are those of the Drakh, so the Minbari are going to be an issue for you. One way to limit the damage from this is to start with the Drakh deployed at the start, as the Ipsha warglobes have advanced jump engines so could serve as the hyperspace reserve quite effectively.

While energy mines are now wasted if used just on fighters, do not group your expensive fighters near a ship as the bombardment squadron will vaporise them while still doing significant damage to the ship.

Historical Note

The forces that were actually in the Beta 3 system were the old school fleet and the mercenaries, without the Drazi Stormfalcon, which at the last minute had declined to fight against the Interstellar Alliance. There were supposed to be Drakh ships as a reserve in hyperspace but these never showed up.

The *Lady Amathu* and escort were over the planet, the *Jagged Edge*, *Death before Dishonour* and *Final Act*

were between the jump gate and the planet, while the Vorchans were hidden in the asteroid fields to either side of the jump gate. Lastly the Ipsha warglobe squadron was lurking all the way at the back, hiding behind the planet intending to engage at long range.

The *Might of the One* and *Dawn Bringer* both jumped in down one flank, virtually on top of the *Lady Amathu*, which promptly surrendered. The Omegas and the *Odysseus* jumped in to the gaps between the encircling asteroids, while the bombardment squadron and the *Holy Fire Unleashed* entered through the jump gate.

The Centurions and the Hurr charged the enemy, getting to point blank range on the bombardment squadron, which did more damage to itself when it vaporised all three ships than they had managed to do to it. The Vorchans attacked from surprise and managed to do some more damage to the missile frigates, crippling them both. The first of the warglobes was crippled but by this stage the only Centauri ships left were a couple of Vorchans and the Ipsha did not like their chances of getting paid, so withdrew.

All this happened so quickly that the reserves watching from hyperspace never bothered to turn up, as the only damage to the alliance fleet of note was the crippling of the two missile frigates, which would have left the Drakh outnumbered approximately three to one.

The result of this was that the system was in Alliance hands when the Minbari and Earth Alliance fleets rolled forward to attack Gorash. This was not necessary for the attack itself but did mean that withdrawing ships had a rally point held by friendly forces to fall back to. Supplies could also be brought forward to the Beta 3 system, allowing for more efficient resupply of the human ships and their reliance on expensive missile systems. Fordice and his task force therefore remained in Beta 3 and had to listen to reports coming in of the treachery and massacre in the Gorash system. But for that you will have to wait...

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Keep Your Dictionary Handy

By Zild Remo

In a world where every citizen is constantly watching every other citizen, it seems hard to believe that any loyal, happy, sane citizen would dare draw attention to himself by using unusual terminology.

Yet Alpha Complex is home to a vocabulary as colourful as its clearance-coded clones and equipment. This situation has occurred for numerous reasons, including:

- **Propaganda:** Words or phrases used to make Alpha Complex sound even more perfect than it is, such as 'commie sabotage' in place of 'bad luck' or 'mistake'. Such words and phrases are believed or otherwise in near-equal measure.
- **Computer Error:** At some stage any given word could have been overwritten or corrupted in Friend Computer's databanks and who is going to argue?
- **IntSec Profiling Scheme:** By convincing HPD&MC to introduce subtle differences in the language used in the versions of vidshows multicast in different sectors, IntSec officers can quickly determine a citizen's home sector by the vocabulary they use. Rumours that happiness levels amongst HPD&MC workers fell sharply upon the introduction of this scheme are treason.
- **Pre-apocalypse Usage:** Words and phrases that became popular in the years before Friend Computer took over.
- **Multiple Meanings:** A perfectly innocuous word in one context may mean something else – or several things – in different contexts. Such variations can be used to speak about treason in code and thus in relative safety. Although they tend to originate from Alpha Complex' various SecSocs, often reflecting the nature of the treasonous organisation in question,

over time they have gained wider use and thus are rarely sufficient proof of treason.

- All of the above.

With players needing little if any excuse to terminate each other, the GM needs to actively encourage players to use alternative vocabulary. As usual, this can be achieved by application of both the orange clearance RealFood with a reputation for enhancing one's eyesight and the IR Prod.

The wise GM must quickly establish that the use – not to mention ad-hoc creation – of slang in *PARANOIA* games is a good thing; something to be rewarded rather than punished, be it through use of our friend the Perversity Point or the situation-specific sudden stroke of luck: *'How lucky! You managed to escape the warbot's iron grip without it even ruffling your jumpsuit! Perhaps it was busy referencing your obscure but entirely non-treasonous use of the word "shlop".'*

Perhaps even more critical is the clear decision not to punish players for using slang. I know the thought of *not* punishing players may sound unusual but just this once I urge you to give it a try. Of course, advice about not punishing players need not apply if the slang used is of a less than desirable quality!

Conversely, players who do not like to mince their words should perhaps be given a lesson in mincing: *'Citizen Bo-R-ING, use of the word "dead" has been deemed insubordination due to its negative impact on complex-wide happiness levels. Please report to the nearest IntSec WipeWhileUWait facility for correction and remember to use one of the two 237 Computer-approved alternatives in future.'*

What follows is just the tip of the ColdFunBerg, a starting point for your imagination listing just a few words and phrases, with varying levels of explanation as to their origins along with some usage examples. You may notice that some entries could derive the same term from several distinct meanings, although there is insufficient space for all such explanations here. Items expressed in numerals or symbols are commonly written as such on forms or typed as such on PDCs. Commendation

points to the loyal citizens over at www.Paranoia-Live.net for their many contributions.

General Usage

CMT / comti:

- 1: (n) A Commie Mutant Traitor. *'He's a comti, I tell you!'*
- 2: (n) Insult, from the above. *'Shut your face, you stinking CMT...'*

Frank / Frankie:

- 1: (n) A member of the Frankenstein Destroyer SecSoc. *'Alright, I confess, I'm a Frank!'*
- 2: (n) A Frankenstein bot. *'Ow! Stupid docbot! What are you, a Frank or something?!'*
- 3: (v) To damage a bot, including to make a bot go Frankenstein. *'Someone Franked the vendbot and now all it'll give me is blue clearance algae chips.'*

leopard cubs / kittens:

- 1: (n) Junior citizens behaving like Death Leopard members. *'A bunch of leopard cubs were hangin' around outside the PLC office and one of 'em threw his ColdFunStick at me!'*

prime / optimus:

1: (n) Original clone (suspected OR reference). *'I lost my optimus during the PLN sector IR riots.'*

creep / creepy:

- 1: (n) Insect. *'There's creeps everywhere!'*
 2: (n) Discreet surveillance device. *'There's a creep in the light fixture.'*
 3: (n) IntSec or one of its operatives, derived from their use of surveillance devices. *'I think he's a creep.'*
 4: (v) To employ discrete surveillance techniques. *'Creep the suspect.'*

vat duty clinic / VD clinic:

1: (n) Informal name for a Vat Duty Assignment Station, often frequented by Troubleshooters as punishment after unsuccessful missions. *'Off to the VD clinic again, eh?'*

metal matter:

1: (n) Brains, usually of a bot, derived from the OR term 'grey matter'. *'That bot's got metal matter, I tell you...'*

UV matter:

1: (n) Intelligence, derived from the OR term 'grey matter' and the high level of respect all loyal citizens hold for UV citizens. *'Good plan! I guess you've more UV matter than I thought...'*

trouble:

1: (n) Blood, a truncation of the word 'Troubleshooter' given both the high injury and death rate amongst Troubleshooters and the large number of red clearance citizens enrolled in the Troubleshooter Corps. *'Looks like trouble. I guess we hit something after all.'*

vend / dispense:

1: (v) Any bodily function, natural or otherwise, that involves the expulsion of material from a citizen's body,

named after the similar term applied to machines. *'Whoa man, you're vending trouble from your shoulder!'*

vendings / dispensings:

1: (n) Material expelled from a citizen's body by bodily functions, natural or otherwise. *'If you have to up-chuck, could you please try not to get your vendings all over my jumpsuit in future?!'*

durable identification / death identification / DID:

1: (n) Boots, the only (solid) remnants of a clone terminated in accordance with the Troubleshooter Handbook, 2nd Edition 3rd Reprint. *'I killed him. Bagsy his DIDs.'*

did:

1: (v) To have killed, from the phrase 'to do him' or 'to do a termination'. *'I did him. Bagsy his DIDs.'*

increment / promote / ++ / plusplus / doubleplus:

1: (v) To kill, as this usually increase a citizen's clone number by one. Originally from programming terminology and thus most commonly used by UVs, high-clearance CPU citizens and Computer Phreaks. '++', 'plusplus' and 'doubleplus' can be used on their own, after a name or after various other terms. *'I promoted the traitor.'* / *'I plusplussed him.'* / *'I CMT++ed him.'*
 2: (adj) Dead, from the above. *'He gave the wrong password to a doorbot and now he's Bob++.'*

vatload:

1: (pron) Lots, from the excessive size of vats. *'We've got vatloads of bootlaces in stock now but still no boots.'*

swipe / swallow:

1: (v) To steal, from the act of inserting one's ME card into a reader and never having it back or from the act of a Matter Eater mutant stealing something and then concealing the evidence. *'Hey! That guy just swallowed my PDC!'*

1.27 / 127 / one point two seven / one two seven:

1: (v) To steal, suspected IntSec crime code. Actually from the OR term 'half inch', rhyming slang for 'pinch', although no citizen actually knows this. *'Hey, who one two sevened my laser?!'*

72.1 / 721 / seventy two point one / seven two one / unsteal / antisteal / find / drop:

1: (v) To plant evidence of treason, the opposite of stealing, 127, lifting and so on. *'I've never seen it before, Friend Computer! I swear it must have been seven two oned.'* / *'Your best bet is to find Commie paraphernalia on your enemies... That usually does the trick for me.'*
 2: (v) To plant other items, such as bugs or explosives. *'Antisteal this device in the Armed Forces barracks. Well of course it's ticking, it's supposed to tick!'*

jacko:

1: (v) To dangle or drop from a high place. Suspected OR origin. *'He jackoed from the top floor.'*

inkblot:

1: (n) A citizen that has died by jackoing or being squashed, derived from the resulting interesting pattern. *'No point calling a Docbot for this inkblot...'*

IR win / irwin / win the IR lottery:

1: (v) To put in or near harm's way, from the act of being randomly chosen for a clone++ing role such as reactor shielding duty. *'We only won the IR lottery because you said you knew a shortcut!'*

still dripping / goo man / shlop:

1: (adj) Recently decanted, sometimes derogatory in meaning, from the leftover clone tank fluids and the sounds they cause a freshly-decanted citizens to make as he moves. *'Give me a minute to think, would you? I'm still dripping.'*
 2: (v) To be on one's way from being recently decanted. *'Sally's new clone should be shlopping its way here as we speak.'*

zap:

1: (v) To kill, especially to shoot with a laser. *'I zapped him good!'*

cake:

1: (v) To lie. Unknown origin. *'You're caking!'*
 2: (n) A lie. Unknown origin. *'So I told a little UV cake. So zap me.'*

sixmonthcycle / six:

1: (n) Friend, from the obscure term 'Juniper' or 'June' of the same meaning and the OR month of the same name. *'It's cool, he's my sixmonthcycle.'*
 2: (n) Ally, from the phrase 'I've got your six'. Often interchanged with 'friend' due to the similar meaning. *'It's cool, he's my six.'*

Blinky:

1: (n) Friend Computer. Affectionate or derogatory dependant on context, although slightly frowned upon regardless. *'Blinky loves us all and I for one love Blinky.'* / *'Don't you worry about Blinky... Once we've pulled this off, none of us will have to worry about him any more!'*

blinky:

1: (adj) Intermittent, from both 'on the blink' and the act of blinking one's eyes. *'That security camera's blinky; one second on, four seconds off.'*
 2: (adj) Faulty, also from 'on the blink'. *'Oh no, I think my laser's blinky...'*
 3: (n) Friend Computer, due to its fault-ridden nature. *'Blinky's blinky.'*

solid docbots:

1: (n) Bad luck. *'I went to that treasonous FE casino last night but had real solid docbots.'*
 2: (n) An unpleasant experience. *'I went to that treasonous FE casino last night but had real solid docbots.'*

bootsmoke:

1: (n) A dead citizen. *'He's bootsmoke.'*
 2: (n) An annoying or worthless citizen. *'Lame-R is such a bootsmoke.'*
 3: (n) General insult. *'Shut it, bootsmoke.'*
 4: (adj) Something annoying or worthless. *'This barrel's bootsmoke now that it's empty.'*
 5: (v) To kill. *'Bootsmoke him!'*
 6: (interj) Expression of anger, annoyance or frustration. *'Bootsmoke!'*
 7: (interj) Expression of dismay. *'Oh, bootsmoke...'*
 8: (interj) Expression used when about to fight against overwhelming odds or otherwise throwing caution to the industrial air filter stream. *'Bootsmoke it!'*

Bootsmoke:

1: (n) Popular vidshow documenting the adventures of citizens working to bring justice to the rugged, long-abandoned WST sector. *'Did you see last night's Bootsmoke?'*

The Big C:

1: (n) Friend Computer. *'Thanks, Big C!'*

sweet merciful Computer / for the love of FC / Friend Computer on an autobot

1: (interj) Expression of surprise or exasperation. *'Sweet merciful Computer, did you just see that explosion?!'*

HEL sector:

1: (n) A very bad place. *'See you in HEL sector!'*
 2: (interj) Expression of dismay. *'Oh, HEL sector.'*

scru / scrub:

1: (v) To get in trouble, especially when having to deal with a scrubot or having already been dealt with by one. *'We're scrued.'* / *'He's scrubbed.'*

mini-me:

1: (n): ME Card, personal identification. *'No, I'm yellow clearance! Look it says so right here on my mini-me!'*

RTFMA:

1: (abbr) Read the (DFSR) mission alert. *'RTFMA!'*

countersink:

1: (v) To try to help but do more harm than good. *'Stop it, you're countersinking!'*

win-win / win-win situation:

1: (n) A bribe. *'I don't take win-wins.'*
 2: (v) To bribe. *'How much is it going to cost me to win-win you?'*

outsource:

1: (v) To delegate or order, usually to someone of lower clearance who does not know what they are doing. *'I'm outsourcing it to you, now shut up and get on with it!'*

tech serve:

1: (v) Break. *'Don't tech serve it!'*
 2: (adj) Broken. *'Too late, its tech served.'*

B3:

1: (N) Explosives, bombs and the like. *'Vulture Leader to Vulture Squad, target in sight... B3 away!'*

shake the B3:

1: (v) To do something stupid. *'Don't touch the big red button, that'd be really shaking the B3.'*
 2: (v) Detonate or launch explosives. *'It's in the blast radius... Shake the B3.'*

abba:

1: (interj) Expression of treasonous levels of unhappiness. *'Oh, abba!'*

2: (v) To be maimed or some other fate worse than death. *'We operated, but we couldn't save the leg. You're abbaed, I'm afraid.'*

wend:

1: (v) To walk, re-popularisation of the old word. *'I can't afford the transtube so I'll have to wend.'* / *'Wend your way to SLM sector.'*

2: (v) To abduct, after the infamous Free Enterprise member Wend-I-AUS who lured junior citizens to his residence with high-energy drinks before selling them into slavery. *'I think commies are trying to wend me!'*

tankskin / decanting suit:

1: (n) Naked body. *'Why's that clone wearing his decanting suit?'*

Insults

Cannot kill your fellow Troubleshooter because The Computer is watching you? At least you can insult them with words he might not understand.

mickey:

1: (n) Menial clone, such as a vat cleaner. *'Hey, mickey! When you're finished there give my boots a quick polish, would you?!'*

mangler:

1: (n) Docbot. *'You've nothing to worry about now that the mangler is here...'*

TV:

1: (n) Flybot, abbreviation of the phrase 'terminal velocity'. *'I'd rather walk than get in a TV!'*

stinky / BO:

1: (n) Briefing Officer, from its abbreviation. *'I hope the stinky shows up soon; I need to visit the little clone's room!'*

goosack / meatbag / fleshwad:

1: (n) Human. Commonly used by bots. *'Oi, fleshwad, stem your bleeding would you?! I just cleaned that floor!'*

filthcicle / stenchcloud / soap dodger / ecosystem:

1: (n) A person with dubious hygiene. *'For the love of FC, learn to use a hygiene booth would you, ecosystem?'*
2: (n) Human. Used by bots only. *'Good day, filthcicle.'*

spanner:

1: (n) Incompetent maintenance operative. *'I was just serviced by a right ol' spanner.'*

clank / scrap metal:

1: (n) An old or poorly-maintained bot. *'They really should upgrade that clank.'*

vatslime:

1: (n) Congealed residue left on foodvats. *'Ooh, looks like you got a bit of vatslime in your HotFun... Tasty!'*
2: (n) Insult. *'Go away, vatslime!'*

commie-loving / mutie-loving / traitor-loving:

1: (pref) Modifier to intensify meaning of an insult. *'He's a commie-loving thief!'*

decantee of a bot / decantee of a commie:

1: (interj) Insult, from the OR phrase 'son of a (DFSR)'. *'You decantee of a bot!'*

high cleaner / high IR / high infrared:

1: (n) A know-it-all who is usually wrong, from a play on the title 'high programmer'. *'That mickey's such a high cleaner...'*

tin / can / tincan:

1: (n) Bot. *'Oi, tincan!'*

volunteer:

1: (n) Moron. *'It seems we have a volunteer!'*

scuttlebot:

1: (n) Rumour, originally from a bot with damaged Asimov circuits and a penchant for talking that moved around the complex spreading gossip and rumour. *'Scuttlebot said this door leads to The Outside!'*

loyalyke:

1: (n) A suspected traitor whose treason has not yet been proven. *'Don't trust him, he's a loyalyke.'*

dosed / dosey:

1: (adj) Overmedicated or using treasonous drugs. *'He can't walk straight. I can't believe he went and got dosey again!'*

Teela-O stand-in:

1: (n) A citizen who considers himself a great hero, whom others consider useless. *'He used to be a Teela-O stand-in but now he's... No, he's still a Teela-O stand-in.'*

Commie Rhyming Slang

A set of rhymes derived by commies to hide the true meanings of words. Double meanings abound in the following examples (making them arguably poor choices for code!) Reasons for traitors wishing to obscure words as innocuous as 'done' and 'ride' are not available at your security clearance, citizen.

hot / hot fun:

Done. *'I'll have that form hot in a tic!'*

shiny / shiny reflec:

Neck. *'Punch him in the shiny!'*

soylent / soylent red:

Dead. *'He's soylent, Jim-Y.'*

desk / desk clerk:

Work. *'That vendbot never desks for me. I think he's a Frankie.'*

stir / stir the vat:

Fat. *'Why are all green goons stir?'*

messhall / messhall surprise:

Lies. *'What a load of messhall!'*

Phreak / Phreak code:

Load. *'Commies ahead! Freak your weapons, clones!'*

vidshow / vidshow repeat:

Seat. *'Take a vidshow and tell me what happened.'*

access / access denied:

Ride. *'My autobot's parked up ahead. Fancy an access?'*

bed / bed inspector:

Sector. *'This is the most treasonous bed in Alpha Complex!'*

Common Phrases

Phrases often popularised by vidshows and mimicked by Troubleshooters who should know better than to stand around jabbering whilst in mortal danger.

Check your six:

Watch your back / It's behind you.

Check your twelve:

It's right in front of you, stupid.

Time for Teela:

Run for your lives.

Got his boots:

Beat, killed and/or outlasted him.

Let's vote for a leader:

Let's choose a fall guy.

As much use as a chocolyke HotFun bowl:

Useless.

Looking like an imminent hygiene violation:

Scary.

Keep your chin up:

Let the cameras see you being treasonously unhappy.

That's smoked the boots:

That's broke / killed / ruined it.

Give The Computer an autograph:

Register a mutation.

Go play with vulturecraft:

Go away (and die).

Tell it to IntSec:

Give me a second to screw this barrel on, then I'll kill you.

Be a hero:

Throw your life away needlessly.

Win a medal:

Throw your life away purposefully.

Brand Names

Some brands gain such overwhelming popularity and recognition that the brand name effectively replaces the name of the product. Or perhaps this is just the result of all that subliminal messaging...

ZapIt!:

The premier range of accessories for firearms and other sporting goods, 'ZapIt!' has all but replaced the word 'holster', the first of the company's many perfect products.

SickOrWell:

Medical insurance.

PopEm:

Pill bottles with junior citizen-proof mechanisms that prevent anyone from accessing the contents. Except junior citizens. Also used for other medicine-related products, including the PopEmPump Pill Re-claimer.

GooUChoose / Goo:

Originally intended as 'GlueUChoose', the name of this product was miscommunicated prior to its original advertising campaign. Attempts to re-brand the product by its proper name were poorly received as they were mistaken for the launch of a cheap, inferior competing product, despite the two having identical qualities and price points and of course, being produced by the same Service Firm. All glues are now commonly called 'GooUChoose', or simply 'Goo', much to the annoyance of other adhesive manufacturers. The HPD&MC advertising executive in charge of the campaign disappeared shortly after attempting to further sales by re-branding the product 'New! Improved! GooUChoose 2!'.

StickyBackPlastiLyke:

Goo on tape, popularised by a well-known vidshow for junior citizens.

Larg-R:

A popular mind-altering drink created by fermenting algae, allegedly named after the R&D clone who discovered the process.

SUB:

Green clearance freshly-made foodstuff with RealFood fillings, named after the sector in which the first outlet was opened. This cheap but tasty meal was purposefully designed to a size that means one is never enough, two is too much and sharing is a clear sign of communist

tendencies, which may go some way towards explaining the hefty appearance of the average green goon.

KleenTeam:

The HygieneTimeFunKit, including soap, sponge and hydropistol toy.

RSK:

Alpha Complex' premier collectable tabletop wargame, pitting loyal Armed Forces citizens against the commie hordes. Rules are suitably skewed in favour of the Armed Forces.

FreeAir:

Ventilation systems, available on monthly or PayAsYouBreathe contract.

TotalRecall:

MemoMax component manufacturer and servicing agent. Sales have fallen considerably since the start of Year 214, when a competing Service Firm indulged in an ad-campaign suggesting that 'TotalRecall' was a reference to product reliability rather than memory retention levels.

Norris:

Razors.

He's Dead, Jim-Y

The following are just a fraction of the phrases used to describe dead clones. After all, with most citizens averaging six deaths, 'dead' gets just a little repetitive. Some of these will sound all too familiar to Troubleshooters who perform their duties on the Grey Subnets using the JParanoia utility.

... has gone to that big briefing office above the dome.

... is shooting trouble with UVs.

... donated their body to R&D.

... shuffled off this mortal sector.

... kicked the synthe-bucket.

... exited, vid-stage left.

... got bored of their present clone.

... passed on to a better sector.

... bought the highly-treasureous farm.

... has gone to Great Alpha Complex in the Sky.

... got out of work detail, permanently.

... forgot how to breath. And have a pulse.

... decided living's not for them.

... joined the scrubot's list of things to do.

... is on tomorrow's menu.

... left their next clone a hefty cleaning bill.

... had better hope their life insurance forms are in order.

... needs to insert another plasticred to continue.

... has gone to meet their former clones.

One Clone's Monologue

A short example drawn from just a few of the above words and phrases:

'My optimus had solid docbots. Some comti jackoed him out of a TV – as if that wasn't winning the IR lottery enough – and made him an inkblot. But I got my revenge... I was still shlop when I thought "bootsmoke it!" and sought out that mutie-lovin' decantee of a commie and promoted him. "That was really shaking the B3!" I had told him as I tech served his arm. There was vatloads of trouble and other vendings all over the place afterwards, until he finally joined the scrubot's list of things to do. But I got his DIDs and that's all that matters.'

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