

G U R P S[®]

MONSTERS



COMPILED BY
HUNTER JOHNSON

STEVE JACKSON GAMES

ALL THINGS VILE AND MURDEROUS . . .

Some creatures are tragically misunderstood – fearsome in appearance, but basically harmless, or even good.

But the ones in *this* book are just plain rotten.

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Beware. There are monsters here.

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GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition, Revised and *Compendium I* are required to use this supplement in a **GURPS** campaign. *GURPS Grimoire* and *Magic, Second Edition* are recommended, but not vital. The creatures presented in **GURPS Monsters** can be used with *any* game system.

THE BEAST-TAMERS:

Compiled by Hunter Johnson

Edited by Andrew Hackard
and Luciann Wasson

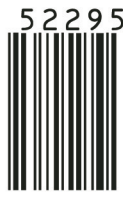
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MONSTERS

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INTRODUCTION

Monsters are like art: hard to define, but you know one when you see one.

The term “monster” covers many creatures of wide-ranging aspects, abilities, and attitudes. Anything nonhuman is eligible, especially if the group calling it “monster” would like to see it destroyed. The nonhuman requirement is often relaxed to merely “different.” The Fear of Other (see *GURPS Horror*) is the fear of monsters.

On the table lies a book of Hours, “cased in a cover of solid silver gilt, wrought with quaint devices and studded with small brilliants and rubies,” and close by it “squats a little ugly monster, a Lar, perhaps, dug up in the sunny fields of corn-bearing Sicily.”

– Oscar Wilde, *Intentions*

While the creatures included in this compilation are certainly Other, they also meet additional criteria. First, almost all monsters here are *unnatural*. This rule excludes the likes of orcs and goblins, since they are natural creatures within their fantasy settings. This book also leaves out the human monsters – the serial killers and other psycho- and sociopaths. See *GURPS Villains* for their ilk. This collection restricts itself to mythological beasts, gothic horrors, demonic apparitions, and other bogeymen. Some of the cryptozoological entries, such as the Honey Island Swamp Monster, approach the natural order, but don’t quite reach it. The Phantom of the Opera (a classic human monster) is the exception that proves this rule.

All monsters here are *horrific*. No misunderstood grotesques, no noble beasts, no merely colossal specimens. The creatures here each want something . . . and whatever it is, it isn’t pretty. Mundane folk should avoid getting in the way. Even the Golem, serving as a ghetto guardian, struck fear into those he protected as well as those he opposed.

Finally, the monsters here are *mythic*. Not all spring from real-world legends, but each has a mythos encompassing its existence. The villagers are spooked, the natives are restless, and the thrill-seekers are entranced . . .

About the Compiler

Hunter Johnson lives with his wife and two sons in Dayton, Ohio. His home is only blocks away from the Washington-Centerville Public Library, used extensively in his *GURPS* projects. Besides compiling and revising *GURPS* books (*GURPS Japan*, *GURPS Bestiary*) he also writes reviews for *Moves* magazine and hosts an annual gaming weekend, humbly called HunterCon. In his mundane guise, he is a computer programmer, working primarily with PowerBuilder, C++, perl, and SQL. You can find Hunter on the Web at www.hunterandlori.com.

About GURPS

Steve Jackson Games is committed to full support of the *GURPS* system. Our address is SJ Games, Box 18957, Austin, TX 78760. Please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope (SASE) any time you write us! Resources include:

Pyramid (www.sjgames.com/pyramid/). Our online magazine includes new *GURPS* rules and articles. It also covers *Dungeons and Dragons*, *Traveller*, *World of Darkness*, *Call of Cthulhu*, and many more top games – and other Steve Jackson Games releases like *In Nomine*, *INWO*, *Car Wars*, *Toon*, *Ogre Miniatures*, and more. *Pyramid* subscribers also have access to playtest files online!

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Internet. Visit us on the World Wide Web at www.sjgames.com for an online catalog, errata, updates, Q&A, and much more. *GURPS* has its own Usenet group, too: rec.games.frp.gurps.

GURPSnet. This e-mail list hosts much of the online discussion of *GURPS*. To join, e-mail majordomo@io.com with “subscribe GURPSnet-L” in the body, or point your web browser to gurpsnet.sjgames.com.

The *GURPS Monsters* web page is at www.sjgames.com/gurps/books/monsters/.

Page References

Rules and statistics in this book are specifically for the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Any page reference that begins with a B refers to the *GURPS Basic Set* – e.g., p. B102 means p. 102 of the *GURPS Basic Set, Third Edition*. Page references that begin with CI indicate *GURPS Compendium I*. Other references are AH for *GURPS Atomic Horror*, BE for *Bestiary*, BT for *Blood Types*, CII for *Compendium II*, D for *Dinosaurs*, EG for *Egypt*, FB for *Fantasy Bestiary*, FF for *Fantasy Folk*, G for *Grimoire*, I for *Illuminati*, J for *Japan*, M for *Magic*, SU for *Supers*, T for *Technomancer*, UN for *Undead*, VO for *Voodoo*, WWi for *Who’s Who 1*, and WWii for *Who’s Who 2*. For a full list of abbreviations, see p. CI181 or the updated list at www.sjgames.com/gurps/abbrevs.html.

A MYTHOLOGICAL MENAGERIE

CHAPTER 1





*"When the skies above were
not yet named," the first
fantastic creatures emerge
from primal chaos.
Mesopotamian dragons
and demons, an Egyptian
sun-bird, and the Greek
Scylla, Hydra, and Chimera
are among the brood of
unnatural beasts that are
transformed from oral
tradition into the oldest
mythological poetry in
cuneiform characters,
Egyptian hieroglyphs, and
preclassical Greek writing.
— Joseph Nigg,
The Book of Fabulous Beasts*

Myths from around the world are a rich source of unique monstrosities to challenge heroes of great power. Most mythological monsters could give even a demigod a good stiff fight, and many were themselves descended from or created by the gods. A wide range of mythologies and cultures appear in this chapter. Liberties have been taken with some stories; for instance, La Llorona has been taken to the world of **GURPS Technomancer**, and Amenhotep reflects Hollywood sensibilities much more than the actual historical mummies of Egypt.

Most of these monsters have a *purpose*. Asterius roamed the Labyrinth of Crete, disposing of the enemies of King Minos. The Golem protected Jews in the ghetto of Warsaw. Curupira preserves the Amazon rain forest from the depredations of modern society.

None of these are the stars of their myths; either they are the foes the heroes must defeat, or (rarely) they are the heroes' allies. Medusa's story is merely a chapter in the larger saga of Perseus' life; Tiamat is just the biggest evil for Marduk to destroy. The myths are about the heroes, not the monsters. This doesn't mean that the monsters should be slighted – far from it! The best monsters have detailed histories, the stuff of bardic lays or holy writings, which help the PCs figure out how to defeat them. However, they are not the ones who drive the action; they wait for the heroes to come to them.

Of course, this chapter barely scratches the surface of the world's mythologies. Some well-known cultures, such as the Norse, are completely absent, and even those myths that are represented are much richer than we can hope to present in a single chapter of a single book. Many more mythical monsters appear in the various **GURPS** historical volumes and in **GURPS Fantasy Bestiary**. There are many excellent books about myths, offering the enterprising GM with plenty of information to design a **GURPS** version of almost any creature he would like. (See the Bibliography, p. 127.)

One thing for the GM to keep in mind is that many players, when they encounter one representative of a well-known mythos, will expect to see others. A party that sails by a large rock and runs afoul of Scylla is going to start watching, warily, for Charybdis . . . and they may well want to journey to Ithaca and stir up some trouble with Odysseus! The GM should be prepared either to deal with the ramifications of dropping the party into classical Greece, or to explain why Scylla is present and the rest of the Greek myths aren't.

A GM may well want to create his own monsters in the mythic mode. He should remember that mythical monsters are often hugely impressive physical specimens, but not especially intellectual. They are often easier to outwit than to defeat in a toe-to-toe fight. Many of them are part animal (such as the Minotaur) or humaniform animals. Some others are gargantuan animals, with no more cunning than the normal specimens – these, such as the Giant Leech of Tlanusi'yi, can cause immense amounts of damage through sheer instinct. Additionally, many monsters are cursed, either by the gods or through their own evil deeds; designing a curse can lead to a good history – and from there, to a memorable foe.

Amenhotep the Mummy

380 points

Age 3,300; 6'3", 90 lbs. A typical-looking mummy, wrapped in bandages – a small opening shows dimly glowing eyes set in deep sockets. Amenhotep appears muscular – his low body weight is due to desiccation. He wears a tarnished funerary amulet around his neck.

ST: 20 [0] **DX:** 10 [0] **Speed:** 6.00
IQ: 14 [45] **HT:** 14/19 [45] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 5

Advantages

Charisma +4 [20]; Filthy Rich [50]; Multimillionaire 1 [25]; Mummy [125]; No Compulsive Behavior [15]; Terror [30]; Versatile [5].

Disadvantages

Obsession (Restore the glory of ancient Egypt) [-15].

Quirks

Doesn't like cats; Proud of own architectural achievements. [-2]

Skills

Accounting-12 [1]; Administration-13 [1]; Appreciate Beauty-14 [4]*; Architecture-16 [6]; Area Knowledge (Luxor)-14 [1]; Calligraphy-12 [4]*; Embalming-12 [1]; Leadership-17 [1]**; Masonry-10 [1]; Theology (Ancient Egyptian)-12/18 [2].

* Includes +1 for Versatile.

** Bought from ST-5 default.

Languages

Akkadian-14 [2]; Ancient Egyptian (Native)-14 [0]; Arabic-13 [1]; English-12 [1/2]; French-12 [1/2].

Biography

Amenhotep, son of Hapu, was the chief architect for Pharaoh Amenhotep III of the XVIIIth Dynasty of Egypt's New Kingdom. He was charged with building grand temples to the gods and monuments to the glory of his pharaoh and of Egyptian civilization. He enjoyed his work and took great pride in it. Among his many achievements were the Luxor Temple at Thebes, additions to the Great Temple of Amun-Ra at nearby Karnak, and Amenhotep III's funerary temple, including twin 65'-tall statues of the pharaoh.

After his beloved pharaoh died, Amenhotep watched helplessly as the heir, Amenhotep IV, renounced the traditional pantheon of Egypt and instituted monotheistic worship of the sun god Aten as the state religion. When the young pharaoh changed his name to Akhenaten it was the last straw for Amenhotep. Embittered, he retired from public life and

soon died. Amenhotep had his own tomb ready on the west bank of the Nile, not far from the Valley of the Kings.

Amenhotep's *ka* (or spiritual conscience; see p. EG100) quickly became restless as Akhenaten closed and defiled the temples of Amun-Ra in his bid to purge Egypt of the old gods. A century later, his *ka* saw Rameses II scavenging stone from Amenhotep's temples for the construction of monuments. Worse was to come. Conquest by Persia and Rome saw the end of classical Egyptian civilization. Nearly 2,000 years later, Europeans started removing artifacts and entire monuments, and digging up long-forgotten tombs best left undisturbed.

In 1932, Amenhotep's tomb was discovered – intact, with a small collection of priceless antiquities. Unfortunately for the Sanderman expedition, when they opened the sarcophagus, the mummy stirred and killed everyone on the site. He then stole a boat, crossed the Nile to Luxor (the modern city on the site of Thebes), and began to hide by day and study by night. He sneaked into museums and libraries – unseen if possible, killing any witnesses if not. Slowly, he caught up on history and began planning for the future. He eventually found Narmer Barud, an ambitious and clever criminal who recognized a path to power, even if it meant humoring a mummy's desires to rebuild ancient Egypt. Barud has recruited a small cult, which now operates around the world to retrieve Egyptian relics and murder those who took them. Each relic returned to Amenhotep swells his power . . . and ambitions.

Motivations

Amenhotep's *ka* has absorbed a wealth of knowledge, and hatred, over the last 3,000 years. He now desires to restore the glory of the ancient Egyptian civilization, piece by piece if need be, and thirsts for revenge against those who contributed to its downfall. He approaches these goals methodically. He has taken the time to learn a few modern languages and set up a power base before putting his plans in motion. With 3,000 years behind him, Amenhotep takes great care not to expose himself by acting too quickly. His ultimate goal is to restore worship of the old gods, purge any who do not embrace the change, and set about building great monuments once more.

Encountered

A group of *Cliffhangers* adventurers is likely to cross paths first with a cultist or servant of Amenhotep, perhaps during a theft. This could be in Cairo, Alexandria, or places further afield, such as Paris or New York. Investigation will reveal clues that lead to Luxor, increasingly dramatic encounters with more cultists, and finally Amenhotep himself. By this time, the mummy should be planning something ambitious and dangerous, perhaps a personal trip to recover Cleopatra's Needle from London.

Amenhotep's Terror and Vampiric Invulnerability make him difficult to approach, much less kill. Despite his Unhealing, the mummy can repair himself with his Embalming skill,



given access to bandages and suitable chemicals. He has supplies of these in his hideout, an underground chamber beneath the ruins of the temple of Amun-Ra in Luxor. This location can serve as the setting for a climactic encounter, with hordes of cultists and the enraged mummy.

Because he has been around since 1300 B.C., Amenhotep could feasibly be encountered by anyone from Romans to Crusaders. All it takes is a tomb robber, stumbling across a likely shaft in the ground, and the mummy's fury could be unleashed in any historical time period. A fantasy campaign with an Egyptian-like civilization could also use Amenhotep, either unchanged or as a spellcaster.

Variations

Amenhotep is suited for a low-magic campaign in which the odd supernatural event occurs. In a higher-magic campaign, Amenhotep will have at least Magery 2 and the following spells at skill 15 or better: Death Vision, Lend Health, Lend Strength, Recover Strength, Summon Spirit, and Zombie. He will use the Zombie spell to animate any other mummies he finds, and will have several enslaved servants when confronted. Further spells may be added to create a suitable

challenge to the adventurers. GMs may also consider giving him Mummy's Curse (p. UN72).

Mummy

125 points

Attributes: ST +10 [110].

Advantages: Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Extra Hit Points +5 [25]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Imperturbable [10]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, Brain, or Vitals) [15]; Temperature Tolerance 10 [10]; Unaging [15]; Vampiric Invulnerability [150].

Disadvantages: Compulsive Behavior (Remain in tomb and guard it; kill abductors and return if forcibly removed) [-15]; Dependency (Funerary amulet; rare, constantly) [-150]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Hideous Appearance [-20]; Reduced Move -1 [-5]; Social Stigma (Dead) [-20]; Sterile [-3]; Unhealing [-30]; Unliving (mitigated by funerary amulet) [-20]; Vulnerability (2d from fire) [-20].

Quirks, Features, and Taboo Traits: Dislikes fire [-1]; Protective of amulet [-1]; Can be turned using True Faith [0].

Note: See *GURPS Undead*, p. 72, for the full description.

– David Morgan-Mar

Asterius, the Minotaur

281 points

The Minotaur appears as a massive humanoid over 7 feet tall. He has the head and tail of a bull, but the body of a human.

ST: 18 [90]	DX: 13 [30]	Speed: 6.75
IQ: 8 [-15]	HT: 14/25 [100]	Move: 6
Dodge: 7	Parry: 7 (Axe)	11 (Brawling)

Advantages

Absolute Direction [5]; Alertness +5 [25]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Dark Vision [25]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Long Horns [50]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Thick Hide [28].

Disadvantages

Berserk [-15]; Bloodlust [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Gluttony [-5]; Lecherousness [-15]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats Humans) [-15]; Status -4 [-20]; Uneducated [-5].

Quirks

Rarely speaks; Thinks of himself as a divine force. [-2]

Skills

Area Knowledge (The Labyrinth)-20 [24]; Brawling-15 [4]; Running-14 [4]; Scrounging-8 [1]; Stealth-14 [4]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-12 [1]; Wrestling-13 [2].

Languages

Ancient Greek (Native)-8 [0].

Biography

Like many other monsters in Greek mythology, the Minotaur was the result of a human angering a god. In this instance, it was Minos II, the king of Crete, who upset an Olympian. Minos said the gods granted him his kingdom, and anything he prayed for would also be granted by the gods. To prove this, he prayed for a bull to appear so that he could sacrifice it to Poseidon. A beautiful white bull emerged from the sea, but Minos decided to keep that bull and sacrifice a more mundane beast in its stead.

Poseidon was not pleased. He caused Queen Pasiphaë, Minos' wife, to be consumed with unnatural desire for the bull. The queen obsessed over the animal every waking moment. At this time, the Athenian master architect Daedalus was living in exile in Crete. At Pasiphaë's request, he built a wooden cow on wheels and covered it with cowhide. It was hollow so the queen could climb inside. The contraption fooled the Poseidonic bull and he mounted it while the queen was within.

Queen Pasiphaë became pregnant and gave birth to a son, Asterius. The child had the head and tail of a bull and the body of a man. For this reason it was called the Minotaur, meaning the bull of Minos. Realizing what had happened, Minos threw Daedalus in prison for helping the queen fulfill her bestial lusts. The king then locked the Minotaur into the Labyrinth, a complicated maze (also designed by Daedalus) from which escape was nearly impossible.

After losing a war with Crete, Athens was forced to pay a tribute to Minos every eight years. This tribute took the form of seven young men and seven young women. These unfortunates were thrown into the Labyrinth, where the Minotaur killed and ate them.

The third time the tribute was sent to Crete, the hero Theseus was one of the seven young men. Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, fell in love with Theseus and decided to help him defeat the Minotaur. She met with Daedalus, who told her the secret of the Labyrinth. She gave this information to Theseus. The hero made his way through the Labyrinth, killed the Minotaur, and escaped, taking Ariadne with him to Naxos.



Motivations

Asterius lives in the dark underground maze, with only the occasional visitation from the tribute victims to vary his monotonous existence. He eats them because he is hungry. He eats them as a way to get back at the stepfather who imprisoned him. He eats them because he doesn't know any better.

Further Reading

The Minotaur first appears in the myths of Theseus and King Minos. A modern retelling of this story, in which the Minotaur is a deranged human, appears in Mary Renault's *The King Must Die* and *The Bull From The Sea*. A similar depiction of the Minotaur as a human who has had himself surgically altered appears in Stephen Dobyn's *The Wrestler's Cruel Study*.

See also *GURPS Places of Mystery*, p. 86, for information on the Palace of Knossos, on which the Labyrinth was probably based.

— Thom Marrion

Variations

The Minotaur is sometimes portrayed as a more centaur-like beast. It has body of a bull with a horned human upper body growing from the neck. For this form, add Centauroid, Extra Legs, and Inconvenient Size, and replace the Monstrous Appearance with Unnatural Feature (for the horns). For a more animalistic Minotaur, add the Bestial disadvantage (and see p. BE104 for more advice). Stress Atavism may also be appropriate for this version of the Minotaur.

In a *GURPS Voodoo* campaign, the Minotaur may be an In-Between. Add In-Between Invulnerability (p. VO99) and Regular Regeneration (p. CI64), and replace both Berserk and Bloodlust with Murder Addiction (p. CI98). This version of the Minotaur is undeniably evil.

The Minotaur is most appropriate for *GURPS Greece* campaigns, but he may be encountered elsewhere. Dante placed the Minotaur in Hell, and a *GURPS In Nomine* campaign might do likewise. The Minotaur could also be used in an urban fantasy campaign, roaming the sewers of a metropolitan city instead of the Labyrinth.

The White Bull

Poseidon was not content with Asterius' conception. The sea god also caused his white bull to become enraged and terrorize the Cretan countryside. Use the entry for cattle (p. BE39) with these stats: ST 120; DX 12; IQ 4; HT 17/30; Move/Dodge 10/10; PD/DR 2/2; Damage 3d+1 imp (usually; see p. BE39 for more information); Size 4; Weight 3 tons.

Nobody could stop the bull until Herakles faced it as one of his twelve labors (see *GURPS Greece*, p. 33). The demigod came to the island of Crete and captured the bull by tying its forelegs and then its back legs together. He then brought the bull to the plains of Marathon in Greece. Later, when the hero Theseus came to the city, he was told to slay the Bull of Marathon (as the white bull was now known) as proof that he was King Ægeus' son. He did as he was asked, and sacrificed the bull to Apollo.

So Theseus killed the Minotaur's sire before he ever went to Crete to kill the Minotaur itself.



Curupira

562 points

A Tupi boy with a fur-covered body, fiery eyes and hair, pointed ears, green teeth and backward-pointing feet.

ST: 11 [10] **DX:** 15 [60] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 13 [35] **HT:** 13/15 [40] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 8 **Parry:** 8 (Spear)

Advantages

Absolute Direction [5]; Alertness +4 [20]; Beast-Kin [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Dark Vision [25]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Fur [4]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Magical Aptitude 3 [35]; Regeneration [25]; Resurrection [150]; Strong Will +2 [8]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Callous [-6]; Dead Broke [-25]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Intolerance (Humans) [-5]; Loner [-5]; Minor Vow (Never to leave the forest) [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Obsession (Protect the forest) [-15]; Reputation -4 (As a vindictive forest spirit, among Brazilians) [-10].

Quirks

Has fun punishing people; Likes riding wild pigs; Likes tobacco. [-3]

Curupira's Magic

Most of the Curupira's spells can be found in *GURPS Magic*. Great Shapeshifting and Malfunction are in *GURPS Grimoire* and are reproduced (in simplified form) here.

Great Shapeshifting (VH) allows the caster to quickly perform multiple shapechanges at will throughout the duration, taking one turn to complete each change and expending no extra energy for doing so. Returning to normal form ends the spell and leaves the caster *mentally stunned* (p. B127). The only limit to the animal forms that can be assumed is that the difference between the old and new forms' attributes (except IQ, which is unchanged), PD, DR, Move, Swimming skill, Sense roll and base damage can't total more than twice the caster's skill level with the spell. *Duration:* 1 minute. *Cost:* 8 to cast, 4 to maintain. *Time to Cast:* 5 seconds.

Malfunction/TL makes the subject machine cease to function for the duration of the spell. Normally the caster must touch the subject, but the Curupira uses a variant that allows for ranged casting (using normal penalties for regular spells). Note that in the legends the Curupira doesn't hex anything other than guns and some other weapons, like bows. *Duration:* 1 minute. *Cost:* 5. Cannot be maintained; must be recast.

Skills

Animal Handling-17 [4]*; Area Knowledge (Brazilian rain forest)-21 [16]; Bow-17 [16]; Illusion Art-16 [10]; Riding (Pig)-19 [2]*; Spear-15 [2]; Spear Throwing-17 [4]; Stealth-18 [16]; Stone Knapping-13 [2]; Survival (Woodlands)-18 [12]; Swimming-16 [2]; Tracking-18 [12]; Veterinary/TL1-17 [4]*.

* Includes Beast-Kin bonus.

Languages

Tupi (Native)-8 [0].

Racially Innate Spells

Great Shapeshifting-18 [8]*; Illusion Disguise-16 [4]; Independence-16 [4]; Malfunction/TL7 and under-18 [22]**; Perfect Illusion-18 [8]; Sound-15 [2]; Thunderclap-15 [2]; Voices-15 [2].

* Bought as a Hard spell due to the Beast-Kin advantage.

** Variant spell; see box. Malfunction/TL7 costs 8 points; each other TL costs 2 points, bought up from the default derived from one TL higher. (So Malfunction/TL6 defaults to 17, with 2 points spent to buy it up to 18; then TL5 defaults to 17, and so on.)

Equipment

The Curupira goes around naked; his only possessions are a small bow, a quiver of arrows, a leather whip, and a small spear.

Biography

The lore of some of Brazil's indigenous tribes tells that, after creating the universe, Tupã also created the lesser gods, humanity, and other creatures. With these, he peopled Earth and the superior and inferior worlds. Among the beings Tupã placed on the Earth was the Curupira, whom he charged with protecting the forests from the destructive nature of mankind.

The Curupira (from the Tupi words meaning "boy body") appears as a young boy lightly covered with dark fur. His teeth are green, his ears are pointed, and he has fiery eyes and hair, but his most notable feature is his feet, which point backward. Legends often depict him riding a wild pig, and he is known to take an animal form when it suits him.

From the beginning, the Curupira has dutifully, even gladly, fulfilled his charge of protecting nature. The natives soon learned to respect and fear him. They usually bring presents like tobacco, food, and arrows when they enter the forest. The presents are left in paths where the Curupira might find them; some he accepts, some he doesn't, but no present placates his fury against those who desecrate his territories. But these were few . . . until the coming of the white man.

First the Portuguese, then pirates from other nations, came for wood, gems, gold, and silver. They came to steal the land's riches – and steal they did. The Curupira was only one person, and for each intruder he trapped inside the forest, or



*Where he was once saddened when he
had to punish a transgressor, now he
took pleasure in his revenge.*

stripped of sanity, or kept away just by his reputation, there were dozens of dozens who never saw him and called him a savage superstition. And every year, more came. When they started settling, the destruction increased. The Tupi were massacred and corrupted, the land was cleared for foreign crops in fields stretching farther than the eye could see, and the world that the Curupira had known and grown up in was no more.

As the destruction spread and the land changed, the Curupira changed too. He grew more distrustful of men, especially Europeans. Where he once assumed those in his territory would treat it well, now he saw everyone as a potential defiler. Where he was once saddened when he had to punish a transgressor, now he took pleasure in his revenge.

Some of the tribes, those that maintain their ancestors' ways, still have the Curupira's trust, but the rest of humanity is being dealt with as rapidly as his powers allow. The Curupira might fall behind in his mission, but he has not quit.

Motivations

The Curupira is an avenging spirit of the forest. Those who take from nature only what is necessary for their survival, hunt only for food, and chop down just enough trees to build homes and plant subsistence crops have no need to fear him – and might actually receive his protection. Those who hunt for sport, are cruel to animals, or destroy the forest without need, those the Curupira will treat as personal enemies. If he is

successful, they will never have the courage to return to the rain forest. If they manage to *leave*, that is.

Encountered

Any party adventuring in the rain forests of Brazil might have the misfortune of meeting the Curupira if their intentions are at odds with his. It just takes one person in the group (possibly a NPC) for the Curupira to turn against the whole party.

If unsure of a group's intentions, the Curupira sometimes tests them; for example, he leaves wounded animals in their path and watches what they do. With his magic, he makes animal calls and illusions, drawing hunters off the trails and deeper into the forest. Other times, he will shapeshift to an animal form and lure the hunters himself. He will curse weapons, especially firearms, so that they fail every time, or use his illusionary powers on cornered animals (especially pregnant females) so that they will “turn *meuã*” and beg for mercy with human voices or expressions. Many hunters who face such unnatural behavior panic and flee, never to hunt again. Some legends also say the Curupira simply flogs his victims to death.

Those who try to track the Curupira go in exactly the opposite direction, since his footprints seem to be coming when he is going.

– Leonardo M. Holschuh

The Golem

371 points

Age indeterminate; 6'2", 220 lbs. A large-framed, hulking humanoid, the Golem is completely bald and has skin with a faintly gray cast. He is dressed in ill-fitting secondhand or otherwise cast-off clothing of working-class style.

ST: 25 [150]	DX: 8 [-15]	Speed: 6.25
IQ: 7 [-20]	HT: 17 [100]	Move: 6
Dodge: 6	Parry: 8 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Alertness +5 [25]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immortality [140]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Impaling Bonus, No Vitals) [35]; Reputation +4 (As a guardian, among Jews) [10]; Unfazeable [15]; Very Fit [15].

Disadvantages

Dead Broke [-25]; Dependency (Animating paper, constantly, falls comatose instead of losing HT) [-25]; Mute [-25]; Reprogrammable Duty [-25]; Social Stigma (Valuable Property) [-10]; Unliving [-50].

Skills

Area Knowledge (Jewish Quarter)-12 [10]; Brawling-13 [24].

Languages

Hebrew (Native)-9 [2].

Biography

In the year 1580, the Jews of Prague suffered persecution because of the "Blood Libel," slanderous rumors that the Jews



had kidnapped Christian children for unspeakable rituals. Though the rumors were false, the danger was very real. One day, the legendary Judah ben Loew, the greatest Rabbi in Prague, had a dream. Upon waking, he decided to create a Golem to protect the ghetto from danger.

Taking his two most powerful students, Rabbi Loew began a strict regimen of fasting and praying, at the end of which the three Kabbalists went to the banks of the Vltava river. In the midst of a torrential rainstorm, the great Rabbi formed the river clay into the vague shape of a man. He wrote the secret name of God on a piece of parchment and, mimicking God's action at creation, placed the paper in the Golem's mouth. The Golem came instantly to life.

The Golem spent his days serving as Rabbi Loew's assistant in the synagogue, and at night he patrolled the ghetto. Twice he caught intruders in the Jewish quarter trying to plant "evidence" in support of the Blood Libel, and once he discovered a plot to poison the matzo for the annual Passover celebration. Every Friday night, Rabbi Loew removed the paper from the Golem's mouth, rendering him inert to prevent him from desecrating the Sabbath. Saturday after dusk, he replaced the paper and the Golem, known as Joseph to those he protected, returned to his silent beat.

One night, in fear of the Jews' nocturnal protector, the citizens of Prague came to the gate of the ghetto, intending to kill the Golem. While they knocked down the gate with a battering ram, the Golem waited silently within. He attacked the mob, taking their battering ram away from them and wielding it as a weapon. Many were killed, and even the Jews began to fear the silent Golem. Rabbi Loew himself began to wonder if it had been wise to create him.

Therefore, when Emperor Rudolf II summoned the great Rabbi to his palace the next day, the two leaders easily struck a deal. The Emperor would put an end to the Blood Libel, and Rabbi Loew would put an end to the Golem, reserving only the right to use his power again if the Jews should ever come under unjust persecution. However, the Golem could not simply be killed, since that would be murder. Nor could there be a funeral for a creature without a soul. When Rabbi Loew told the Golem about his bargain with the Emperor, the Golem initially refused to surrender the life-giving paper. Eventually, however, Rabbi Loew convinced the Golem to comply, promising that he would not be destroyed, but only set aside for a future crisis. The Golem's body was placed in the attic of the synagogue along with worn-out prayer books and other holy objects which could no longer be used. The Golem would wait there until the time when his mute protection would be needed again.

It is said that the Golem acted once again to protect the Jews of Prague. On the day that Nazi tanks rolled into the city, legend has it that two S.S. generals visited the synagogue, demanding to see the location where the Golem rested. After forcing the custodian to show them to the attic, one of the soldiers accompanying the Generals stabbed the pile of prayer books with his bayonet, and immediately died. Was it the Golem? Nevertheless, the Nazis did not destroy or otherwise molest the Altneuschul. It survives to this day, with the Golem sleeping until he is needed.

Variations

The Golem (in the traditional form given here) is most likely to be encountered in a medieval or fantasy setting, although learned magicians, such as a *GURPS In Nomine* sorcerer, might be able to create a Golem much like this one even in the present day. A non-traditional version need not be confined to the lower tech levels, or practitioners of modern mysticism. In a TL8+ world, the Golem might be a vat-grown clone servant of a mad or fringe scientist. Here the Golem could be a hyperstrong version of the creator himself, or even of one or the characters! In a darker game, he could be a refugee from an organ farm, glad to use his excellent health and super-strength in the service of those who will feed him or give him a ride. The Golem is unable to form real bonds with his allies, however, and may be expected to leave or turn against the characters at any time. The silent yet surprisingly strong Men In Black might be Golems created by the Illuminati using any of these methods, or one yet unknown. In a lighter vein, students on the IOU campus investigating the recent string of library robberies might find that the perpetrator is none other than the Archdean's Golem butler, just trying to improve himself.

Motivations

The Golem lives only for the purpose for which he was created, to serve Rabbi Loew and to protect the Jews. Because the paper which animates the Golem is in his mouth, he is unable to speak. Nevertheless, he understands simple spoken commands, and will comply with reasonable requests. Those who encounter the Golem can expect him to be a powerful enemy or ally, depending on how they fit in with the Golem's simple desires. Regardless of the character's relationship with the Golem, he can be expected to resist a return to his dormant state.

Encountered

One might encounter the Golem whenever and wherever the Jews of the city are in danger. He will be under the control of Rabbi Loew, or descendants of his or one of his students. If the Golem's controller should be killed, or if they are otherwise separated, the Golem will become increasingly violent until he is destroyed or is brought under control by another of Rabbi Loew's descendants.

Further Reading

Scholem, Gershom. *On the Kabbalah and Its Symbolism* (Schocken Books, 1996).

Sherwin, Byron. *The Golem Legend: Origins and Implications* (University Press of America, 1985).

Winkler, Gershon. *The Golem of Prague* (Judaica Press, 1980).

— Micah T.J. Jackson

The Great Leech of Tlanusi'yi

346 points

Tlanu'si gae'ga digi'gage

Dakwa'nitlaste'sti

(I'll tie red leech skins

On my legs for garters)

– *Unknown Cherokee warrior; washed into
the waters of Tlanusi'yi and never seen again*

A giant leech, brilliant red in color, with white and crimson stripes running the length of its body. When curled into a ball, the Leech is as large as a house; when stretched out to its full length, the Leech approaches 350 feet.

ST: 80 [120]* **DX:** 10 [0] **Speed:** 6.25

IQ: 4 [-50] **HT:** 15/65 [310] **Move:** 3

Dodge: 6

* No Manipulators, -40%

Tactics of the Tlanusi'yi Leech

The Leech is deceptively quick and agile in the water, swimming at Move 3 and taking full advantage of its DX. It will attempt to envelop as many targets as possible with an initial waterspout, knocking some prey into the river or lake. The Leech will close the distance to the victim quickly for a constriction attack (see p. CI52).

On land, the Leech has Move 1 and suffers a -2 penalty to DX. It is still a formidable opponent, capable of slam attacks into any front or rear hex. The Leech will grapple and constrict stunned victims.

The Leech will constrict only to the point of unconsciousness if facing a single foe, so as to drain the blood and HT of the still-living prey. This blood-draining bite attack (see p. CI50) is accomplished through a tooth-ringed sucker beneath the front end of the Leech. The great strength of the Leech allows it to puncture DR less than 10, although the Leech must search for a suitable feeding location on the victim's body (taking about 1 turn per point of PD). Two points of damage are inflicted by the bite itself, but once initiated, the bite drains 1 hit point per turn. Breaking free of the constricting Leech or its sucker requires a Quick Contest of ST.

When faced with numerous foes, or if it has recently fed, the Leech may decide to drag unconscious victims into the deep, perhaps storing them in air-filled subterranean grottoes. Fright Checks for fresh captures are definitely in order as the still air, already ripe with the stench of prior victims, slowly fills with the squishing, slithering sound of something immense rising from the unseen water.

Advantages

Bite [30]; Constriction Attack [15]; Extra Flexibility (Whole Creature) [10]; Gills [10]; Injury Tolerance (No Neck) [5]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Aquatic [-40]; Bestial (Bloodsucker) [-15]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Invertebrate [-20]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; No Manipulators [-50]; Presentient [-20]; Reduced Move -3 [-15]; Reputation -4 (As a monstrous killer, to the Cherokee or students of their legends, all of the time) [-7].

Skills

Area Knowledge (Great Smoky Mountains rivers and lakes)-16 [24]; Area Knowledge (Southern Appalachians)-12 [16]; Survival (River/Stream, specialized in the Hiwassee) -9/15 [14]; Water Cannon-14 [24].

Super Powers

Water Cannon 10 (Area Effect, +50%; Increased Area 3, +60%; Knockback Only, -40%; Only in a body of fresh water, -30%; Reduced Range 2, -10%; Takes Extra Time, -10%) [72].

Biography

Deep in the Southern heart of the Appalachian Mountains, in what would become the last remnants of the great Cherokee nation, the Hiwassee Lake and River flow beneath maple, beech, and hemlock. Upstream in a tributary, a hole descends through the rocky floor of the Hiwassee. Above the turbulent water near this abyss, a sun-dappled, moss-encrusted ledge of rock runs along the southern bank. The ledge arches across the river, forming a natural bridge and offering a view down into the pit. This is *Tlanusi'yi*, "the Leech place."

Cherokee hunters were the first to discover the Leech, when the bridge was in common use. A group of men crossing it one day paused to look down in wonder at a curled, pulsing ball of red flesh. While they watched, the mass untangled, stretching out to its full, monstrous length. The Cherokee witnessed the crimson and white striped Leech crawl down the rocky floor of the stream and descend into the pit. The water around the pit then began to boil and foam, and the men ran for the bank as a column of water sprayed high into the air, drenching the bridge and washing one of the men into the stream. In a flash, the Leech was upon him.

The hunter was discovered later, drained of his blood and lying on the bank, his ears and nose eaten away.

Over time, as more Cherokee were thus consumed, the area became feared and avoided. Some Cherokee reported boiling water and spouting waves in the other rivers of the Great Smoky Mountains. Others tested their bravery by climbing the bridge at Tlanusi'yi, peering down into the hole to catch a glimpse of movement in the watery depths. Some returned empty-handed. Some never returned at all.

Variations

While a giant leech may seem to be a rather limited monster in many games, in fact there are a number of ways to adapt it to any number of setting.

The Leech as a Mundane Giant Creature

The stats above are for the Leech as a gigantic, colorful version of the giant leech (see the *Hirudo*, p. FB31). Its Water Cannon attack might be accomplished by ingesting a large volume of water before expelling it in the general area of its victims. Alternatively, the water-jet can be the result of the natural rock formation. The Leech simply blocks a spring or perhaps lies in a certain way in the stream to cause the water-spout to form. This limits the water-jet to the immediate vicinity of the rock bridge. Whatever the source of the Leech's ability, the waterspout knocks back anyone within a 5-hex radius of the blast.

The Leech as a Horde of Giant Creatures

Especially suited to *GURPS Atomic Horror* campaigns, mutant Leeches may infest the waters of the Great Smoky Mountains. (Several early nuclear power plants were built in the Smokies.) There are many caverns, caves, and underwater rivers crisscrossing the area, so perhaps the multiple sightings of giant leeches are explained by the presence of a single, well-traveled Leech.

The Leech as Harbinger of Things Man Was Not Meant To Know

The Leech is an effective guardian of the subterranean horrors hidden deep beneath the oldest mountain chain in North America. If the Leech itself *is* the Thing, then it should be granted some additional IQ and some psionic or magical powers. Minion or master, in this version bloodthirsty members of a secret Cherokee society surely made regular sacrifices to the Leech at Tlanusi'yi up until the first half of the 19th century.

The Leech as Guardian of the Lost Cherokee Treasure

After the forced relocation of the Cherokee to Oklahoma in 1839 (a harrowing trek that came to be known as the Trail of Tears), *GURPS Old West* or *Cliffhangers* treasure hunters can easily be lured to the area with tales of sacrifices made to the mythical giant Leech overheard on the reservation, in a saloon, or on a cattle drive. If researched, Cherokee folklore will hint at the horde of gold and jewels that must surely await in the depths of the abyss. . .

The Leech as Modern Menace

Present-day tourists saturate the environs of Hiwassee Lake, hiking, camping, canoeing, and even golfing. The Hanging Dog Campground on the lake, five miles from Murphy, North Carolina, is a popular site for white-water boaters and rafters. While the Hiwassee is fairly mild, rapids can be found in rivers to the south, west, and east. Weary white-water enthusiasts looking for a more relaxing afternoon on the water may well decide to see what the Hiwassee has to offer, and who wouldn't want to search for the scenic natural bridge said to overlook one of the Hiwassee's tributaries?

– Greg DeAngelo

Lilith

1,059 points

A strikingly beautiful naked woman with black feathered wings and long, wild hair.

ST: 12/25 [59] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 14 [45] **HT:** 14 [45] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7

Advantages

Ally (Samael, 9-) [20]; Ally Group (Her daughters; 100-point characters, 9-) [40]; Animal Empathy [5]; Awareness 2 [35]; Fit [5]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Immortality [140]; Literacy [10]; Magery (Moon-Aspected) 3 [18]*; Penetrating Call [5]; Speak with Animals [15]; Status 6 [30]; Very Beautiful [25]; Voice [10].

* Lilith's Moon-Aspected Magery works as the *reverse* of the description on p. CI39, so she is at the height of her powers on the new moon.

Disadvantages

Compulsive Behavior (Murdering children) [-15]; Divine Curse (Her children die within 24 hours of birth) [-5]; Dread (Circumcised boys, or girls over 20 days old) [-10]; Dread (Names of Sanvi, Sansanvi, and Semangelaf) [-10]; Intolerance (Fertile women) [-5]; Intolerance (Other people's children) [-5]; Lecherousness [-15]; Nocturnal [-10]; Obsession (To be a mother) [-15]; Reputation -4 (Queen of the demons) [-20]; Self-Centered [-10]; Social Stigma (Second-class citizen) [-5]; Stubbornness [-5]; Unnatural Feature (Wings) [-5].

Quirks

Eschews clothing; Holds grudges; Howls a lot; Makes sleeping children laugh. [-4]

Skills

Administration-16 [6]; Animal Handling-15 [1/2]; Area Knowledge (Eden)-16 [4]; Area Knowledge (Eurasia)-16 [4]; Cooking-13 [1/2]; Cyphering-13 [1/2]; Erotic Art-16 [16]; Gardening-14 [1]; History (Esoteric)-12 [1]; Leadership-14 [2]; Naturalist-12 [1]; Occultism (Demonology)-21 [16]; Performance/Ritual (Jewish)-16 [6]; Savoir-Faire-18 [0]; Sex Appeal-24 [6]*; Stealth-18 [24]; Survival (Desert)-12 [1/2]; Survival (Jungle)-12 [1/2]; Swimming-13 [1/2]; Theology (Judaism)-11/17 [1].

* Includes +6 for Very Beautiful and +2 for Voice.

Languages

Arabic-12 [1/2]; Aramaic-13 [1]; Greek-12 [1/2]; Hebrew (Native)-14 [0]; Latin-12 [1/2]; Persian-12 [1/2].

Innate Spells

Charm-40 [50]; Dark Vision-35 [40]; Darkness-26 [22]; Emotion Control-30 [30]; Ethereal Body-30 [60]; Gift of

Tongues-20 [20]; Invisibility-25 [20]; Pathfinder-26 [22]; Plane Shift (Earth)-35 [80]; Plane Shift (Demonic Realm)-35 [80]; Sense Life-27 [24]; Silence-25 [20]; Sleep-31 [32]; Steal Strength-26 [22].

This is Lilith during the Middle Ages, when her legend came into its present form. She has been around since Creation, so skills and spells at much higher levels could easily be justified.

Biography

According to legend, Lilith was the first woman, conjoined to the first man at the back as a strange composite being. When the man, Adam, complained that he had no mate, God separated Lilith from him. They lived together peacefully for a time, but Adam's insistence on domination finally forced her to flee Eden for good.

Lilith made her way to the Red Sea and satisfied her perverse lusts by coupling with the demons there, producing over 100 offspring a day. God sent three angels, Sanvi, Sansanvi, and Semangelaf, to order Lilith to return to Eden. When she refused, the angels threatened to destroy her, but she reminded them of her mandate from God to be fruitful and multiply. Unable to argue, they cursed her; she *would* multiply, but her demonic children would all die within 24 hours of birth. Lilith herself was transformed into a demon of the night. She swore revenge for her misfortune.

In her new form, Lilith became queen of the demons and the consort of the demon Samael. She eventually sneaked back into Eden where she joined forces with the serpent and easily tricked Adam and his new wife into eating of the forbidden fruit. Revenge was sweet. But causing the Fall of Man was only the beginning.

Encountered

Lilith is an evil and vindictive creature torn between two goals every night: to kill as many children as possible and to produce as many offspring as she can. She may only accomplish the latter by coupling with sleeping men. She then instantaneously gives birth to a full-grown daughter, called a Lilim or Lilitu (p. FB43), who then goes out to mimic her mother in slaying infants (her daughters cannot reproduce). A child laughing in his sleep is a sure sign of Lilith's presence, and a man sleeping alone is an open invitation for her as there is little chance that she will be detected.

Luckily, Lilith is limited by time and space, which keeps the number of children she can strangle and offspring she can produce to a small number each night. Furthermore, she cannot kill any circumcised boy, or any girl over 20 days old, nor can she approach anyone protected by the names of the three angels who cursed her. Daylight is another of her weaknesses, forcing her to return to the demonic plane before dawn. She rests until nightfall, when her vile lusts may once again be satiated.

— Brian C. Smithson



*And God created man
in His own image, in
the image of God He
created him; male and
female He created them.
And God blessed them;
and God said to them,
“Be fruitful and
multiply, and fill the
earth and subdue it . . .”
— Genesis 1:27-28*

Variations

Who Is Lilith?

As an immortal demon queen, Lilith may feature in *any* time period. The evil seductress myth has existed in virtually every culture, and many of these demons have names remarkably similar to Lilith, such as the Babylonian Belili. Some legends claim that Helen of Troy, the Queen of Sheba, and other famous females were actually Lilith in disguise. Lilith has also featured prominently in other religions than Judaism; Muslim tradition claims that she coupled with Satan to produce the djinn, and medieval Christians adopted her as the queen of the succubi (p. BT95), lustful female demons who also have their way with sleeping men. Even modern vampire lore has incorporated Lilith as the first vampire, or at least the queen of the vampires (for a vampiric take on her daughters, see p. BT97).

In short, Lilith can be used in any game at any time. She may be known by a different name, or take a slightly different form, but she is Lilith all the same. Her obsession is identical, and her means just as depraved. Some GMs may wish to subject Lilith to the traditional demonic features and taboo traits from *GURPS Undead*, p. UN66.

Lilith's Bargain

One aspect of the Lilith story seems odd and contradictory. Lilith escaped sure destruction because God had ordered her to “be fruitful and multiply.” Why exactly does this grant her protection, when Eve was given the same command as her replacement? Earlier in the story, Lilith reveals that she gained her magical powers by learning “the Ineffable Name of God.” Does this knowledge grant her some sort of power over God, that He must allow her to live? More importantly, how did Lilith gain this knowledge? Presumably her demon consorts *can* be destroyed by God; why has she not shared her knowledge with them? Can an enterprising band of investigators discover Lilith’s secret? And if they expose her, can she be destroyed once and for all?

A woman of Hispanic descent, La Llorona appears beautiful from a distance. Her long black hair and simple gown accentuate her figure. She moves with a fluid grace as she wanders the banks of the Rio Grande. She will often move from shadow to shadow as she approaches, hiding her features until she is close. The face, when finally revealed, is twisted in rage and sorrow, with tears flowing from tortured, inhuman eyes.

To humans, her scent is that of the river: sage and earth and water. To other vampires, she smells foul and unnatural, as she feeds on the blood of her drowned victims.

ST: 15 [60] **DX:** 16 [80] **Speed:** 7.75
IQ: 12 [20] **HT:** 15 [60] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7

Advantages

Bite [30]; Dark Vision [25]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Invisibility to Machines [20]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Shadow Form (Accessibility: on water only, -30%) [35]; Vampiric Immortality [60]; Vampiric Invulnerability [150].

Disadvantages

Bloodthirst [-15]; Callous [-6]; Compulsive Behavior (Only feeds on children and adulterous males) [-10]; Cursed (May only drink the blood of the drowned) [-10]; Dependency (Mana, constantly) [-25]; Dependency (Silt of the Rio Grande, daily) [-60]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; The Draining [-10]; No Body Heat [-5]; Pallor [-5]; Reputation -4 (As river ghost of legend, in the American Southwest) [-10]; Social Stigma (Outsider) [-15]; Sterile [-3]; Unhealing [-20]; Unliving [-50]; Vulnerability (Silver and Depleted Necronium) [-5]; Weakness (Sunlight, 1d/minute) [-60].

Quirks

Always crying; Intolerance (Of adulterous males); Leaves bloody fingerprints on anything she touches; Longs for the companionship of children. [-4]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Rio Grande)-12 [1]; Stealth-14 [1/2]; Swimming-20 [16].

Languages

Spanish (Native)-12 [0].

Knacks

Sense Adulterers (Bought as Sense Foes, with 2 points of Power) [24].

Biography

Dora Trujillo went mad after her husband left her. He had an affair with a woman in Dona Ana. When Dora announced her pregnancy, he told her he did not want children and moved in with his girlfriend. A few weeks later, on an autumn day in 1946, her wandering husband drowned in the irrigation channel that fed some of the village's cotton fields. His girlfriend disappeared. That winter, Dora gave birth to stillborn twin boys. The anguish was too much for her. Believing the boys were calling to her, she unearthed their bodies after burial. Beside the grave, as she tried to nurse the tiny corpses, they stirred and drank her blood instead. Her fevered brain only recognized that the boys were alive and she took them to the waters of the Rio Grande to rinse off the red clay. The sun rose as Dora held her children there at the riverbank. Oblivious to their struggles, Dora clasped them to her chest even as the light burned the infant vampires to ash. Having lost her children a second time, Dora flung herself into the shallow water and drowned.

For days she remained hidden in the silt of the riverbed. The ever-changing course of the Rio Grande uncovered Dora in the dark of the night days later.

She arose from her damp grave to sounds on the riverbank. A bright moon and small fire revealed a shoddily clothed man cooking dinner for himself. Dora looked at the man through eyes death had granted her and saw his adulterous nature. She knew his sins and what she must do. Seizing him with a new strength that surprised them both, Dora plunged him into the river and held him there until he drowned. Her fury abated, she sought to quell her hunger with his meal. However, the dead man's blood called to her in a way the food did not.

Dora could no longer walk in the daylight. She drowned and fed upon anyone she could catch along the river. Her madness drove her to cling to the bodies of the young children she caught. In time, the Rio Grande from Hatch to Canutillo was a place no one would go near at night.

So Dora wandered up and down the twelve hundred miles of the Rio Grande, seeking children to collect and adulterers to drown.

The name *La Llorona*, The Weeping Woman, was again spoken with fear along the river.

Motivations

La Llorona seeks to drown all she can catch along the river. She continues to replay the circumstances of her death and vampiric rebirth, and so focuses on men and children. Women are not safe, however, as La Llorona will occasionally attack them out of spite. She prefers not to kill the children she feeds on, choosing instead to hold them tight, causing them to drown when the sun drives her beneath the waters or to suffocate when she enters the silt to rest.



Encountered

The Rio Grande is the lifeblood of the most heavily populated portion of Trinity's Shadow (p. T123). It flows through the three largest cities there: Albuquerque, Las Cruces, and, of course, the El Paso-Juárez Metro area. Thus, La Llorona has a large base from which to feed. Any group of vampire hunters would have a true challenge catching this river ghost.

Further Reading

Anaya, Rudolfo. *The Legend of La Llorona* (Tonatiuh-Quinto Sol, 1984). Suggests that La Llorona derives from *La Malinche*, a legendary Aztec figure.

Gish, Robert Franklin. "La Llorona, Magic Realism, and the Frontier" in *Beyond Bounds: Cross-Cultural Essays on Anglo, American Indian, and Chicano Literature* (University of New Mexico Press, 1996). A scholarly examination of various stories and legends in and around the Southwest.

Hayes, Joe. *La Llorona: The Weeping Woman* (Trails West Publishing, 1987) An informative work that aims at the storytelling aspects of how the La Llorona legend has been passed through Hispanic culture.

— Erik Peticolas

La Llorona in Other Settings

While the backstory presented is for the *GURPS Technomancer* setting, La Llorona can be integrated with any horror campaign or adventure set in Mexico or the American Southwest, or beyond. As a vampire who can move easily through water, she could be found in or around any river in North America.

The origins of the story may even date back to Spain before the colonization of the New World began. Spanish settlers may have brought with them the legend of the woman who drowns herself and her children. Alternately, some believe that La Llorona is the ghost of a native woman who aided Cortés in his destruction of the Aztec empire. Knowledge of her origins would be of great aid in catching or destroying her, and a trip to the Southwest to discover this information would provide adventure opportunities.

Whatever her origin, La Llorona is often used as a bogeyman of sorts, a warning to children to stay away from the river at night and to libertines that their actions have consequences in this life and beyond.



The weeping mother only cried, "Dear Spirit, can you use no charm or spell to make the waves bring back my child, as full of life and strength as when they swept him from my side? O give me back my little child, or let me lie beside him in the bosom of the cruel sea!"

— Louisa May Alcott, *Flower Fables*

Medusa

654 points

Age indeterminate; 5'0", 145 lbs. Medusa is a hideous woman with live snakes for hair, boar's tusks, clawed hands of brass or copper, and golden wings growing from her back (and perhaps her ankles).

ST: 11 [10] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 6.25
IQ: 10 [0] **HT:** 13 [30] **Move:** 6
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 10 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]; Amphibious [10]; Awareness [15]; Body of Metal 1 (Always on, -20%; hands only, -50%) [3]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 5 [15]; Dark Vision [25]; Extra Flexibility (One limb: snake hair striker) [5]; Fangs [10]; Flight (Winged, -25%) [30]; Gills [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Instant Regeneration [100]; Literacy [10]; PD 3 [75]; Status 6 [30]; Striker (Snake hair) [5]; Talons [40]; Unusual Background (Divine birth) [25]; Venom (Corrosive, sweated through blood, -70%) [5]; Venom (Poisonous, from snake hair) [15].

Disadvantages

Bully [-10]; Callous [-6]; Enemy (Athena; 6 or less) [-20]; Intolerance (Of men) [-10]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Reputation -4 (As a ravager of the land) [-20].

Skills

Bow-10 [1]; Brawling-14 [4]; Musical Instrument (Lyre) -8 [1]; Riding (Horse, stirrupless)-11 [1]; Savoir-Faire-12 [0]*; Survival (Mountains)-15 [12]; Theology-12 [8].

* Free from Status.

Languages

Ancient Greek (Native)-10 [0].

Inherent Spells

Flesh to Stone (Always On, -40%; Eye Contact Only, -20%; Instantaneous, +20%; No Roll Required, +66%; Reduced Fatigue Cost -10, +200%; Touch not required, +100%) [170].

Biography

Medusa wasn't always a monster. She was one of three daughters of the sea god Phorcys and the maiden Ceto, and the only one who was human and mortal. She took several lovers, including the god Hephaestus (by whom she bore the fire-breathing Cacus) and the sea god Poseidon. On one of her rendezvous with Poseidon, the two made love in a temple of Athena. The goddess was outraged at the defilement, and retaliated by transforming the beautiful maiden into a hideous monster. (Some accounts suggest Medusa was raped by Poseidon. Other versions say she was punished for comparing her beauty to that of Athena.)

I Am Gorgon, Hear Me Roar

The Gorgons were probably sea goddesses originally, perhaps the personifications of the waves crashing into the shore. Medusa may have been a goddess in her own right before being added to the Gorgons' number.

Medusa may have originally been a Libyan serpent goddess, one aspect of a three-part goddess of wisdom. As this goddess's cult spread to Greece, one of the aspects became Athena, another the Titan Metis, and the third Medusa. Greece was a male-dominated society, and while Athena was largely masculinized, Medusa was transformed into a hideous man-hating demon. Remnants of the Athena-Medusa connection remained, however, and the Perseus myth was crafted to account for Medusa's head adorning Athena's shield.

In this milieu, the questers may set out to slay Medusa. After tricking the Graeae and sneaking into her lair, they are not greeted by a hideous monster; rather, they find themselves confronting a depressed and downtrodden woman, lamenting her curse and seeking some way to rid herself of

it. Will the adventurers feel sympathy for the poor wretch and help her regain her normal life, or will they slay the hideous creature that turns men to stone?

Medusa's Head

After his victorious battle, Perseus made good use of Medusa's head by, for example, turning the giant Atlas into stone. But what became of Medusa's head after Perseus' adventures is not clear.

The most commonly believed resting place for Medusa's head is on the shield (or breastplate) of Athena, her arch-enemy. Other legends place her head in the hands of Persephone, who uses it to deter invaders from the Underworld. Yet other legends claim Medusa's head is the property of Demeter, who wears it around her neck, or of the huntress Artemis.

Adventurers may desire to obtain Medusa's head for use as a weapon, or they may simply wish to find the head's true resting place. The band of heroes might even decide to find the head not for personal use but to rid the world of its evil powers once and for all. The catch to all of these is that, first, they will have to find it.



*... the inviting glance of a
flirtatious lover became the horrifying
gaze that turned men to stone.*

Glorious tresses gave way to venomous snakes. Slender, graceful hands became inhuman, metallic claws. Worst of all, the inviting glance of a flirtatious lover became the horrifying gaze that turned men to stone. Medusa was now a Gorgon and, like her two sister Gorgons, no longer human.

Medusa eventually made her way to the land of Cisthene, hidden away behind a secret entrance guarded by the three Graeae (sisters to the Gorgons). Embittered by Athena's curse, Medusa grew to hate all men and frequently ravaged the countryside near her home. Her activities became so heinous that the hero Perseus vowed to destroy her. With the help of Athena, Perseus compelled the Graeae into revealing the entrance to Cisthene by stealing their only usable eye (they had but one between the three of them). Once in Medusa's lair, Perseus avoided the monster's deadly gaze by watching her reflection in his polished shield. In the end, Perseus claimed Medusa's head, and the monster was no more.

Encountered

Before being killed by Perseus, Medusa may be found in her lair in Cisthene, beyond the cave of the Graeae. Visitors may only find the entrance to her lair by gleaning the secret from the Graeae, no easy task. Inside, the stony bodies of previous explorers or would-be heroes will surround the adventurers. Upon seeing the intruders, Medusa is most likely to attack directly by attempting to meet their gaze. Fighting her with eyes closed is done at a -10 (or -6 if the attacker is used to fighting blind); fighting her while watching a reflection is

done at -4. She is not likely to listen to reason or offer aid, except perhaps to a woman or a sworn enemy of Athena.

Variations

This depiction is based upon traditional (and largely sketchy) myths of Medusa, with several extrapolations. For example, several water-related advantages appear because Medusa is the daughter of a sea god; she never uses such abilities in the myths. Many of her skills have been included because she was an aristocratic woman before she was transformed into a monster; GMs may decide these skills have fallen into disuse and no longer apply. Additional disadvantages that are not directly indicated by the myths but which fit the spirit of the monster include Bad Temper, Disturbing Voice, Frightens Animals, Lifebane, and Sadism. Medusa is traditionally humanoid; the half-woman, half-snake form is a cinematic addition. GMs wishing to emulate this should add Constriction Attack and Flexibility, and possibly Regrowth or Speak with Animals (snakes only).

Further Reading

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Kerényi, Carl. *The Gods of the Greeks* (W.W. Norton & Company, 1980).

Walker, Barbara G. *The Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets* (Harper San Francisco, 1983).

— Brian C. Smithson

Scylla is a gigantic, bloated dog with 12 nearly useless legs. Where the head should be, one finds the torso of a woman, surrounded by 6 large snakelike necks topped with hideous dogs or snake heads, each with three rows of teeth in its mouth.

ST: 65 [193] **DX:** 15 [60] **Speed:** 8.0
IQ: 6 [-30] **HT:** 17/240 [1,215] **Move:** 0
Dodge: 9 (Heads) 0 (Body) **Parry:** 11 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +6 [30]; Amphibious [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 6 [18]; Extra Flexibility [10]; Extra Heads (Reach 12) ×5 [425]; Fangs [10]; Full Coordination ×5 [250]; Gills [10]; Immortality [140]; Magic Resistance +8 [16]; PD 4 [100]; Penetrating Call [5].

Disadvantages

Berserk [-15]; Bestial [-15]; Dead Broke [-25]; Gluttony [-5]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Increased Life Support [-20]; Intolerance (Mortals) [-10]; Reputation -4 (Fearsome sea-monster, to seafarers, all the time) [-10]; Sessile [-50].

Quirks

Hates herself; Jealous of humans and beautiful things. [-2]

Skills

Brawling-15 [1]; Survival (Island/Beach)-12 [14].

Languages

Ancient Greek (Native)-6 [0].

Note: Each of her necks can take one-sixth of her total hit points before being crippled. In some versions of the myth, Scylla does not have a human torso; add No Fine Manipulators to her disadvantages and reduce the cost of her ST accordingly for this version.

Biography

As a daughter of water deities, the beautiful Scylla enjoyed the carefree life of the sea nymphs. One day, while she was bathing in her favorite tidal pool, the sea god Glaucus happened to gaze upon her lovely form, and fell in love with her. Finding the fish-tailed god ugly and repulsive, she refused his advances and fled to the mainland whenever he appeared.

In desperation, the lovesick Glaucus went to the Island of Aea, home of the divine sorceress Circe, to beg for a love potion to melt Scylla's heart. The sorceress was immediately attracted to the passionate young god. She asked him to forget about Scylla and to love her instead. He insisted his heart belonged only to the nymph. Angered, the vengeful Circe decided to destroy her

rival. Using knowledge of the arcane arts, Circe brewed a very powerful potion, and secretly poured it in Scylla's pool.

The next morning, as Scylla entered the waters, intense pain flooded her body, and she was suddenly surrounded by barking dogs and hissing serpents. Trying to escape them, she discovered the beasts were growing from her waist! She staggered to a nearby cave and, hidden there, completed her metamorphosis into a true monster.

Motivations

A prisoner in her own grotesque body, poor Scylla was driven mad by her new form and the incessant barking of her canine heads. She spends her days eating what fish and seabirds she can catch, hating her plight and cursing the gods who allowed this fate to befall her. Her self-pity is only forgotten when ships pass by. Seeing humans sends her into a murderous rage. And if she can reach the ship, she destroys it.

Encountered

Scylla can be found in a narrow strait (thought to be the Strait of Messina that separates Italy from Sicily, with Scylla on the Italian side). In heroic times, the only alternative to this strait was the Wandering Rocks, a group of reefs in a perpetually agitated sea. Only the Argonauts were able to successfully navigate through the Wandering Rocks, and they only managed it with divine help.

Scylla dwells in a cave high above the water. In front of her cave, across the strait, is the dwelling place of the great whirlpool Charybdis. She was once also a nymph; she was cursed by Zeus, who placed her near Scylla. Three times per day, Charybdis sucks in and then spits out enormous quantities of waters. Sailors brave enough to travel in this strait risk being capsized by Charybdis. The only sure way of avoiding the whirlpool is to travel close to the opposite cliff, but that precipitates an attack by Scylla, since she lashes out at anything that comes close to her lair.

Each turn, Scylla can attack with all six of her heads, preferably targeting six different victims. After having bitten a victim, she will hoist him in the air if she wins a Quick Contest of ST. She will then chew and swallow those victims, doing her biting damage each turn. Victims can try to break free by winning another Quick Contest of ST (at -2 per turn after being swallowed). A head will only attack someone else after having consumed its first victim, so a fast ship could possibly move out of range by then. Confronting Scylla in her lair is a risky proposition, since it involves climbing a vertical stone wall while fending off her attacks. Killing her is a sure way to earn the enmity of Glaucus.

Communicating with her is nearly impossible. One would first have to find a way to calm her bestial rage and alleviate her madness. Still, she might listen to a powerful sorcerer or telepath if he promises to cure her.

– Michel Bélanger

Variations

Scylla is closely tied to Greek and Roman mythology, particularly the wanderings of Odysseus and Aeneas, but there's no reason she can't appear in other settings as well.

The Final Fate of Scylla

In all the legends about her, Scylla was never defeated. It is said that she was eventually turned into reefs, and she is thus still a hazard to sailors. In a *GURPS Cabal* game, Scylla and Charybdis (along with the Wandering Rocks) might have been taken to the Pearl Bright Ocean of Yetzirah, to serve as obstacles to adventurers in search of lost secrets and profound truths.

Saving Scylla

Finding a way to restore Scylla is no easy task, but could make a quest of epic proportions. Heroes would first have to reach the palace of Circe and convince her to give them an antidote. If they manage to outwit or seduce her, she might agree to help, but she will demand something in return, and she will likely send them to the far corners of the world to

gather the ingredients. And the hardest part is to get close enough to Scylla to administer the antidote.

Scylla on the Move

By removing Sessile from Scylla's disadvantages, she can be used as a sea-monster menacing travelers on many large bodies of water. She could be an opponent to *Swash-bucklers*, to *Steampunk* submariners, or to divers seeking the secrets of *Atlantis*.

Elixir of Monstrosity

If it were rediscovered, the formula of the elixir that Circe used on Scylla could wreak havoc. It transforms its victims into creatures out of their own worst fears and nightmares (the more grotesque the better; anything from this book, or from *Fantasy Bestiary*, *Space Bestiary* or *Creatures of the Night* is possible). An entire *Horror* campaign could be based around an evil sorcerer using it to create monster after monster, with the investigators slowly discovering that all those monsters they had to fight were once normal people.



Incidit in Scyllam, cupiens vitare Charybdim.

— Vergil

(He runs on Scylla, wishing to avoid Charybdis.)

Tiamat

1,693 points

When she must engage in physical fights, Tiamat assumes the form of a colossal dragon, with the forequarters of a lion, a reptilian body, and an eagle's hind legs. Two feathered wings spring from her back, and from her mouth extends a long, forked tongue. Her fearsome face is terrible to behold, sporting four glaring eyes.

ST: 200 [260] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 18 [125] **HT:** 16/90 [450] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 8 **Parry:** 11 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Extra Legs [5]; Extra Reach (Both arms) ×2 [40]; Fangs [10]; Flexibility [15]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Full Coordination ×2 [100]; Hard to Kill +2 [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immortality [140]; Invulnerability (Kinetic Damage, does not apply to *direct* strikes to the heart, -5%) [285]; Literacy [10]; Long Talons [55]; Magery 5 [65]; Penetrating Call [5]; Reputation +1 (Source of all creation, among Mesopotamian theologians, all the time) [2].

Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]; Horizontal [-10]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Reputation -4 (Ravenous chaos monster, among Mesopotamian followers, all the time) [-7].

Quirks

Just wants to sleep. [-1]

Skills

Astrology-16 [1]; Brawling-16 [16]; Theology-16 [1].

Languages

Sumerian (Native)-20 [2]; Akkadian-20 [6]; Farsi-20 [6]; Hittite-20 [6]; Phoenician-20 [6]; Ugaritic-20 [6].

Spells

All at 21: Body of Water; Boil Water; Breathe Water; Clouds; Create Air; Create Fire; Create Water; Create Well; Decay; Dehydrate; Destroy Water; Dry Well; Earth to Water; Essential Water; Foul Water; Heat; Ignite Fire; Purify Air; Purify Water; Rain; Resist Water; Seek Earth; Seek Water; Shape Earth; Shape Fire; Shape Water; Summon Demon; Test Food; Tide; Walk on Water; Walk Through Water; Water Jet; Waves; Whirlpool [34].



Biography

Before time began, nothing but the great goddess Tiamat (the salt water) and her husband Apsu (the sweet water) existed. Within their bodies lay all potential for creation, but nothing outside them yet existed.

They gave birth to the gods: Mummu, the mist on the waters; the hairy siblings Lahmu and Lahamu; the proto-sky god Anshar and his sister the proto-earth goddess Kishar. Each successive birth brought forth gods of yet greater stature, and these new gods bred as well. Anu, the sky god, was born to Anshar and Kishar. Anu, in turn, begat Nudimmud, a god of wisdom and strength, sweet subterranean waters, and magic itself. So great was Nudimmud that all the young gods – except the primordial Tiamat and her consort – recognized him as their master.

The younger gods sparred; they partied; they made a lot of noise. Apsu, at Mummu's urging, resolved to destroy his descendants, but Tiamat opposed the plan. "Why should we destroy that which we ourselves have brought forth? Their way is indeed painful, but let us take it good-naturedly!" But Apsu was unwilling to put up with the disturbance.

News of his plan reached the younger gods. While Apsu slept, Nudimmud stole his crown of power and holy radiance, assuming for himself the role of king of the gods. He then killed Apsu, his grandfather. But Tiamat he did not disturb.

Incensed by the death of her husband at the hands of their offspring and incited to rage by Kingu, her new consort, Tiamat resolved to succeed where Apsu had failed. She gave Kingu the Tablet of Destinies, an object of immense magical powers, and made him the general of her army. Then, in a perverse act of creation, she gave birth to eleven kinds of monsters. A veritable army of demons arose in Tiamat's service! Nudimmud fled before Tiamat's might.

The gods huddled in terror, until Marduk, Nudimmud's son, offered his services. In return for being given complete authority over all the gods and the entire universe, Marduk himself would fight Tiamat. When all the gods had agreed and conducted a magical ceremony that irrevocably gave Marduk full power, the god set forth.

When Marduk first confronted Tiamat, riding in a chariot drawn by monsters, she let out a roar that had never before failed to drive away her enemies. But Marduk was unperturbed. Instead, he challenged her to single combat – a challenge she gleefully accepted. When she opened her mouth to devour him, he forced it open wider still with an evil wind, preventing her from closing it. Marduk then shot an arrow through her gaping maw and directly into her heart, the only part of her that was vulnerable. The arrow slew her instantly.

But even in death, Tiamat threatens creation. As Mother Hubur, the river that flows beneath the earth, she periodically attempts to flood and destroy all creation. Greatly weakened in power, she is defeated annually by Marduk. But if the proper rituals are not performed and the proper sacrifices not made, she may return, seething with vengeance, to bring a final end to all creation. Until then, though, her annual floods feed the land and bring fertility to the crops that keep humanity alive. And as long as they have their servants, the gods are happy.

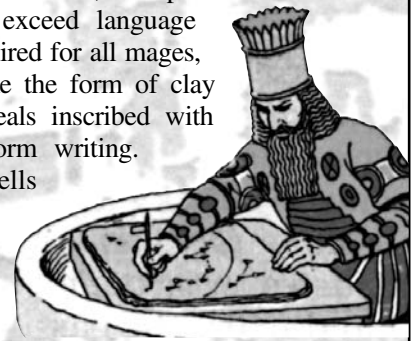
Mesopotamian Magic

Language and force of personality are the sole sources of magical power to the gods, priests, and sorcerers of ancient Mesopotamia. Real power arises from a complete understanding of grammar, a formidable vocabulary, and a knowledge of the real and secret names of things. By giving name to some desired thing, one can cause that thing to come into existence.

Writing, too, contains actual power. The Tablet of Destinies, which seems to be necessary for decisive victories, is simply a magical clay tablet with cuneiform writing. What the Tablet actually says, only the gods know. Perhaps it spells out the fates of all beings who have existed or will exist. Whatever the case, it imbues its bearer with great power.

To model Mesopotamian magic, consider tying Magery to Charisma: a character's Magery may not exceed his Charisma. Also, no spell may ever be cast without a verbal ritual, and spell skill levels cannot exceed language skill. Literacy is required for all mages, and powerstones take the form of clay tablets, stele, and seals inscribed with pictures and cuneiform writing.

Learning new spells requires research into the names of the things the wizard wishes to affect.



Motivations

Most of all, Tiamat wants the unending peace of pre-Creation. When all was watery Chaos, she lived in harmonious slumber with her husband. She wants everything to return to that state and will not rest until everything is undone. She loved her children and long wished to find some sort of peaceful coexistence. When her husband was slain, though, she gave up that hope and now wants nothing but the end of the universe.

Further Reading

Dalley, Stephanie, ed. *Myths from Mesopotamia* (Oxford University Press, 1998). Covers the major Assyro-Babylonian myths well.

Heidel, Alexander. *The Babylonian Genesis* (University of Chicago Press, 1963). Gives a complete translation of the cuneiform tablets on which the *Enuma Elish*, the Babylonian creation myth, is found, as well as several other creation stories and hymns. An excellent first source.

Pritchard, James. *The Ancient Near East* (Princeton University Press, 1965 (Vol. I) and 1976 (Vol. II)). Two volumes, each a bit more expensive than the Dalley work, give room to cover stories and myths beyond the major ones.

– Jan B. Berends

Yama Uba is a hideous hag with crooked features, long white hair, rotting teeth, and glowing eyes. Her mouth extends from one ear to the other, and she hides a second mouth under her matted hair. Her skin is darkened with ashes and dirt, and her kimono is in tatters.

ST: 12 [20] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 12 [20] **HT:** 14 [45] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 8 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]; Ambidexterity [10]; Discriminatory Smell [10]; Disease-Resistant [5]; Extra Flexibility (One limb: hair striker) [5]; Fit [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Magery 3 [35]; Night Vision [10]; Reputation +2 (Among occultists, as a maker of wonderful potions and magic items, all the time) [3]; Striker (Hair, Reach 1) [10]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Code of Honor (Repay any favor) [-5]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Gluttony [-5]; Gullibility [-10]; Light Sleeper [-5]; Loner [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Odious Personal Habit (Never bathes) [-10]; Phobia (Mice, mild) [-10]; Reputation -4 (As an evil crone who brings bad luck, to everyone, all the time) [-20]; Sadism [-15]; Social Stigma (Outsider) [-15]; Status -1 [-5]; Vow (Never leave the mountains) [-5].

Quirks

Concentrates on one victim at a time; Sometimes gets lonely; Spares those who amuse her; Trades poisons and potions for live humans. [-4]

Skills

Acting-13 [4]; Area Knowledge (Japanese mountains)-13 [2]; Brawling-13 [1/2]; Carpentry-11 [1/2]; Cooking-12 [1]; Fast-Talk-12 [2]; Intimidation-16 [10]; Naturalist-13 [6]; Needlecraft-14 [2]; Poisons-18 [16]; Running-11 [1/2]; Stealth-16 [8]; Survival (Mountains)-15 [7 1/2]*; Swimming -18 [16]; Tracking-15 [1]; Weaving-17 [8].

* Bought up from default from Naturalist.

Language

Japanese (Native)-12 [0].

Innate Spells

Climbing-16 [6]; Cornucopia-13 [1]; Enchant-16 [12]; Fear-13 [1]; Great Wish-13 [2]; Haste-13 [1]; Illusion Disguise-15 [4]; Quick March-14 [2]; Simple Illusion-16 [6]; Swim-16 [6].

Note: Yama Uba is a powerful sorceress, and may know many more spells.

Biography

Japanese children learn to watch out for the old woman of the mountains, for Yama Uba (also known as “Yamamba”) enjoys nothing more than to feast on human flesh. The crone lives a solitary existence in a small but well-kept hut in the mountains of Japan. During the day, she frequents forest paths and mountain passes in the hopes that a traveler will pass by.

Yama Uba is somewhat unpredictable, and when a luckless traveler happens her way she may do one of several things. Sometimes she attacks straight away. Her hair then comes alive to subdue the victim and drop him into the gaping maw atop her filthy head. Other times, Yama Uba offers to guide the unwary traveler through the wilderness. She makes no attempt to hide her ugliness and instead takes pleasure in the fear her sudden appearance causes. If the victim accepts her offer, she will lead him to a dangerous area where he meets his end in a rock slide or a treacherous fall. Sometimes, Yama Uba offers hospitality to the stranger. If he accepts, she entertains him properly with food and drink until bedtime. As soon as the victim falls asleep, she devours him. Yama Uba’s final method is to magically disguise herself as a beautiful maiden. She lures her unfortunate victim close, then drops her disguise and attacks.

Yama Uba is not a mindless beast; she knows when it might be beneficial to let a traveler go unharmed. However, she *always* asks a price. Occasionally, her price may be met when a would-be victim amuses her or shows genuine kindness to her. Usually, however, if the traveler is spared, he must return with a live victim for her to eat. Oddly, some reckless adventurers actually seek out Yama Uba, as she is renowned for her skill at creating poisons, potions, and magical items. When they find her – if she wants them to find her – she offers fiendish bargains. Only the most black-hearted men dare agree to such a deal.

– Brian C. Smithson

Advice for Travelers

Yama Uba is not invincible. A life away from civilization has made her quite gullible. Once a Buddhist acolyte stumbled across her hut in the woods. Not knowing who lived inside, he approached the house only to be greeted by the mountain hag herself. She invited him to join her until daybreak, and having no alternative, he agreed. That night, however, the acolyte told Yama Uba that he had to relieve himself. She reluctantly allowed him to go outside, and he hastily made his escape. Another potential victim hid in her attic, and when she heard him moving, he claimed to be a mouse. Apparently, she was greatly afraid of mice. When she hid, he quickly ran to freedom.

Origins

Yama Uba's origins remain shrouded in mystery. She can almost pass for human; did she perhaps begin life as a human only to be cursed by some god or bodhisattva? She is said to be the mother of the hero Kintaro, and he was not monstrous at all. Could his birth have happened before Yama Uba became a hideous mountain hag? Further evidence lies in the old woman's occasional desire for companionship and her odd freeing of a potential victim. If this is true, might it be possible to break her curse, allowing her to resume her life as a human being?

On the other hand, perhaps Yama Uba has always haunted the woods. Her jealousy of the sacrifices offered to local *kami* fuels her murderous appetite.

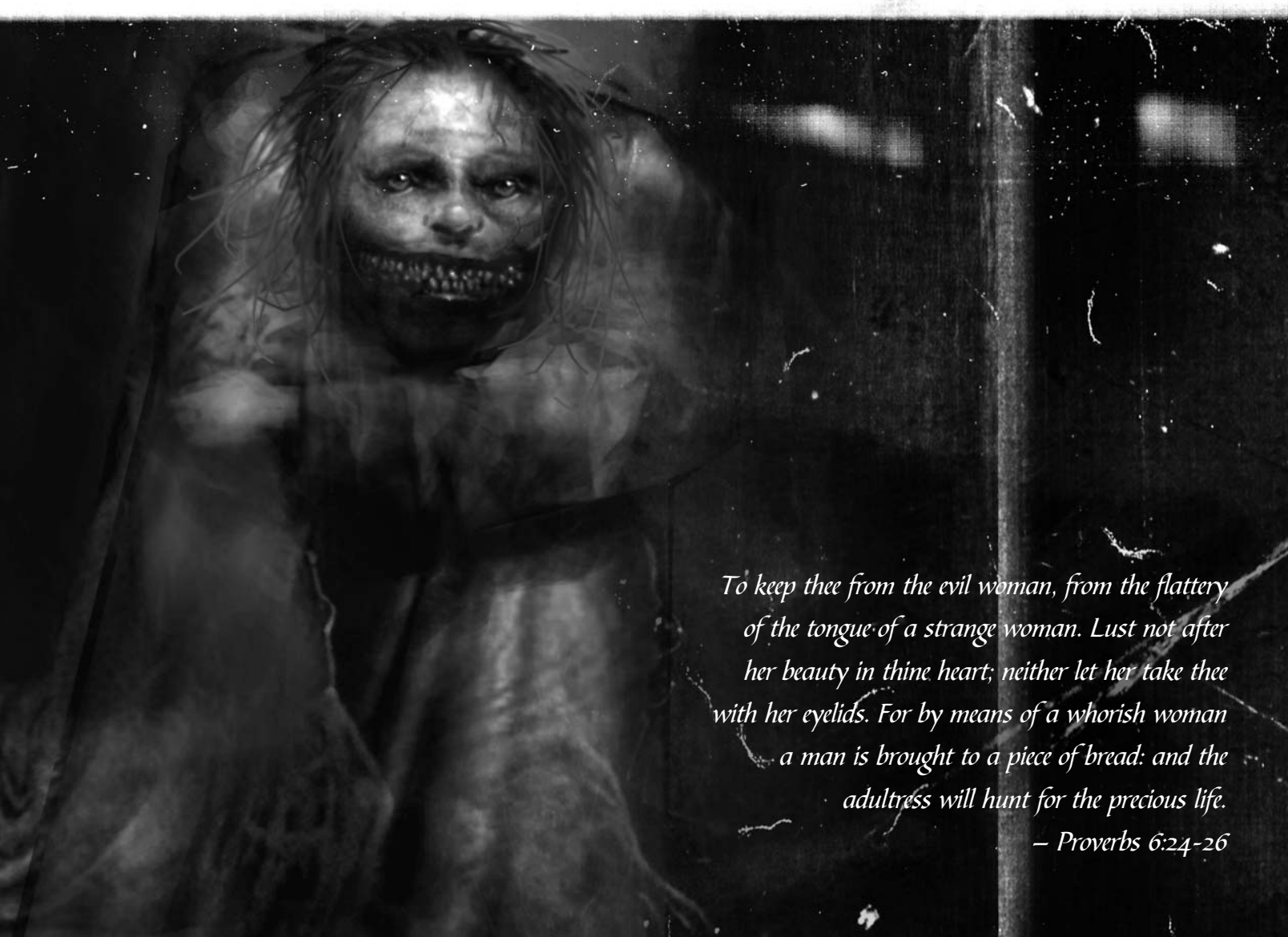
Other legends seem to imply the existence of many such hags throughout Japan. Ancient Japanese settlements may have forced their elderly into the woods to die when they were no longer useful. Perhaps the Yama Uba are their spirits, garnering revenge for their cruel-hearted ostracism.

Yamamba Girls

A recent fad in Japan has girls artificially tanning their faces, wearing white eye shadow and lipstick, and bleaching their hair white. These girls are known as *Ganguro*, but the look is so repulsive to some that they have dubbed its practitioners "Yamamba Girls" after the ugly mountain hag.

Like the Goths of America, the Yamamba Girls have adopted the moniker enthusiastically. Yet many Japanese fear the girls' tastes indicate a deeper problem with Japan's youth.

In a culture that grows increasingly technological by the day, forest spirits such as Yama Uba are often forgotten. But what would the trendy Tokyo teens do if they actually encountered their namesake one night? Perhaps Yama Uba has updated her tactics for the modern day. Instead of murdering mountain travelers (increasingly rare nowadays), she is making her mark on Japan's youth, garnering their devotion and weakening Japanese society's revulsion against Yama Uba and her kind. The Yamamba Girls have only caused harmless controversy so far . . . but who knows what the old woman of the mountains has in store for her disciples?



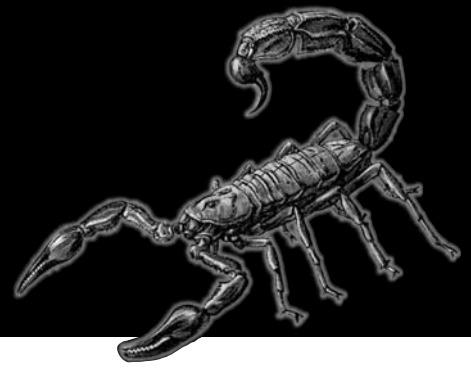
*To keep thee from the evil woman, from the flattery
of the tongue of a strange woman. Lust not after
her beauty in thine heart; neither let her take thee
with her eyelids. For by means of a whorish woman
a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the
adulteress will hunt for the precious life.*

— Proverbs 6:24-26

THE CRYPTOZOO

CHAPTER 2





The term “cryptozoology” was coined in the late 1950s by the French naturalist Bernard Heuvelmans, currently the president of the International Society of Cryptozoology (ISC). The society may be found on the World Wide Web at www.izoo.org/isc/.

cryptozoology: the study of the lore concerning legendary animals (as Sasquatch) especially in order to evaluate the possibility of their existence
– Merriam-Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary

While the root “crypto-” means “hidden,” the dictionary definition is the study of legendary animals. While not strictly precise, the “legendary” description does accurately reflect the most important sources in cryptozoological study: local traditions, accounts from explorers, and native folklores. Many cryptozoologists use too little critical thinking in their craft, and their exploits (and exploitations) cause many people to lump cryptozoology in with unscientific paranormal studies. But other cryptozoologists (such as the ISC) strive to apply the scientific method within the field.

Bigfoot and the Loch Ness Monster are the poster children of cryptozoology. Bigfoot is here on page 32. Nessie can be found in *GURPS Warehouse 23*, p. 97.

In addition to these celebrities of the cryptozoological milieu, the ISC also studies known animals that are generally thought to be extinct, significantly outside their normal habitat, or are unusual in size or markings. You can discover more on these interesting curiosities of biology on the ISC’s Web page. This chapter will look at the unknown creatures (or “cryptids”).

Cryptozoological creatures differ from the mythical beings of the previous chapter in that they are not members of a pantheon; there is no body of tradition to support them. (On the other hand, they might be viewed as the servant creatures in the mythology of *The X-Files*. The line between cryptozoology and mythology can be blurry in places . . .)

Widely recognized names like Bigfoot, the Jersey Devil, and the Mothman appear here, along with their lesser-known American brethren The Honey Island Swamp Monster and El Chupacabra. Old World legends Spring-Heeled Jack and the Beast of Le Gévaudan appear, along with a historical count who may have been a werewolf. As with the last chapter, some creatures have been adapted in the interest of variety: the Sphinx as a hidden monster is a relatively new idea, and Specimen Alpha-39 is one writer’s interpretation of that hoary urban legend, the alligator in the sewer.

More hidden animals can be found in “The Cryptozoo” chapter of *GURPS Warehouse 23* and the “Mythical and Legendary Creatures” section of *GURPS Bestiary*. The latest reports from the field can be found in the *Interdisciplinary Journal of the International Society of Cryptozoology* or, less rigorously, in most supermarket tabloids.

Tom Slick

Tom Slick was a Texas oilman who, influenced by Bernard Heuvelmans’ book *On the Track of Unknown Animals*, financed and led several expeditions in search of the yeti. His initial adventures in Nepal in the 1957 with Peter Byrne led to the Nepalese government ban against foreigners’ killing, injuring, or capturing a yeti. Slick never got a chance to test this ban, but he did go on two more expeditions with F. Kirk Johnson. He died in a mysterious plane crash in 1962. He would make a very interesting (and possibly Illuminated) Patron for a group of PC cryptozoologists.

Incidentally, Tom Slick and F. Kirk Johnson also had a silent partner in their expeditions – actor Jimmy Stewart. (Yes, really!)

The Beast of Le Gévaudan

230 points

A large, long-bodied wolf with a wide chest, reddish fur, and a black stripe from its large head to the tip of its long, bushy tail. It has a thick neck and small pointy ears. Sharp fangs are visible in its long, narrow black muzzle.

ST: 30 [105]* **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.0

IQ: 8 [-15] **HT:** 14 [45] **Move:** 7

Dodge: 9

* No Fine Manipulators, -40%

Advantages

Alertness +8 [40]; Claws [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 4 [12]; Discriminatory Smell (Works as Empathy within 2 hexes, +50%) [23]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Move ×1 [10]; Four Legs [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Increased Speed +1 [25]; Luck [15]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Thick Fur [29]; Ultrahearing [5]; Very Rapid Healing [15].

Disadvantages

Bestial [-10]; Color Blindness [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Enemies (Large group of hunters, on 12 or less) [-60]; Gluttony [-5]; Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Innumerate [-5]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Presentient [-20]; Reputation -4 (As an unstoppable man-eater, to everyone) [-20]; Social Stigma (Barbarian) [-15].

Quirks

Kills for sport; Prefers young women and children for victims. [-2]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Le Gévaudan)-12 [8]; Jumping-14 [1]; Running-14 [4]; Stealth-14 [2]; Survival (Woodlands, specialized in those of south-central France)-8/14 [4]; Tactics-12 [12]; Tracking-16 [12].

Notes: A more cinematic version of the creature could have Bite, Hard to Kill, Invulnerability, Passive Defense, Patron (a powerful sorcerer), Regeneration, and maybe even



Extra Lives. Disadvantages such as Jinxed, Vulnerability (to holy items), Semi-Upright (instead of Horizontal), and the quirk “Peeps through windows at night” could also be appropriate.

Biography

The inhabitants of XVIIIe County of Le Gévaudan in southern France (in the modern département de la Lozère) had feared and hunted wolves for generations. The creature they spotted for the first time in June 1764 was unlike anything they had ever seen. It was big, fast, smart . . . and deadly. The creature attacked with alarming regularity. Horribly mutilated, half-eaten bodies were found throughout the region. Some thought the Beast was a *loup-garou* (werewolf), others that it was a scourge sent by the devil or summoned by some sorcerer. It was thought to watch sleeping peasants through their windows. Panic spread quickly, and people were afraid to leave their houses at night.

In the following months, mobs of peasants scoured the land, hoping to find the creature. They were soon joined by many hunters, mercenaries, and even a troop of dragoons, all after bounties of up to 6,000 livres (about \$40,000). Many wolves were killed, but not the Beast. The majority of hunters gave up after a few months, having alienated the locals by invading their houses, eating their food, and trampling their fields.

Hunted almost constantly, the creature was shot several times, stabbed more than once, and even thrown into a blazing fire. Many a huntsman was sure he had mortally wounded it, only to learn that it killed someone in the next town on the very next day. The Beast was too fast and too cunning, always one step ahead of its pursuers. As the death toll rose, the creature’s reputation spread across the country.

News of the events in Le Gévaudan spread throughout France and the rest of Europe, where France’s enemies used the situation to ridicule the kingdom. Louis XV was furious. In the spring of 1765, he ordered his personal weapon bearer (one of the best shots in France), Antoine de Beauterne, to take care of the creature.

The next September, Beauterne shot and killed a “large and unusual” wolf, which was stuffed and sent to Versailles. The king declared the Beast dead and the whole affair over . . . but the killing continued. Fearing ridicule, the king tried to keep it secret. The inhabitants of Le Gévaudan had to deal with the creature by themselves.

The Beast’s reign of terror continued until June of 1769, when it was killed with a blessed bullet by a local eccentric, Jean Chastel. In all, 157 people were attacked by the Beast, and 104 of them died. The Beast’s body decomposed quickly, and had to be buried before it could be properly examined. Legend says that nothing will grow on the spot where the creature fell.

Encountered

The motivations of the creature are quite simple; it kills and flees to kill again. If the creature encounters a lone soul, it attacks. It will avoid direct confrontation with an armed

The Nature of the Beast

While peasants believe it was a demon, werewolf, or divine scourge, scholars have argued over the true nature of the Beast for more than 200 years. Their theories range from a mutant wolf or bear, to a prehistoric throw-back, or even a baboon! Some cryptozoologists believe it was a hyena, either displaced from Africa or an undiscovered European variety. Use the hyena (pp. BE17, BE112) or the prehistoric giant hyena (pp. BE51 or D64) to make the Beast a more “natural” creature. It is also possible that there was actually a pair of creatures, and that Beauterne actually did kill one in 1768. Sadly, the stuffed creature disappeared from a Paris museum at the beginning of the 20th century. *Steampunk* scientists could check it out, and *Time Travel* agents could be sent back to recover it.

Madmen and Cultists

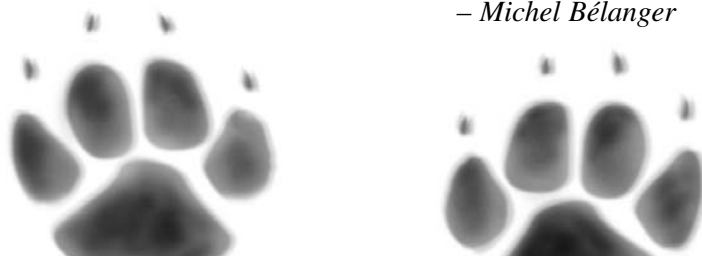
Some authors have attributed some or all of the killings to the ultimate predator: man. A few blame a serial killer who used the hysteria surrounding the Beast to his advantage; others think it was the work of a group of killers using wolfskin disguises and dogs in boar hide. Many people suspected the eccentric Chastel family, especially the younger sons, who were suspected of sorcery by their contemporaries (it was their father who finally killed the Beast). The Chastels were expert dog trainers, and perhaps Jean was able to kill the Beast because he had trained it . . . In a *Horror* campaign, perhaps a cult’s solstice celebration at one of the many dolmens of the region succeeded in summoning *something*.

group. It will hide or lead pursuers in circles, trying to make fools out of them. It knows the terrain very well, and uses that knowledge to lose pursuers. If ambushed or cornered, it will fight only until it can make an escape. Its ability to shrug off damage is legendary. The creature seemed to sense the mood among its hunters: when they thought they had killed it, or when a famous hunter gave up the chase, it would kill several times in close succession, as if to mock them.

GURPS Le Gévaudan

Characters in a *Swashbucklers* or historical *Horror* campaign could be hired to rid the region of the Beast, or they could be attracted by the large bounty. With wolves, paranoid peasants, unruly soldiers and mercenaries, and possibly even evil cultists and mad killers, Le Gévaudan offers plenty of adventuring possibilities for both action and horror.

— Michel Bélanger



Bigfoot

154 points

Indeterminate age; 9', 900 lbs. Bigfoot is a large simian biped covered in brownish-black fur, longer on his head and shorter on his body. He has a dark, gorilla-like face.

ST: 20 [110] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 9 [-10] **HT:** 12/20 [60] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 8 (Brawling)

Advantages

Acute Hearing +3 [6]; Increased Speed +1 [25]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Thick Fur [29].

Disadvantages

Bestial [-10]; Curious [-5]; Dead Broke [-25]; Dull [-1]; Edgy [-5]; Innumerate [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; Pacifism (Self-Defense Only) [-15]; Poor Grip [-5]; Presentient [-20]; Shyness (Severe) [-10].

Quirks

Fond of deer livers. [-1]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Woodlands of the Pacific Northwest and western Canada)-13 [8]; Brawling-12 [1]; Hiking-13 [4]; Stealth-15 [16]; Survival (Woodlands)-15 [14]; Tracking-12 [8].

Biography

Dating back centuries, Bigfoot sightings are too numerous to count. In fact, Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest have been encountering a creature they call *sasquatch* ("hairy man") since before the white man came to their lands.

While most of these sasquatch creatures remain hidden from humans, there is usually one individual in each generation that lacks the species' crippling shyness and exhibits some amount of curiosity. This individual will venture out of the deep woods, closer to territory inhabited or regularly visited by humans. This solitary sasquatch has been given the name Bigfoot by those humans who encounter or search for him.

Many theories attempt to explain Bigfoot, ranging from elaborate hoaxes to alien beings. The one theory that has gained some scientific legitimacy is the *Gigantopithecus*, or Giganto, theory.

Giganto was a species of bipedal ape closely related to the orangutan. They inhabited parts of the Asian continent as recently as 300,000 years ago. Fossil evidence shows that the ape stood up to 9' tall and may have weighed up to 1,000 pounds, dimensions that are very similar to that of Bigfoot and his kind (see p. D69). No fossil evidence of the ape has been found in North America, but to be fair, no one has ever really looked for such evidence.

It is possible that Giganto may have traveled to North America via the Bering Strait land bridge that existed thousands of years ago. If Giganto really did migrate to the North American continent, it could be that a few of that species remain alive to this day.

The sasquatch are primarily herbivorous, living off of berries and other vegetation. There have been some disturbing discoveries, however; mutilated deer carcasses that are linked to sasquatch sightings. These deer were all killed by blunt trauma, and all of the carcasses have at least one of their rear legs broken and their livers missing. Deer livers are highly prized by carnivores for their nutrient value, so Bigfoot may, like his great ape cousins, have some carnivorous tendencies.

Bigfoot is often heard howling or wailing a haunting cry. He is also sometimes seen beating sticks against trees or logs.

Variations

Bigfoot may be just the best-known example of a whole class of creatures. Here are two others.

The Abominable Snowman

Descendants of *Gigantopithecus* may still live in the Himalayan mountain range of Asia. These creatures are referred to as the *yeti* in the legends of the natives. Like the sasquatch, the yeti are a very shy and reclusive species. And like Bigfoot of the sasquatch, there is often one adventurous yeti that regularly ventures into human territory. This individual is known as the Abominable Snowman. See *GURPS Warehouse 23*, p. 99, or *GURPS Bestiary*, pp. 61, 65, and 113, for more on the sasquatch and yeti.

The Wendigo

Another ancient legend of North America may also be an example of a Giganto descendant. The Wendigo is a woodland creature (or spirit) that may inhabit the forests of northern Minnesota and parts of central Canada.

Tales of the wendigo vary from spirit to shapeshifter to apeman to troll to ice giant. It is more sinister than Bigfoot, and described as either a cannibal or a death omen. The Wendigo will often stalk a human or group of humans, taunting them by breaking twigs or rustling branches while always remaining just out of sight. The creature will attack once it has driven its victims to their wits' end.

For the white-furred apeman interpretation, add Reputation -4 (Bloodthirsty harbinger of death or cannibalistic monster, to residents of northern Minnesota and central Canada) [-10] and Loner [-5] and remove Pacifism. The point total remains the same.

Other Giganto-related species may exist elsewhere in the world. See the Honey Island Swamp Monster entry (p. 38) for examples.

He might do this to communicate with others of his kind, or he may be trying to mark his territory. Interestingly, the stick beating occurs when herds of deer are nearby, and this noise often frightens them into stampeding. Bigfoot may be using this to drive the deer herd to a certain place as part of a hunt. Indeed, one witness claims to have seen Bigfoot chase a small herd of elk over a cliff. Several of the elk carcasses were never found.

Motivations

Bigfoot is an adventurous sasquatch. That's not saying much, though, as sasquatch are extremely shy and reclusive creatures. Sasquatch have lived in North America for thousands of years, yet it is only Bigfoot that dares venture near humans. Though not as shy as most sasquatch, Bigfoot never actively seeks out human contact.

In addition to Bigfoot's adventurous nature, he has also displayed a curiosity that is unusual for a sasquatch. In some instances, when Bigfoot is not threatened, his curiosity gets the best of him. Bigfoot will often stare silently at any humans he encounters, as if studying them. He has even been drawn to the sound of children playing, and will sit quietly and watch them from the cover of the forest.

Encountered

Two main areas of North America are inhabited by sasquatch groups. The majority of sasquatch activity is concentrated in the Pacific Northwest; a lesser, but still significant, degree of activity occurs in the wooded regions of eastern Ohio.

Bigfoot sightings have been reported in several other wooded areas of the country as well. Even though sasquatch activity is not heavy in these areas, Bigfoot may still be encountered there. Being an adventurous sasquatch, Bigfoot may travel far and wide in search of new territory. Bigfoot



may even be traveling from the Pacific Northwest to the sasquatch groups of the Ohio region, hopping from one forest to another along the way. A series of adventures could revolve around the PCs chasing the ever-elusive Bigfoot across the country.

When humans do run across Bigfoot, the encounters are usually brief. While outgoing for a sasquatch, Bigfoot is still terribly shy. If he is approached, Bigfoot will usually slip quietly away into the surrounding woods. If the PCs encroach on Bigfoot's den, he will glare intently at them until they leave or attack.

Should the PCs ever attack Bigfoot, he will defend himself ferociously. He has tremendous strength, and is capable of killing a human with a single blow of his fist. Some prehistoric apes are believed to have used primitive weapons, and Bigfoot may likewise be armed with a club of wood or bone.

— Andy Fix

El Chupacabra

176 points

5', 110 lbs. A kangaroo-like creature with gray skin, red eyes, big ears, and spines down its back and tail.

ST: 14 [45] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 6.5
IQ: 6 [-30] **HT:** 13/17 [50] **Move:** 6
Dodge: 6

Advantages

Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Taste and Smell +2 [4]; Bite [30]; Chameleon (Only at night, -50%) [11]; DR 1 [3]; Danger Sense [15]; Discriminatory Smell [15]; Night Vision [10]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Rapid Healing [5]; Sharp Claws [25]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Silence [5]; Spines [15]; Super Jump x1 [10].

Disadvantages

Bad Grip [-10]; Bad Smell [-10]; Bestial (Blood-Drinker) [-15]; Color Blindness [-10]; Cowardice [-10]; Dependency (Animal blood, daily) [-30]; Frightens Animals [-10]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Presentient [-20]; Reputation -4 (As a vampiric monster, to Puerto Ricans) [-10]; Short Arms [-10].

Variations

Though cryptozoologists differ on the subject, the popular theory is that El Chupacabra is a one-of-a-kind. The recent reports of El Chupacabra in other areas could result from spreading paranoia . . . or genuine sightings. If the latter is true, then it lends weight to the theory that the creature is an extraterrestrial pet. Perhaps El Chupacabra is responsible for cattle mutilations in North America as well as Puerto Rico.

If El Chupacabra is an alien pet, then it is probably not unique in the universe, although on Earth, it seems to be. In a *GURPS Space* campaign, a party of adventurers could stumble onto an entire *planet* of goat-suckers; a warm, continuously dark planet where they feed without interference. A race of beings that enjoys keeping Chupacabra as pets is probably not one that the PCs want to encounter.

For a winged Chupacabra, the GM should replace Spines with Winged Flight. This makes it much harder to track, as it no longer depends on hopping to get around.

If El Chupacabra is neither a naturally winged creature nor the pet of an alien species, then a mystery remains: how could reports of the creature come from other locales if it never leaves Puerto Rico? Perhaps some Illuminated agency heard of El Chupacabra and decided to make their own goat-suckers. Genetic testing on a natural blood-sucker, perhaps a species of bat, might have succeeded, leading to sightings abroad. Adventurers looking to solve the mystery have to find this offshoot creature and trace it to the spawning agency. Once the creature is caught, however, holding it is probably not be any easier than catching and keeping the original.

Skills

Area Knowledge (Rural areas of Puerto Rico)-18 [24]; Jumping-18 [24]; Survival (Woodlands)-18 [26].

Biography

El Chupacabra is native to Puerto Rico, where it ram-pages throughout the island and sucks blood from the local livestock. The name “Chupacabra” literally means “goat sucker” and was given to the creature after the earliest attacks, in which goats were found drained of blood, with two peculiar puncture marks on their necks. There have been reports that organs were missing from some of the bodies of the victimized animals, without any discernible way for the organs to have been removed. Sightings have increased over the years, fueling paranoia in the rural areas of Puerto Rico.

Some say the creature has been around since the beginning of the 20th century. Others believe it has only been around for the past six or seven years. Only one thing is known for sure: El Chupacabra has a weakness for the blood of livestock. It attacks farms at night and drains the blood from whatever animals it can find.

El Chupacabra's attacks have been compared to reports of cattle mutilations, especially the tales of missing organs. The appearance of bright lights during some attacks has led to the belief that El Chupacabra is actually a creature from outer space. Due to its animal-like behavior, some speculate that El Chupacabra is actually the pet of an alien species, either left here accidentally or brought here regularly to feed on the blood of terrestrial animals.

The trail of most of the encounters can be traced back seven years, when eight goats were found dead in a field in Oracouis, Puerto Rico. Five months later, El Chupacabra was blamed for the deaths of about 150 animals in and around Canvanas. Recently, reports of El Chupacabra have spread from Puerto Rico to other parts of the Americas, including Miami, Texas, Mexico, and Brazil. This information has bolstered the theory that El Chupacabra's extraterrestrial owners merely bring the creature to new feeding grounds. Others think that the spines on the back of El Chupacabra are actually wings of some kind and it uses them to fly to other areas.

Motivations

El Chupacabra's main motivation is its thirst for blood. It sneaks into barns and fields at night in search of livestock. Once it finds a suitable victim, El Chupacabra sinks its large teeth into the back of the animal's neck and feeds on its blood. El Chupacabra's hunger cannot be sated; it continues draining the blood of more and more animals until it is chased away from the site or the sun comes up. At dawn, El Chupacabra returns to the woods until the next night, when it feeds again.

Encountered

This creature is most likely encountered at night, near a barn or other animal housing. El Chupacabra's instinct is to retreat into nearby woods and use its chameleon powers to evade anyone chasing it. Once El Chupacabra disappears, a putrid, sulfur-like smell is the only thing that gives its presence away.

El Chupacabra hops from place to place like a kangaroo, making tracks that are far apart, with a unique, broad spread of claws (three front and one rear on each foot).

El Chupacabra must be caught while it is feeding. Any sort of sudden movement, bright lights, or loud noises frighten it off. However, if El Chupacabra is cornered, it fights back. Its claws, spines, and sharp teeth make it an adversary better confronted from a distance.

— Jeff Culliton



The Great Sphinx

3,395 points

A stone lion with the head of a man. Various parts, most notably the nose, are missing or crumbling. Approximately 66' high, 230' long, weighing an indeterminate number of tons.

ST: 1,000 [396]* **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 7.0

IQ: 20 [175] **HT:** 15/500 [2,485] **Move:** 7

Dodge: 7

* No Fine Manipulators, -40%

Advantages

Body of Stone 10 (Unswitchable) [60]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Four Legs [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [15]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Cutting/Impaling Bonus, No Vitals) [45]; Magery 3 [35]; Night Vision [15]; Sanctity [5]; Sharp Claws [25]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Unaging [15]; Universal Digestion [15].

Disadvantages

Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Secret (Not merely a statue) [-30].

Skills

Area Knowledge (Egypt)-20 [1]; Astronomy-20 [4]; Bard-20 [2]; Diplomacy-20 [4]; History-25 [14]; Jumping-15 [4]; Mathematics-20 [4]; Occultism-25 [12]; Politics-20 [2]; Psychology-20 [4]; Running-15 [4]; Savoir-Faire-20 [1]; Stealth-15 [8]; Strategy (Land)-25 [14]; Survival (Desert)-20 [2]; Thaumatology-25 [16].

Languages

Akkadian-19 [1]; Ancient Egyptian (Native)-20 [0]; Ancient Greek-20 [2]; Arabic-20 [2]; English-20 [2]; French-20 [2]; Latin-19 [1].



Spells

All at level 21: Aura; Colors; Command; Compel Truth; Continual Light; Control Person; Create Air; Create Earth; Darkness; Daze; Detect Magic; Dream Projection; Dream Sending; Dream Viewing; Earth to Air; Earth to Stone; Earth Vision; Encrypt; Fascinate; Fear; Flesh to Stone; Foolishness; Forgetfulness; Glow; Identify Spell; Light; Mage Sense; Mage Sight; Mass Daze; Mass Sleep; Mind-Reading; Mind-Sending; Panic; Permanent Forgetfulness (VH); Possession (VH); Purify Air; Rain of Stones; Remove Shadow; Sand Jet; Sandstorm; Seek Air; Seek Earth; Seek Magic; Seeker; Sense Emotion; Sense Foes; Sense Life; Shape Air; Shape Darkness; Shape Earth; Shape Light; Sleep; Soul Rider; Stench; Sunlight; Telepathy (VH); Terror; Truthsayer; Whirlwind; Windstorm [63].

Biography

The Great Sphinx of Giza is the enigma of the sands. Its age is uncertain; although traditional dating places it in the Fourth Dynasty (around 2,600 B.C.), there is evidence that it may be younger than this, and occultists often claim a far greater age for it. Although it is usually assumed that the head of the Sphinx represents Khafre, the pharaoh responsible for its construction, it may instead represent his older brother, the pharaoh Djedefre. Khafre also referred (metaphorically?) to the Sphinx as his father. The 18th-dynasty pharaoh Thutmose IV claimed that he ascended to the throne in return for removing the sand that had buried the Sphinx in the 15th century B.C. Throughout the ages, the Sphinx has symbolized Egypt, royalty, and wisdom.

This is not coincidence.

The Sphinx is an ancient spirit. Its motives are inscrutable at best. It first appeared in Mesopotamia in the third millennium B.C., manifesting to the early city builders in dreams and desert mirages. However, they resisted its influence, and so it moved on – to Egypt. There it begat the pharaoh Khafre, revealing itself during his adolescence. Under the Sphinx's guidance, Khafre built its physical form. Finding its new home good, the Sphinx merged with the stone of the Giza plateau and blessed Khafre's reign as pharaoh.

The reign was a good one, but Egypt groaned under the weight of the Sphinx, which roamed up and down the Nile and out into the desert, devouring any who crossed its path. After Khafre died, the Sphinx returned to Giza to honor its son in death. There it was trapped (and muted) by the priests of Ra in its present location. Without the power of the Sphinx to guide them, the Fourth Dynasty deteriorated, to be replaced by a dynasty descended from the priests who had imprisoned the Sphinx.

Over the next millennia, the Sphinx sat imprisoned in front of its son's tomb. Egypt rose to great prominence, then fell, first to the Ptolemies, then to the Romans, and finally to the forces of Islam. Although the Sphinx was able to regain a little power in the 18th dynasty by influencing Thutmose IV, the priests of Ra were alert and countered further attempts at restoration. Thus, it sits in the sands of Egypt, sleeping but aware.

Motivations

The priests of Ra believed that the Sphinx was driven mostly by hunger, but some of its behavior hints at more complex plots. It has consistently played a role in the rule of Egypt, as a symbol of royal power; the GM may choose to make it more than a symbol. For example, many of the great conquerors of the ancient world are associated with Egypt in some way: Alexander the Great, his general Ptolemy, Julius Caesar, Mark Antony – did they make bargains with the being inhabiting the Sphinx, or refuse such bargains to their sorrow? In the 19th century, Napoleon's soldiers are reputed to have desecrated the Sphinx. Napoleon then met with disaster in Russia. . .

Variations

In a *GURPS Illuminati* game, the Sphinx can operate as a rather peculiar Secret Master. Based in Egypt, it uses its knowledge of history and human nature to extend its power throughout the world. Countless secret organizations and cults trace their roots back to Egypt; what if they owe their existence to the Sphinx? In such a game, the Sphinx should be Illuminated and have an Ally Group (A Conspiracy).

In a *GURPS Horror* game, the Sphinx is better suited to the role of dark god. This is especially appropriate when combined with *GURPS Egypt*. A secret cult of the Sphinx could oppose the priests of Ra throughout the dynasties or make trouble for more modern investigators.

It's also possible that characters could encounter the Sphinx before it inhabits its stone body, or that it might choose to abandon that body in order to regain its freedom. In that case, replace all of the Sphinx's physical Advantages and Disadvantages with one of the following: Astral Entity (p. CI96), Being of Pure Thought (p. CI34), or Spirit Form (Unlimited lifespan, no materialization; see p. 121). In this state, the Sphinx will likely be looking for a body of some kind; this could make for an interesting scenario involving robots or mecha.

For more information on the Sphinx and Egypt, see *GURPS Egypt* p. 38 and *GURPS Places of Mystery* p. 34.

– Jesse Lowe

Dumb Brute

An ancient, ambivalent demigod may not be what a particular campaign needs, while a giant, city-smashing monster may just fit the bill. In that case, the Sphinx can be an ancient monster imprisoned by the pharaohs in a body of stone. Drop the IQ to 6 and remove most of the spells and mental skills. A rampaging Sphinx would make a suitable opponent for *GURPS Supers*, *GURPS Steampunk* mecha, or a band of intrepid *GURPS Cliffhangers* heroes.



The Honey Island Swamp Monster

223 points

First time I ever saw it, it was standing plum-still like a stump. I stopped and realized it wasn't a stump and it wasn't supposed to be there. When I stopped, it ran. It was dark gray, about seven-foot high. It jumped a bayou.

— Ted Williams

7'0", 450 lbs. The Honey Island Swamp Monster is a humanoid covered with dingy gray fur – short on its body and long on its head. Its eyes are amber and catlike.

ST: 22 [130]	DX: 13 [30]	Speed: 8.25
IQ: 9 [-10]	HT: 14 [45]	Move: 8
Dodge: 9	Parry: 11 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Absolute Direction [5]; Acute Hearing [2]; Acute Taste & Smell +2 [4]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 2 [6]; Fur (Thick) [29]; Increased Speed 1 1/2 [38]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Silence [5].

Disadvantages

Bad Smell [-10]; Bad Temper [-10]; Bestial [-10]; Curious [-5]; Dead Broke [-25]; Dull [-1]; Edgy [-5]; Illiteracy [-10]; Innumerate [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; Primitive -6 [-30]; Reputation (Fearsome beast, residents of south Louisiana, always) [-3]; Shyness (Crippling) [-15].

Quirks

Likes tomatoes. [-1]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Honey Island Swamp)-14 [10]; Brawling-16 [8]; Camouflage-15 [12]; First Aid-10 [2]; Fishing-12 [6]; Jumping-15 [4]; Lifting-20 [1]; Mimicry (Animal Sounds)-13 [4]; Mimicry (Bird Calls)-13 [4]; Running-14 [4]; Scrounging-11 [4]; Stealth-15 [8]; Survival (Swampland)-15 [14]; Tracking-12 [8].

The Legend

Called by various other names (The Thing, The Swamp Ape, The Louisiana Wookie, and The Southern Bigfoot), the Honey Island Swamp Monster was first sighted in the early 1960s in the Honey Island Swamp, a marshy bottomland between the East and West Pearl Rivers, straddling the Louisiana-Mississippi border. Despite its proximity to New Orleans and the growing North Shore suburbs, the swamp remains relatively untouched. Several interstate highways run along its borders, but most of the swamp is accessible only by foot, airboat, or pirogue. The swamp is part of the Bogue Chitto National Wildlife Refuge.

Among the animals known to live in the swamp are Louisiana black bears, feral pigs, alligators, and nutria. Florida panthers are suspected to live there, and it is believed to be the only place where ivory-billed woodpeckers may still survive. Reports of a tall man-like creature with short gray hair

Variant Missing Links

Although the evidence is mixed, the Honey Island Swamp Monster seems to be a unique being. Similar “missing link” man-apes have been sighted around the world. The best known are the Yeti of the Himalayas and Sasquatch of the Pacific Northwest, but similar creatures have been recorded in a variety of environments – the Alma (Russia), Cangodrilo (Mexico), Foulk Ape (Arkansas), Grassman (Ohio), Kapre (the Philippines), Momo (Missouri), Nguoi Rung (Vietnam), Skunk Ape (Florida), Yowie (Australia). How these creatures are related, if at all, remains unknown.

The differences among these creatures are minor. Height varies; they many have from three to six toes; fur color runs the spectrum from white to red to brown to black and all shades in between; temperament ranges from shy to violent.

The Honey Island Swamp Monster can be used as the basis for any of these creatures. Or use the Wildman template from *GURPS Fantasy Folk* (p. 132), the Yeti template from *GURPS Bestiary* (p. 113), or the first humans templates from *GURPS Dinosaurs* (p. 83).



all over its body and long, stringy gray hair hanging from its head occur mainly at night. Most of these encounters marked by the creature fleeing any contact with humans, but there are incidents where the creature attacked.

In the early 1970s, a couple camping in the swamp reported hearing peculiar screams from down the river. Over the next ten minutes or so, the screams grew louder and closer, until it was apparent the screaming creature was just outside their tent. A shotgun blast scared the creature away, and the couple quickly broke camp. In the morning they returned to find odd four-toed tracks that came from a creature estimated to weigh well over 400 pounds.

More troubling are the sightings of the creature in populated areas bordering the swamp. It has been seen stealing vegetables from farms and gardens, and it is suspected in the disappearance of several calves and dogs.

Despite its secretive nature, there has been at least one report of the creature ripping siding off of a house in an attempt to get inside. The details surrounding this incident are sketchy at best, and, understandably, authorities have been reluctant to blame the damage on the monster.

Encountered

Who or what the Honey Island Swamp Monster is widely speculated on. Suggestions have ranged from a bear or orangutan to a crazed human or a being descended from some protohuman. Such questions are just the sort of thing to drive budding cryptozoologists into the swamp.

Investigators who seek out the monster will find the Honey Island Swamp notoriously hazardous. It is riddled with poisonous snakes and other dangerous animals, patches of quicksand, and sinkholes.

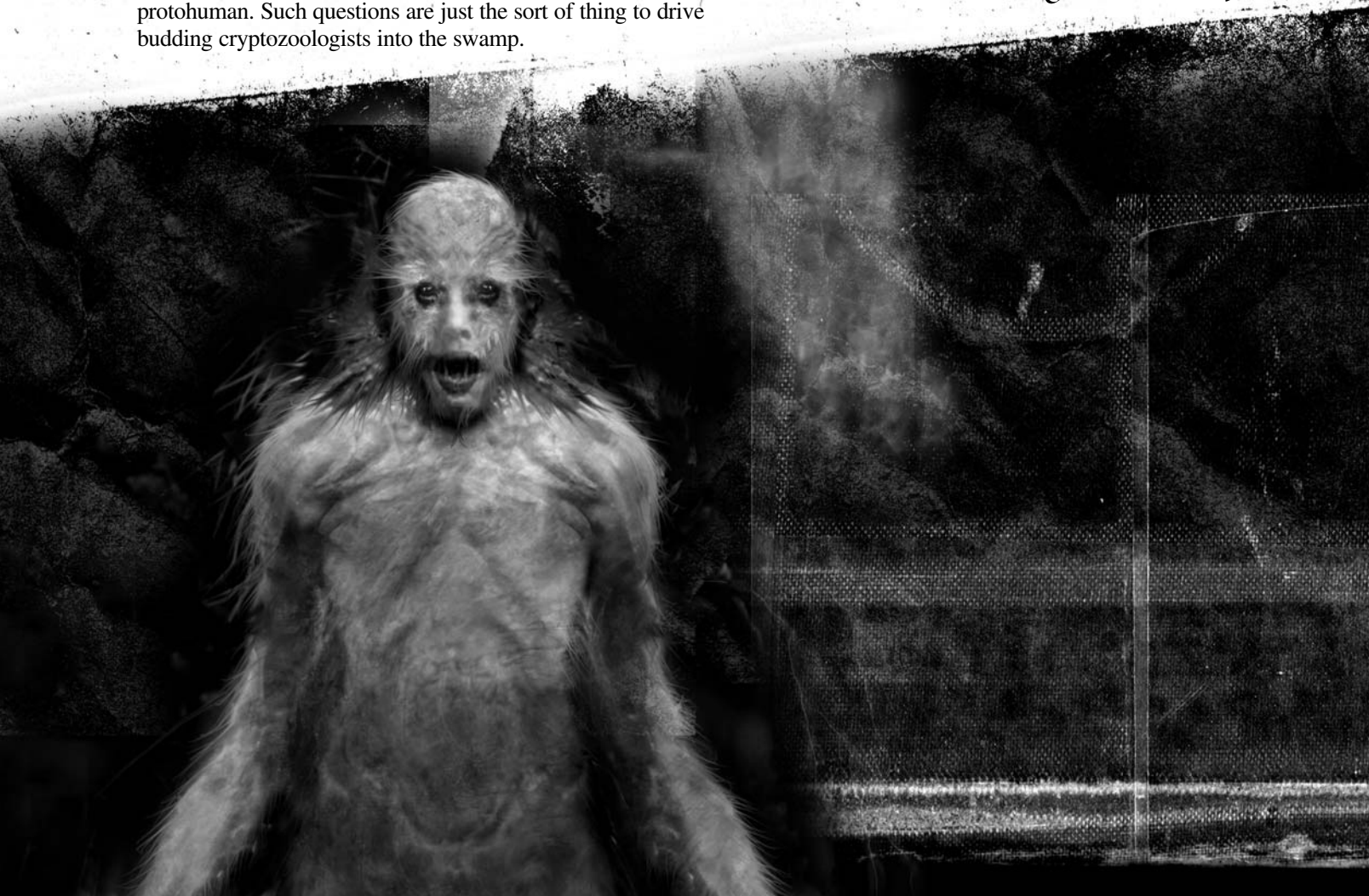
If strangers enter its territory, the monster will stalk them first, assessing their potential threat. It may try to frighten people away with animal calls. If this fails, it will isolate members of the group and, particularly if it's nighttime, it may attack.

Those in search of the monster are likely to find bent saplings and similar markings at the limits of its territory. Some claim it bends together several saplings into a pyramidal shape for this purpose. Distinctive footprints – about 10-inches long with three wide-spread toes at the top of the foot and a fourth toe about one-third of the way down the outside edge – may also be found in soft soil.

Outside the swamp, the monster may be encountered at night in remote fields or even at the edges of the suburban sprawl. In such places, if it cannot flee, it is wary and quick to attack.

– T. Carter Ross

A shotgun blast scared the creature away, and the couple quickly broke camp. In the morning they returned to find odd four-toed tracks that came from a creature estimated to weigh well over 400 pounds.



Human Form

Age 51; 5'6", 175 lbs. A muscular man with flashing blue eyes, long black hair streaked with gray, yellowed teeth, and scarred hands.

ST: 13 [30]	DX: 13 [30]	Speed: 6.75
IQ: 11 [10]	HT: 14 [45]	Move: 6
Dodge: 7	Parry: 9 (Brawling) 7 (Sword)	
Block: 7		

Advantages

Attractive [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Fit [5]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Literacy [10]; Reputation +2 (As a capable leader, to those who served under him) [3]; Shapeshifting (See below) [113]; Status 4 [15]*; Very Wealthy [30].

* Includes +1 from Wealth.

Disadvantages

Age [-3]; Bloodlust [-10]; Callous [-6]; Excommunicated [-5]; Intolerance (Peasants) [-5]; Enemy (Louis le Gros, 6-) [-15]; Obsession (Avenge his father) [-10]; Reputation -3 (As a cruel man, throughout Normandy) [-8].

Quirks

Always refers to his family history; Fearful of those more powerful than himself; Often gestures with his sword while talking. [-3]

Skills

Administration-10 [4]; Area Knowledge (Europe)-10 [1/2]; Axe/Mace-12 [1]; Body Language-11 [4]; Brawling-14 [2]; Broadsword-16 [16]; Falconry-10 [2]; Heraldry-11 [2]; Intimidation-13 [6]; Literature-11 [4]; Politics-14 [12]; Psychology-10 [2]; Riding-13 [2]; Savoir-Faire-11 [0]*; Shield-13 [1]; Strategy (Land)-10 [6]; Survival (Woodlands)-11 [2]; Tactics-12 [10]; Tracking-11 [2]; Two-Handed Sword-16 [16].

* Free from Status.

Languages

Latin-10 [1]; Norman French (Native)-11 [0].

Werewolf Form

Hughes' were-form uses the shapechanging rules found on pp. 120-121.

Attributes

The wolf has ST 25 (No Fine Manipulators) [90]. Hughes' other attributes are unchanged.

Advantages

Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Taste and Smell +2 [4]; Alertness +2 [10]; Claws [15]; Discriminatory Smell [15]; Extra Hit Points +5 [25]; Four Legs [5]; Enhanced Move 1 [10]; Increased Speed [25]; Instant Regeneration [100]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Thick Fur [29]; Ultrahearing [5].

Disadvantages

Berserk [-15]; Bestial [-10]; Cannot Climb [0]; Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Increased Life Support [-10]; Infectious Attack [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Vulnerability (2d, Silver) [-20].

The form has a positive point total of 327, a negative point total of -175 (which is a -75% limitation, but limited to 80% of -175, or -140 points), for a form cost of 191. Hughes must change into a wolf creature during the full moon (Lunar Change, -20%). He can consciously transform himself at other times, and he will transform under stress (Common External Trigger, -20%). The final cost of the shapeshifter advantage is 113 points. The appearance of his were-form is a large silver wolf; easily twice as big as a normal wolf.

Tales of men who could transform into wolves go as far back as human history; Herodotus first mentioned a tribe of werewolves in the fifth century B.C.

Werewolf stories became more prevalent during the Middle Ages, particularly in France and Germany. Local magistrates and curious monks recorded these werewolf sightings with great excitement.

One of the earliest documented werewolf tales is that of Hughes de Camp-d'Avesnes, the Count of Saint-Pol. While he is certainly not the *first* werewolf, he is easily the nastiest. His savagery and bloodthirst began long before he brought the curse of lycanthropy upon himself.

Hughes' Sword

Hughes' bastard sword could be a powerful artifact against werewolves. It can be recognized by the crest of Avesnes in its pommel as well as the decorative silver in the hilt. Against lycanthropes, the entire sword is treated as though it were silver. Additionally, no lycanthrope can hold the sword without it burning his hand (1 point of damage each second and the subject must make a Will roll to continue to hold it).

In all likelihood, Hughes' sword was taken into custody by Innocent II and kept in the vaults of the Vatican, although Louis le Gros may have taken possession of it instead. In modern campaigns, PCs may discover the sword in an old castle, on exhibit in a museum, or locked away in Warehouse 23.



Adventures

In a historical Middle Ages campaign, French lords will know Hughes' reputation for creating misery long before his folly at the Abbey of Saint-Riquier, and the serfs of the nearby lands will fear him and his growing army.

Hughes is constantly looking for soldiers and brilliant minds to help plan attacks on his enemies. If he finds men strong enough to help him, he will welcome them to his forces. If he believes otherwise, they are likely to be ignored or trodden upon.

Those who make enemies of Hughes meet ghastly ends. Hughes is very patient, even as a beast, and will stalk his prey for days, even years, before finally striking in a horrific fashion. After his transformation, he will be imposing, frantic, and still seeking revenge on real and imagined enemies. In his wolf form, he is a bloodthirsty beast that exists only to devour the weak.

Settings

Unlike many creatures of legend, werewolves are not typically immortal. Most of them perish a short time after being cursed; they trade a long life for tremendous bestial power. It is possible, however, that since Hughes was cursed by the divine, immortality (or at least longevity) was part of his affliction.

If that were the case, Hughes could easily live through the Middle Ages and into the Renaissance. Musketeers in a *GURPS Swashbucklers* game could stumble upon Hughes while adventuring in northern France. He may even approach them in the guise of a count looking for help avenging a wrong. He will undoubtedly portray his cause as noble; in his mind, it always is.

If Hughes survives the Inquisition and witch hunts of the following centuries, he might appear in a *GURPS Old West* campaign. Native Americans have many tales of shapeshifters, and Hughes could seek them out as noble warriors and try to forge an alliance, naturally with him at the head of an army. A trail of bloody cattle and mutilated bodies along with the strange behavior of local Indian tribes may lead gunslingers to the Comte de Saint-Pol.

Hughes makes a good villain in a *Black Ops* or *Horror* campaign as well. In the present, he would be an ancient evil, grown much stronger over the years. GMs should add appropriate defenses so he can withstand the firepower of a typical modern-day group. While it is difficult to guess what would motivate Hughes in the modern world – almost a thousand years after his excommunication – he may be lured out of hiding to destroy one of the heirs of Louis le Gros or another one of his ancient enemies. Or perhaps he surfaces in the third world as a general with a reputation for cruelty and a tendency to use his tank battalions to destroy churches or mosques with his enemies inside.

Biography

Hughes de Camp-d'Avesnes was born in 1080 or so to a noble family in what is now northern France. His father was an influential lord with a fierce temper and claimed that he was a descendant of Charlemagne.

Barely a man, Hughes joined the First Crusade with Godfrey of Bouillon and earned a reputation as a fearless warrior, a skilled tactician, and a merciless leader. He participated in the attack on Nicaea in 1097 and with his fellow Franks pillaged dozens of Turkish villages in the name of Christ. Hughes also participated in the destruction of eastern Christian villages because he did not take the time to discover the nature of the people in his path to Nicaea.

When he returned home, Hughes was shocked to find that his father had been killed. Two neighboring lords and longtime family rivals, the Comte d'Auxi and the Comte de Beaurain-sur-Canche, had attempted to seize land from Hughes' estate. Although their bid failed, the elder Comte died on the field.

Hughes plotted his revenge. He was a bloodthirsty warrior, but not an impatient one. He fortified his lands and taxed his peasants horribly. For over 20 years his tax collectors took everything they could from his subjects. The winters were harsh and many died, but Hughes cared little for peasantry. His reputation as a cruel master spread throughout France.

Hughes used his fat coffers to raise an army, second in size only to the King of France. In 1130, he attacked his father's enemies, easily won several battles, and seized their lands.

Much to Hughes' frustration, the Comte d'Auxi and the Comte de Beaurain-sur-Canche evaded capture. Over the next few months, Hughes dispatched hundreds of scouts to find their hiding place.

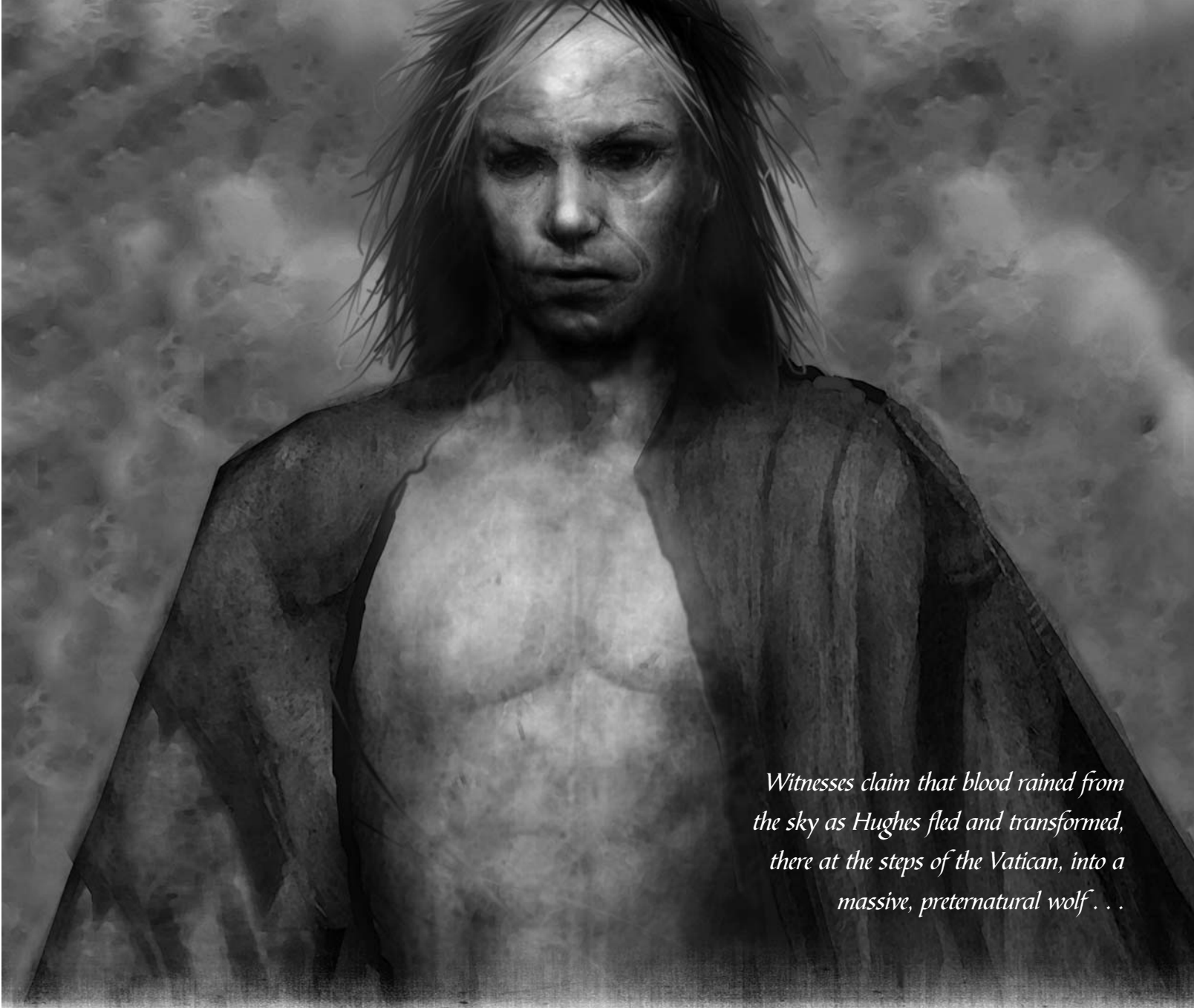
In the winter of 1131 a scout discovered they had sought sanctuary at the Abbey of Saint-Riquier in the village of Ponthieu, just north of Hughes' lands. Hughes gathered his army and marched on the village. The terrified peasantry fled into the abbey for shelter.

Realizing that they were outmatched and surrounded, the Comte d'Auxi and the Comte de Beaurain-sur-Canche sued for peace. Hughes never considered their surrender. Despite his lieutenants' warnings that it was *terre sacré*, Hughes ordered the abbey burned to the ground.

Hughes' enemies died in the fire that day, along with dozens of monks and hundreds of peasants. Elated with victory, Hughes' men pillaged Ponthieu, stole treasures from the devastated church, and slew any peasants who escaped the conflagration.

This final victory attracted the attention of Louis le Gros, the king of France. Louis had spent most of his reign trying to bring the unruly barons of France under his control. He was also a very pious man on good terms with the Church. Hughes' sacrilegious act, along with the threat of his growing army, provoked Louis into action. Intending to crush this upstart lord, he immediately set out for Saint-Pol.

Realizing he could never hope to defeat Louis le Gros, Hughes fled. He rode straight to Rome to seek sanctuary and forgiveness at the Vatican. The clemency of the Pope, Hughes



Witnesses claim that blood rained from the sky as Hughes fled and transformed, there at the steps of the Vatican, into a massive, preternatural wolf. . .

presumed, would be enough to persuade Louis le Gros to cease any hostilities.

That Hughes dared seek sanctuary after brutally ignoring it enraged Louis. He rode hard, hoping to catch Hughes before he reached Rome. He did not succeed, but he was in time to interrupt Hughes' audience with Pope Innocent II.

Hughes begged for mercy and promised his wealth to the Vatican. He swore he would rebuild the Abbey of Saint-Riquier. Louis le Gros proved the more persuasive. Disgusted, Pope Innocent II excommunicated Hughes on the spot.

Trying to invoke pity, Hughes began praying to show his humility. Innocent II's decision was firm, and he declared that Hughes should cease, that the Lord was no longer Hughes' shepherd. The pontiff observed that Hughes was the creature from which the Lord wished to protect his flock.

Hughes drew his sword and screamed that he had given his life for God, that he had fought and bled for God, and that

God had no right to turn away from him. To everyone's astonishment, the sword scorched his hand. Many say that it was the silver embedded into the hilt that charred Hughes' palm.

Realizing that God had indeed turned His back on him, Hughes ran into the night crying out, "*Vox quoque Moerim iam fugit ipsa; lupi Moerim videre priores*" – "My voice grows hoarse; I feel the notes decay as if the wolves had seen me first today."

Witnesses claim that blood rained from the sky as Hughes fled and transformed, there at the steps of the Vatican, into a massive, preternatural wolf, the very beast from which shepherds must protect their flock.

Werewolf sightings became more frequent in France shortly after Hughes met his fate. Whether these werewolves were Hughes himself or the infected children of his bite is unknown.

– J.C. Connors

The Jersey Devil

105 points

3'6". The Jersey Devil possesses a forked tail, two-foot-long bat wings, cloven feet, and a horse's body. He has a head like a collie and a face like a horse. His back legs are like a crane's. The Devil walks semi-erect on his hind legs.

ST: 16 [42]* **DX:** 15 [60] **Speed:** 7.25

IQ: 7 [-20] **HT:** 14/16 [55] **Move:** 7

Dodge: 8

* No Fine Manipulators, -40%

Advantages

Claws [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Flight (Winged) [30]; Penetrating Call [5]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Curious [-5]; Dead Broke [-25]; Frightens Animals [-5]; Gluttony [-5]; Illiteracy [-10]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Reputation -4 (As a bloodthirsty monster, in New Jersey and surrounding states, on a 10 or less) [-5]; Semi-Upright [-5]; Taboo Trait (Affected by Exorcism) [0]; Uneducated [-5].

Quirks

Fondness for sheep and chickens; Returns to his birthplace regularly. [-2]

Skills

Camouflage-12 [10]; Flight (Winged)-17 [8]; Survival (Woodlands)-12 [12].

Languages

English (Native)-7 [0].

Biography

In 1735 Mrs. Leeds of Smithville, New Jersey became pregnant. The child was unwanted, as it would be Mrs. Leeds' 13th. As her painful labor began one stormy night, she cursed it, saying, "Let this child be a devil!" Mrs. Leeds forgot her curse when the midwife placed the baby boy in her arms . . . but it was too late. Mrs. Leeds watched in horror as the baby's body changed before her eyes: the face lengthened and bat wings sprouted from his back. His legs grew long and spindly and his feet became hooves. A forked tail completed the horrifying transformation. The creature let out a bone-chilling scream, and flew up the chimney into the night.

The creature terrorized the people of the surrounding countryside and was dubbed "The Jersey Devil." In 1740, a clergyman attempted to exorcise the beast but achieved only limited success. Although temporarily banished from Pine Hills, the Jersey Devil would return after 100 years. During this time, there were only two sightings. In both cases, human

beings stumbled on the creature in the woods, yet no harm befell them – a lingering effect of the exorcism.

The Jersey Devil reappeared in 1840. The creature attacked sheep and livestock while eluding every attempt to capture him. Fear stalked the inhabitants of the region, who refused to venture outside their homes at night. For the next 50 years, the Jersey Devil was seen throughout the area, including Bridgeton, Long Branch, Smithville, Long Beach Island, Brigantine Beach, Leeds Point, and Haddonfield. By the end of the 19th century, he had expanded his territory to include the Hyenga Lake environs in southern New York. People in New Jersey and the bordering states now accepted the existence of the Jersey Devil as fact.

The creature did not cease his appearances with the dawn of the 20th century. Between January 16 and January 23, 1909, people throughout the Delaware Valley reported seeing a strange winged beast. With over 100 sightings reported, the week was dubbed "Phenomenal Week" and the governor declared a state of emergency. No one went out after dark or left their animals unattended. The people of the area were terrified, especially those living deep in the heart of the Pine Barrens.

The Jersey Devil's next major string of appearances occurred between 1951 and 1952, in what is known as the "Gibbstown-Paulsboro invasion." This invasion, though smaller than Phenomenal Week, sent many into a panicked state. Poses were formed to track the creature but dogs wouldn't follow his trail; they'd only whimper and turn away. Since then, public skepticism about the Jersey Devil's existence has risen considerably, but stories and sightings continue.

Motivations

Despite his hideous appearance and violent behavior, the Jersey Devil is still the young child he was before his transformation. Consequently, his motivations are simple and primal: seek food, stay warm, and learn about his surroundings. The Jersey Devil only terrorizes inhabited areas when driven by one of these needs. Especially strong is his curiosity, giving him plenty of reasons to leave his forest lair and enter the wider world.

Encountered

The Jersey Devil is a nocturnal creature that rarely travels far from his home in the forests of Pine Hills, New Jersey. Some say the creature regularly returns to his birthplace in Leeds Point for unknown reasons. Nevertheless, there are enough sightings outside this area – and even outside New Jersey – to justify encounters elsewhere in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Excluding the years 1740 to 1840, the creature is free to roam, and his taste for chickens and sheep makes him likely to travel far afield to sate his prodigious appetite.

– James Maliszewski

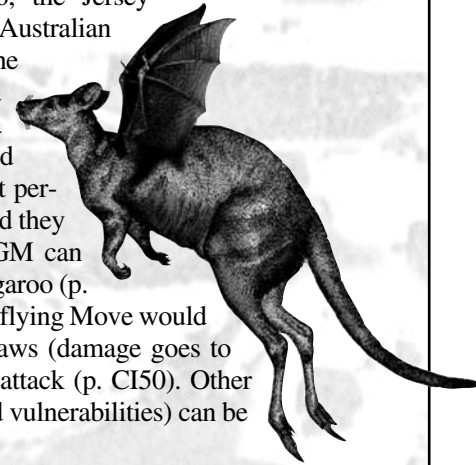
Variations on the Legend

The Jersey Devil's mother is sometimes named Mrs. Shrouds (or Shourds) rather than Mrs. Leeds. There is a house in Leeds Point called Shrouds House, reputed to be the birthplace of the Jersey Devil. Research shows that both a Daniel Leeds and a Samuel Shrouds lived in Leeds Point in 1735. The Shrouds lived right across the river from the Leeds.

One version of the legend suggests a needy Gypsy woman, callously treated by the pregnant Mrs. Leeds, cursed the child. Yet another version says that Mrs. Leeds was a witch who had dealings with the Devil – the creature's true father. Another story suggests the monster's mother fell in love with a British soldier and was cursed by the townsfolk for the treasonous relationship. Certain other stories claim the Jersey Devil did not mutate from a normal baby into monster, but rather was born with his beastly countenance. Some versions tell how the Jersey Devil killed and ate everyone who witnessed his birth.

The Hoax

In 1909, as the Jersey Devil was receiving national media attention, Norman Jeffries and Jacob Hope claimed to have captured him. He was not, they revealed, the victim of a diabolic curse. No, the Jersey Devil was actually an Australian variety of vampire! The two men had affixed claws and wings to a kangaroo and painted some stripes on it, but perhaps in the game world they didn't need to. The GM can use the stats for a kangaroo (p. BE18), add wings (its flying Move would still be 15), longer claws (damage goes to 2d-1 cut), and a Bite attack (p. CI50). Other vampiric abilities (and vulnerabilities) can be added as desired.



*A devil, a born devil, on whose nature
Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains,
Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost;
And as with age his body uglier grows,
So his mind cankers.*

– William Shakespeare, The Tempest



Unknown age; 7' tall, 225 lbs. According to eyewitness descriptions, the Mothman is large, gray, featherless, and vaguely man-shaped. Its wings (10' span) can fold close to its back; they do not flap, but remain motionless when it soars.

Perhaps its most terrifying feature are its red, luminous eyes. Described by witnesses as being as large as automobile reflectors, they seem to have a hypnotic effect.

ST: 15 [60] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 6.0
IQ: 10 [0] **HT:** 12 [20]
Move: 48 (Flying) 6 (Running) **Dodge:** 6

Advantages

Flight [40]; Night Vision [10]; Super Flight x3 [60]; Terror (Limitation: Eye contact only, -20%) [24].

Disadvantages

Bestial [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Frightens Animals [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Reputation -2 (Misbegotten portent of madness) [-10]; Reputation -2 (Vengeance of Chief Cornstalk, among cryptozoologists and occultists, recognized sometimes) [-3]; Weakness (Sunlight, 1d per five minutes, fatigue only) [-15].

The Gentle Mothman

The night before the bridge collapse, a young girl saw the Mothman hovering just outside her bedroom window, staring at her with his enormous, glowing eyes. The next day, she and her family were going on trip that would take them over the Silver Bridge. However, her father was struck with a paralyzing headache just as he backed the car out of the driveway. After he had recovered, the family heard about the disaster on the radio. Were it not for the headache, they would likely have been on that bridge. Some theorize that the Mothman favored the little girl for some reason (this would be an added Quirk) and, knowing of the coming collapse, used mind-control powers to induce the man's headache and keep the family home.

The Skeptic's Take

Skeptics ascribe the sightings to an encounter with a sandhill crane. Perhaps a particularly aggressive crane visited Pleasant Point in the mid-sixties. Then again, no sandhill cranes have ever been clocked at 100 miles an hour, and their eyes are decidedly not hypnotic. Nor do they eat dogs.

But if toxic substances in the TNT area from chemical companies or the military got into a sandhill crane nest, perhaps the Mothman did indeed hatch, powers intact, from a simple bird's egg.

Quirks

Fond of dog flesh. [-1]

Skills

Flight-14 [8]; Intimidation-12 [1]*; Stealth-15 [16]; Survival (Plains)-12 [6]; Tracking-14 [10].

* Bought up from ST -5 default.

Psionic Powers

ESP 5 (One skill only: Precognition) [10]; Psychokinesis 5 (One skill only: Pyrokinesis) [15]; Telepathy 10 [50].

Psionic Skills

Precognition-10 [4]; Pyrokinesis-10 [4]; Suggest-14 [12]; Telereceive-14 [12]; Telesend-14 [12].

Biography

Just outside Point Pleasant, West Virginia, is a place the locals call "TNT." Formerly a bird sanctuary, the area later served as a depot for wartime explosives. Today, several industrial biochemistry companies own parts of the area. For the local youth, TNT is a great hangout for drinking and making out. It's also the only place where anyone got a good look at the Mothman.

On November 14, 1966, two young couples out for a drive in a '57 Chevy spotted a shadowy figure next to an old generator plant. The door to the plant was apparently ripped off its hinges. In her description of the tall figure, Linda Scarberry focused on its eyes: "They were hypnotic. For a minute, we could only stare at it. I couldn't take my eyes off it."

The kids headed for the highway as fast as their car would go. The Mothman gave chase. The car zoomed along at 100 miles an hour, but the creature dogged their every turn, never once flapping its wings (so it has Flight instead of Winged Flight). It finally broke off when they reached the city.

Terrified, the two couples reported the incident to the police. Deputy Millard Halstead accompanied them back to TNT to investigate. They found no sign of the Mothman, although a couple parked in the area mentioned a big bird – they called it a "monster" – had pecked on their windshield and given them a terrible fright. When Halstead tried to report back via his police radio, only a loud screech issued from the speaker.

The next day, the police received several sightings of the same "bird." It even swooped just over the top of a car on the highway. In each case, the people felt an unnatural terror. On November 16, the *Point Pleasant Register* reported the incidents of the night before, dubbing the creature "Mothman" for the first time. In the following year, over 100 more sightings were reported. All agreed on the basic form of the creature, and all agreed the creature filled them with abject terror.

During that time, dogs began to disappear, mostly around the TNT area. Sometimes, they were never found; sometimes, their bodies were found mutilated. In one case, searchers



found a dog's charred body, but the area around it was untouched by flames.

Mary Hyre, editor of the *Register*, had a nightmare in which "a lot of people were drowning in the river and Christmas packages were floating everywhere." On November 19, 1967, the Silver Bridge collapsed under a heavy load of holiday shoppers. Some blame this tragedy on the Mothman (or several *Mothmen*). They theorize that the monster used its wings to set up a resonance with the 44-year-old bridge, causing it to collapse and sending 46 people to their deaths in the icy water of the Ohio River.

Many of these 46 people had previously reported seeing the Mothman. Since the collapse, there have been few sightings of the Mothman.

Motivations

The Mothman may be a reclusive freak of nature with a penchant for raw dog. Some theorize that he engineered the collapse of the Silver Bridge to get rid of as many witnesses as possible.

But perhaps it is the product of a curse placed 200 years earlier by the Shawnee Chief Cornstalk. In the mid-18th century, Cornstalk attempted to expel white settlers by force, then by negotiation. Finally, the settlers murdered Cornstalk and his son. Rumor has it that his dying words were a curse on Point Pleasant, a curse that would bear fruit 200 years hence.

Encountered

A creature of night and the darkness, the Mothman is at its scariest when the characters don't see him coming. . . especially if they never get a really good look at him at all. A short series of adventures built around Mothman sightings could work well in a modern setting or the recent past. Any number of possible explanations can lead investigators astray in their quest for the truth.

The Mothman works well in a small-town **GURPS Horror** campaign. Provincial, conservative, and comfortable, the locals have enjoyed a quite life for two centuries. Nothing odd ever happens here, and they like it that way. The Mothman knows just how to upset such a town. It would begin by terrorizing a few high-school kids and gradually grow bolder as gawkers and tourists come to catch a glimpse of it. One by one, locals and visitors would have a brush with the monster, and some of them might begin to act oddly as the Mothman's mental powers take hold and grow. Just what will the neighbors think about their new kooky behavior?

Further Reading

Keel, John A. *The Mothman Prophecies* (Illuminet Press, 1991).

— Jan B. Berends

Specimen Alpha-39

509 points

25' long, 1,945 lbs. A large alligator with faintly glowing red eyes.

ST: 40 [106]* **DX:** 15 [30] **Speed:** 7.25

IQ: 8 [60] **HT:** 14/38 [110]

Move: 8 (Swimming) 5 (Running)

Dodge: 8

* No Fine Manipulators, -40%

Advantages

Alligator [87]; Cast Iron Stomach [15]; Chameleon $\times 2$ [14]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 5 [15]; Danger Sense [15]; Disease-Resistant [5]; Empathy [15]; Infravision [15]; Intuition [15]; No Innumerate [5]; No Presentient [20]; No Sleepy [10]; No Social Stigma [15]; Temperature Tolerance (Cold) 2 [2]; Versatile [5].

Disadvantages

Enemy (Dr. Carmen Laws: single formidable individual with helpers; on a 9 or less) [-20]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Reputation -4 (Sewer monster; sewer dwellers) [-7]; Semi-Literacy [-5].

Quirks

Likes to play cat-and-mouse games with its prey. [-1]

Alligator 87 points

Attributes: ST +8 (No Fine Manipulators) [54]; DX +2 [20]; IQ -7 [-60]; HT +2 [20].

Advantages: Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Taste and Smell +3 [6]; Alertness +6 [30]; Amphibious [10]; DR 2 [6]; DR +2 (Limitation: Except on stomach -20%) [5]; Early Maturation [5]; Enhanced Move (Swimming) +20% [2]; Extra Hit Points +8 [40]; Four Legs [5]; Nictating Membrane $\times 1$ [10]; Night Vision [10]; Oxygen Storage [14]; PD 1 [25]; PD +2 (Limitation: except on stomach -20%) [40]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Striker (Reach 1) [10]; Subsonic Speech [20].

Disadvantages: Attentive [-1]; Bestial [-10]; Cold-Blooded [-5]; Color Blindness [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Hidebound [-5]; Horizontal [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Increased Life Support [-10]; Innumerate [-5]; Mute [-25]; No Fine Manipulators [-30]; Obdurate [-10]; Presentient [-20]; Reduced Move (Land) -2 [-10]; Short Arms [-10]; Sleepy (50%) [-10]; Social Stigma (Barbarian) [-15].

Natural Skills: Stealth (P/A)-DX [2]; Survival (Fresh-Water Lake, River/Stream, or Swampland, specialized) (M/A)-IQ+3/IQ+9 [10].

Skills

Area Knowledge (Manhattan sewer system)-12 [8].

Languages

English (Native)-8 [0].

Biography

In the early years of the 21st century, BioSync Industries established a research facility in western New Jersey. Its stated aim was to find biotech answers to problems faced by the agricultural sector.

This was not the entire truth.

BioSync was a cover operation, funded by devious means through the US government. While it did perform some of the research it advertised, its *actual* purpose was the creation of genetically altered creatures for military use. One such creature, code-named Project Alpha, started with an alligator from the swamps of Florida.

A genetic sample was taken and modified. Genes from other crocodilians and reptiles were added for greater size and heartier constitution. Other species, such as the chameleon, were tapped for their unique abilities. Mammalian genes were added to change the heart from three-chambered to four, increasing the resultant creature's vitality and energy. In addition, they increased the alligator's brain size and complexity.

Then came the surgical modifications. Flexible plates composed of Kevlar and carbon fiber were implanted to augment its thick hide, along with thermographic sensors to increase its visual sense.

In tests, Alpha-39 performed admirably. Its absolute obedience and docility impressed the researchers.

In fact, the only one to show any reservations was Dr. Carmen Laws, head of security for Project Alpha. She had made it clear that she didn't like the creature. Not that she had anything against alligators in general, but every time she made eye contact with the immense form floating in its special heated pond, she got the feeling that something malevolent was looking back at her, something far more intelligent than they gave it credit for. She had little faith in the training methods used to ensure their charges never turned on them. However, as she was merely security and not actually working on the project, all objections she put forth were ignored. She lobbied for, and got, extra safety interlocks for the containment area – if just to quell her constant stream of concerns.

Her worst fears came to pass at a Christmas staff party. A couple of researchers, thinking to liven the party up, drunkenly disabled the safety interlocks and got Alpha-39 out of its pen. Their plan was to leash the creature and lead it through the party like an oversized dog; such was its apparent tractability that they felt perfectly safe in doing so.

Someone heard the abruptly cut-off screams and called security. Dr. Laws was one of the first on the scene; one man was dead and his friend was mortally wounded. Ignoring the stricken researchers, she followed the trail of bloody alligator



clawprints until they petered out. Contacting the main security station, she called for an immediate and total lockdown. Doors slammed all over the facility.

Then suddenly, inexplicably, some sprang open again, to the accompaniment of fire alarms.

The security cameras told the tale: for some reason, the creature had swung its tail at a fire-alarm button and set it off, triggering an automatic safety measure that negated the lockdown mechanism. From there it found its way from the facility and disappeared.

Project Alpha was terminated, and Carmen was fired from BioSync. Finding a make-work office job in Manhattan, Dr. Laws even contemplated suicide for a while, until she heard the rumors about a monster living in the sewers – a monster that ate people. She knew exactly what was and what must be done. If she could recover the creature – or its corpse – she might be able to leverage her way back into BioSync. This time, she would not fail.

Motivations

Alpha-39 is interested only in staking out its territory and defending it against interlopers. The creature understands that Dr. Laws, or anyone else who knows BioSync's secrets, may

attempt to recapture or kill it. Thus, it will be especially ruthless when dealing with any trespassers who seem to be affiliated with BioSync in any way.

It understands the rudiments of spoken English and can even read in a halting fashion. Quite often it will trail behind its prospective prey, listening to their conversations and making appropriate plans.

Encountered

The PCs may be exploring the sewers on their own initiative, seeking answers to some mystery or other, when they stumble into Alpha-39's territory. Imagine a cat-and-mouse game, played out in dank, echoing sewer tunnels as they attempt to escape to open air – the stuff of a true horror movie.

Alternatively, the characters could be hired by Dr. Carmen Laws, who tells them of an "escaped organism" that must be tracked and captured, or killed if capture is impossible. She would be likely to give them less-than-complete information, especially downplaying the danger of the situation. If her pawns can kill the creature, but are themselves killed in the process, this would neatly tie up loose ends.

– Alan Atkinson

Spring-Heeled Jack

360 points

A tall figure with fiery red eyes and metallic claws, usually wearing a cloak and horned helmet with something resembling sheepskin or oilskin underneath.

ST: 12 [20]	DX: 16 [80]	Speed: 7.5
IQ: 12 [20]	HT: 14 [45]	Move: 7
Dodge: 8	Parry: 13 (Brawling)	

Advantages

3D Spatial Sense [10]; Breathe Fire [20]; Catfall [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 8 [24]; Fit [5]; Night Vision [10]; PD 2 [50]; Sharp Claws [25]; Super Jump 4 [40].

Disadvantages

Bully [-10]; Callous [-6]; Compulsive Behavior (Frightens people) [-15]; Enemy (Police and vigilantes) [-20]; Hideous [-20]; Reputation -3 (As a dangerous villain, in and near London) [-8].

Quirks

Likes to attack women; Trickster. [-2]

Skills

Acrobatics-20 [32]; Area Knowledge (England)-13 [2]; Area Knowledge (London)-15 [6]; Brawling-18 [4]; Camouflage-12 [1]; Disguise-11 [1]; Jumping-20 [16]; Stealth-15 [1]; Survival (Urban)-13 [4].

Languages

English (Native)-12 [0].

Biography

One evening in September, 1837, on the outskirts of London, a businessman walking home from work was accosted by a strange figure. As the man passed a cemetery, his attacker leaped over the high fence. Landing in front of his victim, the figure revealed a horrible face with pointed features and glowing red eyes. The businessman fled.

On the following evening, three young girls walking passed the same cemetery also encountered the strange figure, who proceeded to attack one of the girls. He tore at her clothes with metallic claws and groped her body. The same clawed, leaping, fiery-eyed man continued to attack over the next few months, usually going after young ladies, but also bounding in front of carriages and frightening any who saw him.

Reports of these encounters agreed that he had pointed ears or horns, a pointed nose, and red protruding eyes. He wore a helmet and a tight-fitting costume underneath a cloak or cape. After one escape during which the figure leaped over a 9-foot wall, investigators found footprints. They were 3 inches deep where the menace had landed, and contained odd

imprints which suggested some sort of mechanism on the bottom of his shoes. As word of the attacks spread, the villain became known as Spring-Heeled Jack.

By 1838, Spring-Heeled Jack had moved into London proper. After an attack on two women in Limehouse, the authorities began to take the tales of this strange criminal seriously. Spring-Heeled Jack was declared a public nuisance and the Duke of Wellington came out of retirement to help patrol for the villain. This was at the height of Spring-Heeled Jack's activity, and he was often sighted leaping over rooftops and climbing buildings.

On February 22, 1838, 18-year-old Jane Alsop answered a knock on her door. A man in a black cloak exclaimed, "For God's sake, bring a light, for we have caught Spring-Heeled Jack in the lane!" When Jane returned with a candle, she realized that the man's features were those of Spring-Heeled Jack himself. Blinding her with a blast of flame, Jack tore at her clothes, fleeing only when Jane's sisters managed to pull her back into the house. A week later, he tried the same trick at the home of a Mr. Ashworth. This time, his intended victims were not fooled; Spring-Heeled Jack retreated and seemed to vanish for over a year.

Spring-Heeled Jack made brief returns throughout the 1840s and 1850s. In an unusually lethal encounter in 1845, he killed a prostitute by throwing her from a bridge. His next major appearance was in 1877, at Aldershot North Camp. On an August night, he appeared before Private John Reagan, who was on sentry duty. He slapped Reagan's face and leapt away. A month later, Jack terrorized the village of Lincolnshire, where angry locals fired at him with shotguns. The buckshot had no effect.

Appearances by Spring-Heeled Jack became increasingly rare at the end of the 19th century. He was sighted in 1904 and 1920, and there are claims of him showing up in America a few times since then. The case of Spring-Heeled Jack has never been laid to rest, and though he may make less of a scene than he used to, he has not disappeared completely.

Monster?

Many have speculated that Spring-Heeled Jack is some sort of alien, demon, or other unnatural creature. In this case, he must have a means to disguise his true nature most of the time, since he lived in or near London for many years. Given his very humanoid appearance, this could be accomplished with a higher Disguise skill. Sightings of Jack span 150 years, so he must have a long life span (if he is not immortal). A monstrous Jack might have many other abilities as well.

Man?

The most common theory of Spring-Heeled Jack's origins is that he was simply a man – or probably many men over the years – wearing a costume with gadgets. Such an outfit would give the wearer increased ST and DX, Breathe Fire, Catfall, Claws, Night Vision, Super Jump 3, and Hideous Appearance, as well as providing PD 2 and DR 8. As a piece

of super equipment, it would cost 147 points (see p. SU68) and the wearer would be hiding a Secret worth -20 points.

Machine?

Rather than a collection of gadgets, Spring-Heeled Jack could be an automaton, built to terrorize London. This mechanical man would be at least Complexity 5 and probably sentient. As with all clockwork characters, this Jack would also have Absolute Timing, Doesn't Sleep, Eidetic Memory 2, High Pain Threshold, Immunity to Disease, Lightning Calculator, Mathematical Ability, and No Natural Healing, costing a total of 100 points.

The creator of Spring-Heeled Jack, automaton or costume, would be a Gadgeteer with Mechanic and Engineer skills at high levels. It would require at least a few levels of Wealth to sponsor such a creation and the possession of High Technology.

Encountered

An encounter with Spring-Heeled Jack is usually far more terrifying than harmful. He shows up only to frighten, and prefers to flee rather than fight. Jack is crafty, however, and could be dangerous if cornered. A group of PCs attempting to uncover his identity and bring him to justice may push him to more extreme acts in order to protect himself.

Further Reading

Haining, Peter, *The Legend and Bizarre Crimes of Spring Heeled Jack* (Muller, 1977).

— Joe Taylor

Who Was Spring-Heeled Jack?

When Spring-Heeled Jack first appeared on the scene, the prime suspect was Henry, Marquis of Waterford. Waterford liked practical jokes, hated women, and was wealthy enough to have funded Spring-Heeled Jack's creation. In 1838, a witness also claimed to have seen an embroidered 'W' on Jack's cloak. However, Jack made many prominent appearances after Waterford's death in 1859. Even if Waterford himself was not Spring-Heeled Jack, he might have arranged for someone (or something) else to be the leaping prankster.

Adventures

Though Spring-Heeled Jack was often violent, there has been only one murder attributed to him in over 150 years of sightings. But what if his habits were to change? A Spring-Heeled Jack on a killing spree would be a nightmare for any city in any age. It would naturally fall to the PCs to put an end to Jack's reign of terror once and for all.

Perhaps a PC is a distant relative's sole heir. Among the inheritance is a large trunk containing a helmet, mask, cloak, and a strange pair of boots . . .

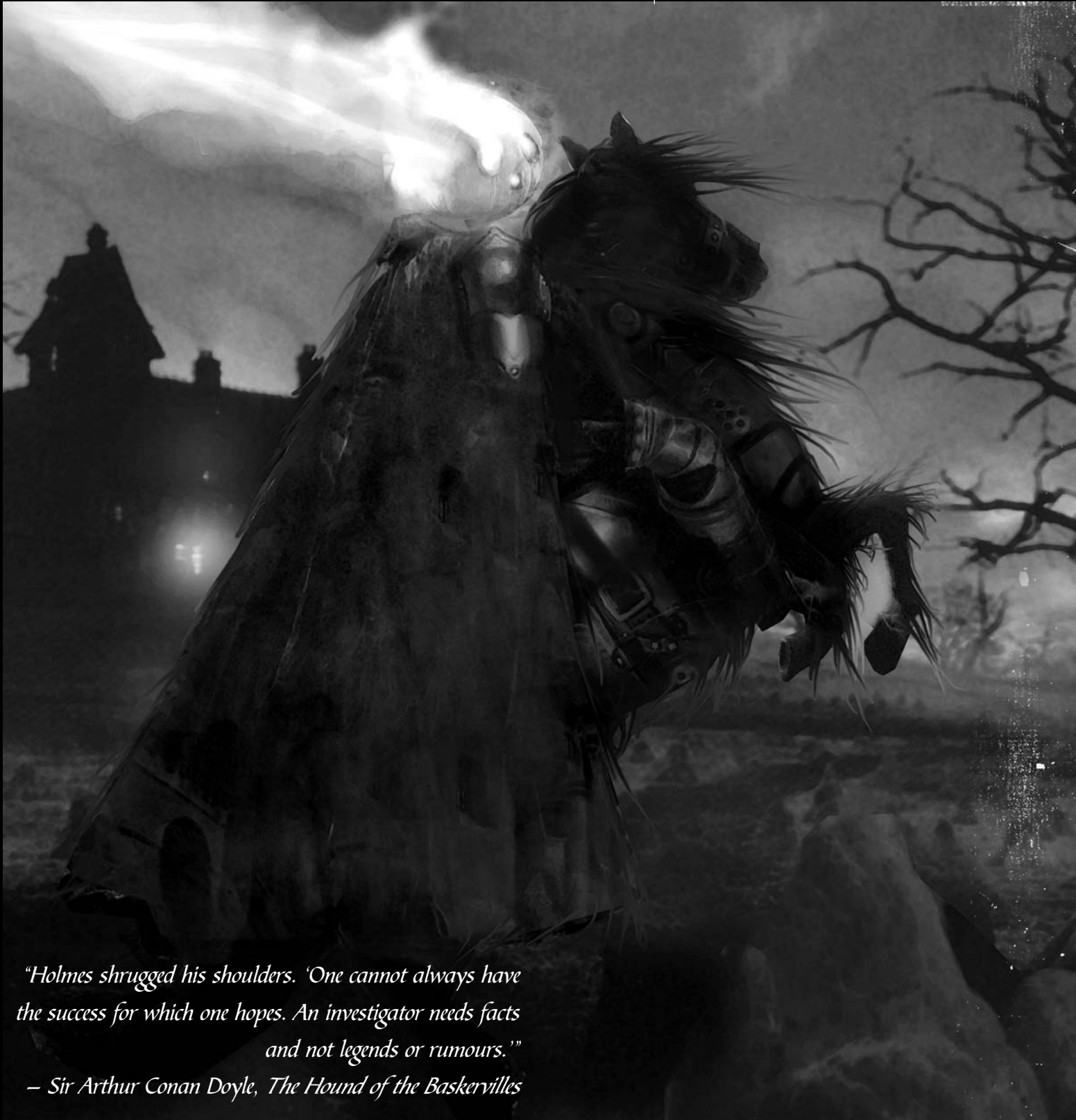
*Tie myself to an umbrella and jump
over the Corner Grate! Excuse me,
there are a great many pleasanter
roads to the devil than that.*

— Mark Twain, *A Tramp Abroad*



LEGENDS OF LITERATURE

CHAPTER 3



"Holmes shrugged his shoulders. 'One cannot always have the success for which one hopes. An investigator needs facts and not legends or rumours.'"
— Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*



This chapter and the next contain monsters that were created “for entertainment purposes only.” Epitomized by the Shelleys and the Stokers of Gothic literature, this literary tradition goes back much further, to the traditional sagas of Europe. Grendel (p. 66), for instance, comes to these pages from the Anglo-Saxon epic *Beowulf*, and Dante’s Geryon (p. 64) hails from the 1300s. And the tradition is still alive today: see Shub-Internet (p. 74) for a thoroughly modern example.

Because the writer pulls all the strings here, literary monsters do not normally jump out into the street and demonstrate their full power on the closest bystanders. No, the creature and its abilities are revealed over the course of several encounters. The GM should follow the writer’s lead, with literary monsters or with monsters from other sources. The players’ imaginations will usually fill in the unknown with much more macabre details than the GM – and a flexible GM can adapt the creature to include some of the juicier morsels provided by the players.

Monster literature today forms a sub-genre of horror, with the lion’s share of pages devoted to vampires of various descriptions; fittingly, Dracula’s entry spans twice the number of pages of the others here. Werewolves, ghosts, and zombies can still be found on the bookshelves, but the challenge many horror writers (and, hopefully, horror GMs) face is creating wholly new monsters to terrorize their heroes and surprise their readers (or players).

Tracking Back to the Source

One reason to draw your monsters from literature is that there is so *much* literature to use; with a little digging, a creative GM can uncover many vile foes to set against the stalwart band of heroes. Even the more famous stories, such as *Beowulf*, contain surprises for people who only know the tales through reputation – how many people remember that Grendel’s mother nearly slew Beowulf to avenge her son?

Archetypes and Expectations

The advantage of using established archetypes (or the creatures themselves!) is instant recognition. Players who hear about a tall, pale man who only comes out at night and has no reflection know that they are facing a vampire, and the GM doesn’t have to go to a great deal of work setting up this adversary. However, this can be a major disadvantage as well, as the party goes shopping for garlic, wooden stakes, and crucifixes, and stops inviting strangers in for tea.

Additionally, a GM who consistently relies on players’ preconceptions to do his work is in danger of becoming lazy . . . to say nothing of confusing his players when he leaves out something crucial.

The GM’s task, at this point, is to use the players’ expectations against them. To continue with our example, Dracula has powers which are not part of the vampire legend; more important, he lacks many of the common weaknesses of other vampires – he is perfectly able to cross running water, for instance. Players who know the archetype better than the actual literary source of a creature may be in for a rude jolt . . .

Kid’s Stuff

Other creatures have been watered down in modern times, becoming mere shadows of the horrific originals. The Big Bad Wolf is a clear example; decades of cartoons have made him a buffoon, easily outwitted by Red Riding Hood and her canny grandmother. In the original story, he’s a crafty predator, who forces his way into Grandmother’s house, then sets a sophisticated trap for Little Red-Cap.

Many of the Grimm brothers’ fairy tales have suffered this evisceration. Over time, as society has moved to shelter children more from “adult” ideas, the Grimms’ tales have become tamer, even to the point of being cute. Many of the original stories are violent, even genuinely frightening – and many people today are only familiar with the versions they heard as children, versions which are considerably different than the traditional stories! (Consider the spectacle of Cinderella’s stepsisters carving up their own feet in order to fit into the slipper . . .) Setting up a story which all the players think they know, and then taking it in a horrifying new (or, rather, old) direction can lead to some of the most memorable monsters of all.

Where Do They Come From?

The oldest part of our brains, the hindbrain of limbic system, wellspring of our fight-or-flight reflex, is sometimes claimed as the source of our monsters, not so much Unreason reclaiming ground from Reason as the Primitive asserting its continuing strength over the Sophisticated.

– Peter Nichols, “Monster Movies,” in
The Encyclopedia of Science Fiction

The Big Bad Wolf

191 points

Age indeterminate; 6'6" long; 175 lbs. A large gray wolf that appears quite normal on first glance, although closer inspection reveals that his front paws are actually quite like furred human hands. He usually travels on all fours, but he is capable of walking on his hind legs for short periods of time.

ST: 10 [0]	DX: 14 [45]	Speed: 6.5
IQ: 15 [60]	HT: 12 [20]	Move: 9
Dodge: 8	Parry: 9 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Alertness +1 [5]; Charisma +3 [15]; Claws [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Discriminatory Smell (Works as Empathy within 2 hexes; +50%) [23]; Enhanced Dodge [15]; Enhanced Move (Running) $\times 1/2$ [5]; Gobbling (bought as Webbing, Instantaneous +20%, Damage to the "webbing" is taken by the character -50%) [14]; Penetrating Call [5]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Thick Fur [29]; Ultrahearing [5]; Unaging [15]; Venom (Corrosive, Accessibility: only vs. Gobbled victims -75%) [4]; Versatile [5]; Voice [10].

Disadvantages

Callous [-6]; Cowardice [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Gluttony [-5]; Lecherousness [-15]; Loner [-5]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats humans) [-15]; Odious Personal Habit (Pedophilia)

[-15]; Sadism [-15]; Secret (He's no ordinary wolf and is actually quite dangerous) [-30]; Semi-Upright [-5]; Sleepy (50%) [-10]; Social Stigma (Barbarian) [-15].

Quirks

Attracted to human women; Careful; Controlling and subversive; Prefers seducing prey to devouring it immediately. [-4]

Skills

Acting-17 [10]; Area Knowledge (The Woods)-15 [1]; Brawling-14 [1]; Cooking-14 [1/2]; Diplomacy-17 [1/2]*; Disguise-13 [1/2]; Fast-Talk-22 [10]*; Mimicry (Human speech)-12 [2]; Occultism-16 [4]; Orienteering 13 [1/2]; Running-14 [16]; Savoir-Faire-16 [1/2]*; Sex Appeal-16 [6]*; Stealth-14 [2]; Survival (Woodlands)-13 [1/2]; Swimming-13 [1/2]; Tracking-13 [1/2].

* Diplomacy and Fast-Talk include +3 from Charisma. Diplomacy, Savoir-Faire, and Sex Appeal include +2 from Voice.

Languages

French (Native)-15 [0].

The Wolf's powers of seduction are largely modeled through advantages (Charisma and Voice) and skills (Diplomacy, Fast-Talk, and Sex Appeal), but he seems to have complete control over his victims. The Hypnotism skill or psionic powers of suggestion may be in order.



Variations

The story of the Big Bad Wolf has scared generations of children, but it's just a fairy tale. Or is it? What if there's something deeper – and darker – lurking in the subtext?

Hellhound

"Little Red Riding Hood" was a popular tale among the French peasantry, especially during the witch hunts of the 16th century. Many events in the story point to the more sinister Big Bad Wolf portrayed here over the comical nemesis of modern cartoons and children's stories.

When the Wolf and Red Riding Hood split paths in the woods, the Wolf chooses "the path of pins," a possible allusion to the pinprick test used in witch hunts to bring out the "Devil's mark." When Red arrives at the cottage, the Wolf tricks her into eating the flesh and blood of her own grandmother, an act that mocks the Christian Mass. When a cat in the story calls the girl a "slut" for this, it acts as her familiar, further evidence of her seduction into witchcraft. Her journey is complete when she voluntarily removes and burns all of her clothing – symbolically leaving her former life behind – and gets into bed with the Wolf, implying acts of bestiality, lesbianism, and incest (he was dressed as her grandmother) – all three unthinkable to the 16th-century peasant. The Wolf had truly devoured her on more than one level.

In this light, the Big Bad Wolf is an avatar of the Devil himself. He *is* mortal, as signified by his fear of the local woodcutters (and the heroic hunter added by the Grimms), but he is also a master at smooth talking and seduction.

An entire campaign could be crafted around this idea. When local girls begin disappearing from villages bordering the woods, adventurous clergymen and townspeople might well decide to find out why. When they find the half-man, half-wolf responsible, they might be able to deter him, perhaps even destroy him. But they might be convinced. They might just join him.

The Global Village

Variants of "Little Red Riding Hood" exist all over the world, from France to Italy to China, and the Big Bad Wolf is not always the villain. In some of the stories, the Wolf is replaced by a true werewolf, an ogre, or even an old crone. Are these simply different individuals who merely happen to operate in a similar manner? Or is the connection somewhat darker? Perhaps these monsters are all avatars of the same dark power. Or maybe the Big Bad Wolf has some shapeshifting ability and likes to travel. Whatever the case, a band of heroes might just take it upon themselves to investigate these similarities – and to deal with the threats for good.

These stats assume that this Big Bad Wolf and the one in "The Three Little Pigs" are different individuals – the latter was much less subtle and cunning than his namesake in "Little Red Riding Hood." GMs may make them the same creature by adding a knack for the Air Jet spell (p. M34) or several levels of the Wind Jet power (p. SU65).

The Wolf depicted here is a much darker villain than the one popularized in modern retellings of the "Red Riding Hood" story. For that version, remove Sadism and lower the various influence skills (and possibly IQ). The modern Big Bad Wolf dies in the story, killed by a heroic hunter.

Biography

Some say he is the epitome of the uncivilized native, the wild man displaced by his civilized descendants. Others claim he is the unbridled id, the lust and anger, impulses and passions that modern men keep safely hidden away. These people are wrong.

By chance, a little girl in a red hood happened to cross paths with the Wolf one day. Food was scarce – he hadn't eaten in three days – but nearby woodsmen put a quick meal out of the question. He would have to use other methods. He would have to seduce her.

He asked her where she was going. She explained that her grandmother was ill and that she was bringing her some goodies from home; she even pointed out the way. He encouraged her to gather flowers for her grandmother, and he dashed to the old woman's home. He would eat well today.

He pretended to be the girl, and the grandmother fell for it. He devoured her immediately, then donned the old woman's bedclothes and waited in the bed. When the girl arrived, he pretended to be her grandmother, hoarse from her sickness. He fooled the girl into eating her grandmother's flesh and even drinking her blood. Then he told her to burn her clothing and get into bed with him. She did so willingly.

The girl remarked on his large body, so unlike her grandmother's. His big eyes? To see her better. His big legs? To run better. His big teeth? The better to eat her.

And he did.

Encountered

The Big Bad Wolf steers clear of mankind when he can. He isn't weak, but a party of strong men can easily overcome him. Instead, he prefers to watch and wait. Once he identifies a weakling or straggler, he moves in for the kill. If he can consume the victim outright (with his Gobbling ability), excellent – but sometimes it takes a little finesse. And he's got that, in spades.

Further Reading

Grimm, Jakob and Grimm, Wilhelm. "Little Red Cap." Lang, Andrew, ed. *The Blue Fairy Book* (Dover, 1975).

Warner, Marina. *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Tales and Their Tellers* (Noonday Press, 1996).

– Brian C. Smithson

The Doppelgänger

231 points

Currently appears as a heavysset 50ish businessman with a ruddy complexion and graying hair and mustache.

ST: 12 [20] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 5.75
IQ: 14 [45] **HT:** 10 [0] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 6

Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]; Ally Group (Street “cleaners”, 9 or less) [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Hard to Kill +2 [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Language Talent +3 [6]; Mimicry [15]; Morph (Person imitated acquires previous form, +100%) [80]; Status 1 [0]*; Unaging [15]; Wealth (Very Wealthy) [30].

* Free from Very Wealthy.

Disadvantages

Frightens Animals [-5]; Murder Addiction [-60]; Sadism [-15]; Secret (Murderous monster) [-30].

Quirks

Keeps a scrapbook of his exploits; Prefers to impersonate men; Wary of holy items. [-3]

Skills

Accounting-14 [4]; Acting-15 [4]; Administration-15 [4]; Bard-13 [1]; Driving (Auto)-13 [2]; Fast-Talk-14 [2]; Forgery-16 [8]; Guns (Pistol)-15 [1]; History-13 [2]; Knife-13 [1]; Law-12 [1]; Linguistics-14 [1]; Lockpicking-13 [1]; Merchant-13 [1]; Poisons-13 [2]; Politics-13 [1]; Research-13 [1]; Riding-12 [1]; Savoir-Faire-16 [0]*; Shadowing-14 [2]; Stealth-14 [4]; Survival (Urban)-13 [1].

* Free from Status.



Languages

English-16 [1/2]; French-17 [1]; German (Native)-18 [0]; Italian-16 [1/2]; Polish-16 [1/2]; Russian-16 [1/2].

Biography

In 1815, a young clerk who had failed miserably in business cursed God for his misfortune while drowning his sorrows at a Hamburg pub. His frustration at his lack of success had recently cost him his fiancée, and he slid rapidly downhill.

Stumbling in late to work the next morning, the young man was astounded to see *himself*, smartly dressed and working diligently at his books. The shock and horror of this vision sent him right back out into the street and he watched, incredulous, as his double calmly and professionally finished the workday, earning itself a look of praise the young man had never seen from his crotchety old employer. As the thing that wore his face left work and headed toward his flat, he resolved to confront the apparition.

Before he could do so, the young man was seized by police officers, who called him by a name not his own. As they dragged him away, he saw his own reflection in a shop window, and terror gripped him. Another man's face stared back at him – whatever had stolen his form had given him someone else's! The charge was murder, the police informed him, and his insane rambling about a ghostly double drew no sympathy from the court.

At his public hanging, the doomed man waited quietly on the gallows, subdued by despair. He gazed out at the thin

crowd of gawkers and saw a well-dressed young couple passing by. His former fiancée walked arm in arm with his double, who smiled faintly at him as the trapdoor was sprung.

Since then, the doppelgänger has moved from life to life, first building up and then destroying his unsuspecting victims in a cruel game of unnatural leapfrog. He can never stay in any one place too long before the bodies start piling up, but he also never wants for victims in a world so filled with despair. Recently, he's taken on the persona of Wall Street financier Gary Bishop and is enjoying a turnaround in his investments.

Motivations

The doppelgänger thrives on despair. Failure and frustration attract him like a vulture to rotting meat. His nature is brutal, tempered by a fine appreciation of the nuances of human suffering. A favorite escapade is to take the shape of a man wallowing in self-pity and succeed where he failed, rubbing the victim's face in his success. Almost all victims find themselves the prime suspects in the murder investigations that invariably follow in the monster's wake.

However, causing pain and suffering is not the only motivation of the doppelgänger. He is a creature much aware of his current situation, and he prefers comfort and pleasure over squalor. He seeks out men who have not lost all standing, but rather are teetering on the edge of total failure. His intelligence and experience, brought to bear on any business or personal problem, can often turn their problems in his favor.

Although he finds it amusing when his victims are accused of his crimes, it does not always work out so neatly. As a backup, the doppelgänger maintains a network of street contacts and uses them to make problems disappear. He takes little care to cover his tracks, counting on his next victim to take the heat.

Encountered

The doppelgänger will most likely enter the campaign by supplanting an important NPC, preferably a PC's Patron or Ally. The GM can prepare for his entrance by hinting that the NPC has fallen on hard times, and may even allow the PCs to believe that they are responsible for his sudden comeback.

If the doppelgänger finds himself in a position of sufficient power, it may even amuse him to allow the NPC to come to the heroes in his new guise and describe his plight. This is especially appropriate for a campaign in which the party reports to and receives instructions from the NPC, such as most *Cyberpunk* or *Black Ops* campaigns. The doppelgänger will produce ample evidence that it is the agents who are up to no good and have become a threat to the organization.

Sources

The doppelgänger originates in German folklore as a representation of the duality of man. The earliest literary appearance is probably *The Devil's Elixir* (c. 1815) by E.T.A. Hoffman. *The Double*, by Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1846), is the inspiration for the character described here.

– Morgan Davey

Other Settings

As he is Unaging, this doppelgänger can appear in virtually any historical context. His skills and languages suggest a European origin, but his high intelligence and language talent lend themselves well to appearances worldwide.

GURPS Old West

Everybody thought Jim Dixon was ruined when a flash flood caught his herd last spring. Heck, he'd been spendin' more time in the Rusty Spike than ol' Pete, the bartender. Now he's working a new herd and people are wondering how he got that big loan from tight-fisted Doc Brubaker. But the Doc's gone missing. . .

GURPS Steampunk

Who'd have thought that the Pneumatic Mule wouldn't be a runaway hit? Benjamin Hoagland's backers sure counted on it . . . until that German, Detwiller, started selling his Triple-Expansion Mechanical Clydesdale. Ben was left with a warehouse full of Pneu-Mules and a mountain of debt. But Detwiller's tragic trampling under one of his own creations made the Steam Clydesdales seem a lot less attractive, and brought Hoagland back from the brink. Now workers are dying mysteriously in the Hoagland factory, but Mr. Hoagland doesn't feel there's any call for alarm.

Apparent age varies; 5'11", 165 lbs. A tall, thin man with sharp, aquiline features. He has a high forehead and bushy eyebrows. Most noticeable are his vivid red lips and his pale skin tone.

ST: 23 [30] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 7.75
IQ: 13 [30] **HT:** 18 [30] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 8 (Brawling) 5 (Sword)
Block: 6

Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]; Allies (Three enslaved vampiric "brides," 401-450 points each) [120]; Ally Group (Slovak gypsies, medium-sized group, fairly often) [20]; Filthy Rich [50]; Magery (Star-Aspected) 2 [5]; Status 6 [25]*; Stoker Vampire [464]; Strong Will +4 [16].

* Includes +1 for Wealth.

Disadvantages

Reputation (As a vampire, -4 to Transylvanian peasants, all of the time) [-10].

Quirks

Arrogant; Careful; Drawn to victimize young women; Unaware of full extent of powers. [-4]

Skills

Acting-16 [8]; Administration-14 [4]; Animal Handling-12 [2]; Area Knowledge (The Balkans)-15 [4]; Area Knowledge (England)-13 [1]; Bow-12 [2]; Brawling-12 [1/2]; Broadsword-11 [1/2]; Cooking-12 [1/2]; Diplomacy-12 [2]; Disguise-12 [1]; History-14 [6]; Intimidation-16 [2]; Jumping-12 [1/2]; Lance-11 [1/2]; Law-10 [1/2]; Leadership-16 [2]; Mathematics-11 [1]; Politics-11 [1/2]; Riding (Horse)-13 [2]; Running-16 [1]; Savoir-Faire-15 [0]*; Shield-12 [1/2]; Stealth-11 [1/2]; Strategy-16 [10]; Tactics-14 [5 1/2]; Tracking-12 [1]; Whip-14 [4].

* Free from Status.

Languages

English-12 [1]; French-11 [1/2]; German-12 [1]; Hungarian-12 [1]; Italian-11 [1/2]; Latin-11 [1/2]; Romanian (Native)-13 [0]; Serbian-11 [1/2]; Slovonian-12 [1]; Turkish-13 [2].

Innate Spells

All at 21 (includes +2 for Magery): Beast Summoning (Bats, rats, foxes, wolves, owls, and moths only) [4]; Bird Control (Owls only) [4]; Body of Air [4]; Daze [4]; Enslave (Infected victims only) (VH) [8]; Fog [4]; Insect Control (Moths only) [4]; Mammal Control (Bats, rats, foxes, and wolves only) [4]; Shapeshifting (Bat) (VH) [8]; Shapeshifting

(Wolf) (VH) [8]; Snow [4]; Steal Youth (Bite victims only) (VH) [8]; Storm [4]; Suspended Animation (Self only, ends at sunrise) [4]; Telepathy (Enslaved victims only, involuntary) (VH) [8]; Waves [4]; Wind [4].

Biography

Though he is not the original vampire, Count Dracula is doubtless the most famous; his name is almost synonymous with "vampire." His tale is told in the novel *Dracula* by Bram Stoker. An epistolary novel told from the viewpoints of several of Dracula's opponents, the novel reveals how the Count planned to leave the Old World of Transylvania, travel to London, and from there spread his influence until he would be able to freely roam the world. He hires an English solicitor to set up accounts in Europe to give him financial freedom and, taking 50 large boxes of native soil with him, begins his journey.

Dracula's arrival in Whitby demonstrated the effect the Count's hunger could have on a population. During a terrible storm (likely brought on by the Count), the Russian ship *Demeter* ran aground. The captain lashed himself to the wheel before he died; the crew was nowhere to be found. The ship's log was a tale of vanishing crewmen, madness, an unseen stowaway, and weather that brought them quickly to their destination, then turned against them before they could go ashore.

Dracula demonstrated his resourcefulness, cleverness, and cruelty several times. He posed as a god for a madman to gain entry to an asylum, he enlisted multiple hirelings in different countries to diversify his safehouses and to conceal his actions, he victimized the loved ones of his enemies, and he *always* had an escape route. When his enemies exposed too many of his hideaways, he fled to Transylvania, preferring to gather power for another attempt rather than force a confrontation he might lose.

Motivations

The Count is primarily interested only in his own continued prosperity and success. His vast powers are restrained by his extreme caution; he has survived for centuries, and if he is not absolutely sure of victory over a threat, he is willing to retreat and outwait any enemy. This exaggerated caution may seem overdone, but according to Van Helsing, "He is clever and cunning and resourceful, but he be not of man stature as to brain. He be of child brain in much."

His sensual nature has been emphasized more and more as his story has been retold and adapted, but some of this is present in the original tale. He is described as "sensual" looking, and his method of feeding is a mockery of intimacy. While he doesn't restrict himself to female victims, they represent an overwhelming majority. Three former victims, all young, attractive women, reside in his castle. Much of the sensuality in the tale comes from his female victims, who are often referred to as "voluptuous" after their conversion.



Encountered

Dracula does not suffer from many of the weaknesses commonly attributed to vampires. Sunlight does not harm him; while he normally rests on his native soil from sunrise to sunset, he can arise during the day if needed. Encountering Dracula could be a rude awakening for the characters whose players rely on Hollywood too much!

The Count is difficult to kill. Van Helsing's method of killing a vampire was to stake the vampire, behead it, and stuff garlic in its mouth. (It is worth noting that Dracula is "killed" by a quick decapitation by a steel knife. Is it possible he survived the attack and is slowly recovering?) Though it is possible to wound him by conventional means, Van Helsing's thoroughness indicates that special precautions might be required to make his demise permanent.

Van Helsing and crew stopped Dracula by exploiting his caution and dependence upon his limited supply of native soil. *Dracula* is a novel not of combat, but of a game of cat-and-mouse, of investigation and looming deadlines. Dracula's foes should have to work around his allies to unearth his plans and stop them, perhaps even as a prelude to confronting him directly.

Encountered in a modern environment, Dracula will have multiple identities and countless safehouses complete with soil to rest on. He would likely take full advantage of technology, legal protections, and hirelings. Dracula uses others as tools, relying on them to enact his will while he attends to other matters. Upon learning of potential adversaries, Dracula will research them thoroughly. Dracula's primary advantage is his adaptability. If possible, he will avoid any encounter where he is not in control of the events.

Stoker Vampire

464 points

Attributes: ST +10 [110]; HT +5 [60].

Advantages: Bite [30]; Clinging [25]; Creates vampires through sharing blood [0]; Dark Vision [25]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Star-Aspected Magery 1 [8]; Temperature Tolerance 10 [10]; Unaging [15]; Vampiric Invulnerability [150].

Disadvantages: Bloodthirst [-15]; Compulsive Behavior (Can't enter a house for the first time until invited in) [-10]; Dependency (Blood; occasional, daily; ages without it) [-40]; Dependency (Mana; common, constantly) [-25]; Dependency (Suspended animation on native soil) [-60]; Dread (Garlic) [-10]; Dread (Religious symbol within 6 yards) [-15]; Dread (Running water; may be carried into, -50%) [-10]; No Reflection [-10]; No Shadow [-10]; Pallor [-5]; Sadism [-15]; Sterile [-3]; Unhealing [-20]; Vulnerability (Decapitation) [-5]; Vulnerability (Wooden stake, heart shot) [-5].

Innate Spells: All at IQ+5 (includes +1 for Magery): Beast Summoning (Bats, rats, foxes, wolves, owls, and moths only) [12]; Bird Control (Owls only) [12]; Body of Air [12]; Daze [12]; Enslave (Infected victims only) (VH) [24]; Fog [12]; Insect Control (Moths only) [12]; Mammal Control (Bats, rats, foxes, and wolves only) [12]; Shapeshifting (Bat) (VH) [24]; Shapeshifting (Wolf) (VH) [24]; Snow [12]; Steal Youth (Bite victims only) (VH) [24]; Storm [12]; Suspended Animation (Self only, ends at sunrise) [12]; Telepathy (Enslaved victims or master only, involuntary) (VH) [24]; Waves [12]; Wind [12].



Getting Bitten

Dracula leaves it unclear if all of *Dracula*'s victims become vampires. In the one clear case presented, the victim was not only bitten by the Count, but drank of *Dracula*'s own blood from a wound he made in his chest. Since the world would quickly be overrun with vampires if the bite alone created a vampire, new victims only become vampires if they drink a vampire's blood. Because bite victims can be Enslaved, they are usually willing participants in this ritual. *Dracula* is selective in his victims, and apparently only chooses to make young women into vampires.

Someone who has taken part in this gruesome act does not immediately become a vampire. The transformation takes place over a course of weeks, with vampiric nature slowly encroaching between sunset and sunrise. During this time, the victim begins to weaken and "die," eventually reduced to the vampiric nature. This can be represented with a HT roll every sunset with a cumulative -1 each night after the first. A failed roll acts as damage and fatigue that cannot be healed or recovered until the victim dies, becoming a vampire, or is cured of the affliction (by killing the creating vampire). During the night, the infecting vampire can exercise limited control over the victim through the Enslavement, but this ability fades after sunrise. A character in the process of becoming a vampire will exhibit symptoms, such as pallor and larger eyeteeth. From the moment of his infection until he is cured, the victim will have a Dread of religious objects. If the prey is not cured before the transformation is complete, apply the Stoker Vampire template to the character's abilities.

Dracula Is Too Weak

Some GMs may find that *Dracula* doesn't pose a threat to a sophisticated, skilled team of investigators, run by players well-acquainted with the wide range of vampire lore available in the modern world. In these games, the GM can augment the Count in various ways.

Foremost among these is hiding the nature of the opponent. *Dracula* is a more difficult adversary if his foes are unaware he is a vampire, and he can cause them difficulties through his allies and his powers. When animals, lawyers, and the weather turn against you, and friends go missing, a vampire isn't the most obvious enemy.

Another option is to vary the Count's powers, particularly his weaknesses and identifying traits. Perhaps Bram Stoker was a vampire himself, and spread the myth that garlic was a repellent rather than the strength-enhancing berserker drug that it truly is. Maybe *Dracula* is Christian or agnostic; perhaps religious items have to be powered by someone with True Faith. In this case, the PCs must find *Dracula*'s true weaknesses before they can hope to survive a confrontation.

Local authorities are not likely to appreciate vampire-hunting efforts. Sharpened wooden stakes may be against local weapon ordinances; excessive garlic usage might bring about retaliation from neighbors. Religious fanatics of many persuasions might take issue with the characters' sudden and fervent conversion.

Dracula Is Too Strong

Heroes who rely too strongly on a corrupted retelling of the Dracula story, or who don't figure out Dracula's nature, can easily die if they confront the Count directly. They might also disregard important plot elements, unaware of the threat ("Boxes of dirt? Who cares?"). In such cases, they might need a helping hand.

The easiest solution is the same one the Bram Stoker used: a knowledgeable vampire-hunter NPC to supply information. Care should be taken to make sure that the NPC doesn't prevent the characters from gathering facts on their own. Van Helsing was mysterious and often withheld information from the others; any NPC vampire hunter should have similar limits to ensure the enjoyment of the players.

Another solution is to expand Dracula's weaknesses. Maybe Dracula cannot remain long in sunlight. Maybe UV lights prevent his powers from working. Perhaps Dracula finds any number of common foods (or odors) as offensive as garlic.

One more solution, agreeing with the novel's depiction of Dracula, is to have him make classic villain mistakes, particularly in the name of caution. When the Count is in a position to eliminate his enemies, he withdraws; when he could exploit a weakness, he overlooks it. Using this option can add suspense to the game: the heroes may find themselves able to thwart Dracula . . . if he doesn't think to check on one aspect of the plan. The GM should use caution as well, because overplaying Dracula's mistakes can leave the players feeling that they won through blind chance and GM fiat, rather than through their efforts and plans.

Further Reading

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Reed, Gary and Showman, Galen. *Renfield: A Tale of Madness* (Stabur Press, 1995). A graphic novel from the henchman's point of view.

Saberhagen, Fred. *The Dracula Tape* (Warner, 1975). A retelling of the story from the Count's perspective.

Yarbro, Chelsea Quinn. *Sisters of the Night* series, starting with *The Angry Angel* (Avon, 1998). Prequels to the Stoker novel, these books detail Dracula's brides.

You can find an extensive Dracula bibliography online at www.webone.com.au/~nikkiw/dracbib.htm.

GURPS Blood Types and **GURPS Undead** both have information on vampire legends which could be used to vary Dracula's powers; the version here is based on the Gothic Vampire template (p. BT91) and the Vampire template (p. UN83). **GURPS Who's Who 1** includes an entry for Vlad Tepes (p. WWi56), widely (though not conclusively) regarded as the real-life basis for the fictional character.

— Brett Sanger

Dracula Crossovers

Vlad Tepes was born in 1431, but if he wasn't Dracula (or if he wasn't born, and instead was replaced or fabricated by Dracula), the Count could have been around for a very long time. Here are some unexpected places the first undead might appear:

GURPS Imperial Rome

The Roman Empire extended over the Count's domain and beyond. Should Dracula be around, he could be leading his nation in resistance against the invaders . . . or perhaps he is acting as patron to dozens of naive clients, happily weaving his web of manipulation.

GURPS Swashbucklers

Dracula has some problems with water, but a GM can easily correct that. Exchanging his Dread of running water for a Dread of fire, let him shapeshift into a shark rather than a wolf and an albatross instead of a bat, and he becomes a very menacing opponent on the high seas. His weather-control abilities alone make him a deadly enemy – or a powerful ally.

GURPS Illuminati

Who better to be a Secret Master than an immortal? If Dracula isn't calling the shots, perhaps his unknown origins are part of a vast conspiracy. Experiments in immortality, mind control, or demon possession could all explain how such a creature might come about.

GURPS Aztecs

With Huitzilopochtli, a bloodthirsty god who demands human sacrifices, and a prophecy that the world will end with the female demons of twilight swarming out of the night sky to devour humanity, the Aztec world could be a fitting if unusual setting for Dracula. If he really is the Patron of an empire, his foes will have to be clever to avoid ending up as prisoners or sacrifices.

GURPS Reign of Steel

Dracula has a vested interest in keeping humanity around. The heroes might well face a difficult choice . . . working with an inhuman monster against more powerful inhuman monsters.

GURPS Steampunk

Dracula seeks to understand modern technology and culture, if only to protect himself and his food source. A scientific explosion of this magnitude would require his direct attention. This puts an interesting spin on the traditional Dracula tale.

“If I cannot inspire love, I will cause fear.”
– *Frankenstein*, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley

Indeterminate age; 8’, 330 lbs. Stitched together from body parts taken from graveyards, slaughterhouses, and dissecting rooms, Frankenstein’s creation is not easy to look at. Lustrous black hair flows to his shoulders, and his teeth are pearly white and perfectly straight. That these elements are beautiful, alas, only increases the monster’s horrific appearance. He has yellow skin so thin that the muscles and blood vessels are visible beneath. Two eyes sunk deep in their sockets stare out from his shriveled face, and his lips are thin, straight, and gray-black.

ST: 22 [130]	DX: 10 [0]	Speed: 7.0
IQ: 14 [45]	HT: 18 [125]	Move: 14
Dodge: 7	Parry: 9 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Eidetic Memory 1 [30]; Enhanced Move ×1 [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Language Talent +4 [8]; Temperature Tolerance 3 [3]; Toughness (DR 2) [25].

Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]; Bestial [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Enemy (Victor Frankenstein, appears almost all the time) [-30]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Obsession (Vengeance against those who wrong him) [-15]; Reputation -4 (Monstrous killer, among residents of Ingolstadt, recognized sometimes) [-5]; Vow (Vegetarianism) [-5].

Quirks

Appreciates good music. [-1]

Skills

Brawling-14 [16]; Literature-12 [1/2]; Survival (Arctic)-14 [1]; Survival (Mountains)-14 [1]; Swimming-14 [16]; Writing-14 [1].

Languages

English-18 [1]; French-18 [1]; German (Native)-18 [0]; Italian-17 [1/2]; Romansch-17 [1/2].

Biography

Born of arcane science and one man’s lust for power, the Monster heaved his first convulsive breath in a lab on a dreary November night somewhere in Ingolstadt, Bavaria. His creator, Victor Frankenstein, succeeded in animating lifeless matter. This nameless being, abandoned by his creator almost immediately, ventured from the lab to the nearby village where the fear-struck inhabitants attacked him.

He found refuge in a tiny shack next to a small house. The Monster spied on the house’s residents, an old blind man and his two children. Overcome with loneliness, he looked to the family for friendship. At first, he did chores for them secretly under the cover of darkness. One day, though, he approached the blind man when the children were away. The conversation was pleasant and warmed the Monster’s heart. When the children returned they saw not a friend but a horrific fiend, and they beat him until he fled.

His complete isolation from all humans overwhelmed him, and he blamed Victor Frankenstein. The Monster embarked on a campaign of violence against those Frankenstein loved. To escape the Monster’s wrath, Dr. Frankenstein tried to lose himself in the Alps. Tracking him down, the creation confronted him and asked only that the doctor use his skills to create a female companion. Frankenstein agreed; feeling both pity and responsibility for the Monster. He headed to England to complete his second creation. Doubts

“It’s moving!
It’s alive! It’s alive!”

The classic Monster of James Whale’s movies *Frankenstein* and *The Bride of Frankenstein* can lumber into any **GURPS Horror** setting, usually as an adversary. This version of the Monster, made monstrous when Dr. Frankenstein accidentally builds the creature with a criminal’s brain, is far less frightening than its brilliant, but obsessed, creator. (After all, the Monster dies, but Victor and Elizabeth manage to marry.) His statistics would be quite different: a significantly lower IQ (perhaps 7) and DX (8), Undead Invulnerability, and a Dread of fire.



Future Frankensteins

The fears surrounding the unholy creation of the Monster parallel modern anxieties about potential human cloning. While clone armies and psychic clones are staples of science-fiction settings, a single clone being could be the focus of a horrifying near-future scenario, especially if the clone in question is somewhat damaged goods.

Early efforts to enhance humans genetically will likely produce some unpleasant results. A child with enhanced intelligence may be hideously ugly as a side effect. Even if his growth were accelerated, the monstrous infant would need care and nurturing in his infancy. How would his life differ from that of his Gothic prototype?



plagued him as he worked, though. What if the Monster and his new bride hated each other? Worse, what if they spawned a new race? In revulsion, he destroyed his work.

Upon learning of this, the Monster renewed his mission of vengeful terror. On Victor's wedding night, the creature stole into the nuptial bedchamber and killed the new bride. Bereft of love like his creation, Frankenstein became the enraged pursuer and hunted the Monster to the Arctic wastes. However, before he could, Dr. Frankenstein took ill and died in the cabin of an icebound ship. The captain of the ship found the Monster looming over Frankenstein's body. The monster was last seen lumbering across the dark ice to build a pyre on which to immolate himself.

Encountered

In a Gothic horror setting, where prejudice and provincialism are the norm, the Monster's appearance terrifies all who look on him save the blind and those of iron will. GMs may require PCs – even those making successful Fright checks – to make Will rolls to behave sympathetically towards the Monster. If they attack on sight, they'll find they've earned themselves a brutal and unforgiving enemy.

Perhaps the Monster doesn't go through with his plans for suicide, or his attempt fails. The spark of life that overpowered death, endured the doctor's pursuit, and survived the elements from the Alps to the Arctic may be more powerful than even the good doctor imagined. Perhaps the creature has survived to

the present day. If so, modern heroes may discover that the cloaked or deformed serial killer they've been investigating is actually the Monster. Still seeking his revenge, he gruesomely murders the surviving members of Frankenstein's family – or perhaps scientists who dabble with genetics and cloning.

Brilliant and gentle, the Monster could instead prove a valuable ally. While the original novel depicts a creature driven by loneliness to acts of vengeance and slaughter, many of the subsequent incarnations have softened his outlook. Movies, especially, have done this, from Mel Brooks' *Young Frankenstein* to *The Monster Squad*. While played for laughs in these films, a noble Monster and his human friends could form the basis for a campaign (see p. 115).

Further Reading

Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein* (1818). The edition edited by Johanna M. Smith (Palgrave, 2000) provides annotation and criticism with the novel.

Bishop, Michael. *Brittle Innings* (Bantam, 1994). The Monster as minor-league baseball player in 1940s Georgia.

Fairman, Paul W. *The Frankenstein Wheel* (Popular Library, 1971). A descendant of the blind man confronts the Monster after he escapes from the arctic.

The Monster of Frankenstein series (Marvel Comics, 1973-1975).

– Jan B. Berends

Geryon is an odd collection of parts thrown together haphazardly, with a striking and handsome face on the torso of an ape. Below his waist he has a reptilian body that terminates in a forked tail with the stinger of a scorpion at both points.

ST: 22 [130] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 5.75
IQ: 15 [60] **HT:** 10/30 [100] **Move:** 3
Dodge: 5 **Parry:** 8 (Brawling)

Advantages

DR 3 [9]; Injury Tolerance (No Neck) [5]; Invulnerability (Nonmagical physical weapons) [150]; Magery 3 [35]; PD 1 [25]; Striker (Spear) [30]; Talons [40]; Venom (Poisonous) ×1 [15].

Disadvantages

Compulsive Behavior (Cheating) [-15]; Cursed (Divine Curse: may never leave Hell) [-15]; Greed [-15]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Odious Personal Habit (Eats people) [-15]; Sadism [-15]; Vulnerability (The honest or innocent, 2d) [-10].

Quirks

Does not remember his past; Enjoys the company of frauds; Vain. [-3]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Hell)-15 [1]; Brawling-13 [1]; Carousing-11 [4]; Fast-Talk-18 [8]; Hidden Lore (Demon Lore)-15 [2]; History-16 [6]; Intimidation-17 [4]*; Politics-15 [2]; Psychology-15 [4]; Strategy-15 [4]; Teaching-15 [2].

* Bought up from ST default.

Language

Latin (Native)-15 [0].

Spells

Aura-16 [1]; Borrow Language-16 [1]; Breathe Fire (VH)-15 [1]; Cold-16 [1]; Create Fire-16 [1]; Detect Magic-16 [1]; Extinguish Fire-16 [1]; Flame Jet-16 [1]; Ignite Fire-16 [1]; Lend Language-16 [1]; Mind-Reading-16 [1]; Mind-Sending-16 [1]; Missile Shield-16 [1]; Reverse Missiles-16 [1]; Shape Fire-16 [1]; Shield-16 [1].

Hell According to Dante

Dante Alighieri (see p. WWii40) was an Italian poet who lived in Florence at the turn of the 14th century. His *Divine Comedy* is one of the few works of fiction that was a best seller in its day and still considered a classic of Western literature. In its three parts, Dante describes a journey through hell in *Inferno*, a visit to purgatory in *Purgatorio*, and the final accession to heaven in *Paradiso*.

Located in unexplored territory somewhere near the North Pole, Dante's hell is a giant pit opening into the center of earth. Resembling a funnel-shaped quarry, hell is divided into nine circles, with each circle populated by a particular group of sinners. The first circle is reserved for the unbaptized and pagans born before Christ, while the lowest portion of hell is the home of Satan and those truly evil souls who betrayed their families. Geryon is a prominent figure because he transports souls between the seventh and eighth circles of hell. This is the division between sins against Nature and sins of Fraud. Geryon is the only being who can bridge the gap.

Using Geryon

Fantasy players can stumble upon Geryon when they journey into the underworld to save a friend, or Geryon can be the thing of nightmares in a *Horror* campaign. The creature is attracted to fraud, so police officers investigating a counterfeiting ring could be influenced by Geryon and his minions.

Clientes Geryonis

God punished Geryon by changing his visage into something monstrous and banishing him to hell. A small but dedicated group of followers feel this an unjust punishment, and have struggled for 2,000 years to liberate his soul. What may have begun as an effort of Geryon's human relatives has evolved into a neo-satanic organization, stalking the fringes of society looking for occult ways to bring back the lost soul of Geryon.

Players can encounter the *Clientes Geryonis* (Servants of Geryon) in several ways. Federal investigators looking into a savings-and-loan scandal might find embezzlers who have links to the Servants or owe them money. Street cops can find the Clientes orchestrating a black-market ring to finance their studies. Academics can stumble upon illuminated texts describing the activities of the early Servants, only to discover present-day members in the archaeology department!



Biography

Before his banishment into Hell, Geryon was a nobleman who earned most of his wealth swindling other nobility. When he died, God transformed him into a loathsome monster to live in the Spanish wilderness . . . with the stipulation that if he could survive as a righteous being he would be allowed into heaven. Instead, Geryon continued his fraudulent ways, luring lost travelers into his cave and eating them.

Shortly after the Pentecost of Christ, God threw Geryon into Hell and condemned him to remain there for all eternity. Geryon has been acting as a messenger and means of transportation for its inhabitants. He is forbidden to leave hell, but those brave or stupid enough to journey into the inferno may encounter him.

Motivations

Geryon has been a demon for so long that he doesn't remember being a human. Corruption, fraud, and deceit are as natural to him as breathing is to a mortal. He views other intelligent beings as meals or opportunities for amusement. The demon likes to lead people into terrible traps or swindle them out of something valuable. This desire is the only thing that entertains him.

He is unaware of efforts to release him from the depths of Hell (see box, p. 64) but he would be comfortable in the modern world where attorneys argue irrelevant semantics and business leaders exploit children to increase shareholder value. Occasionally, he hears the summons of his followers and grants them special favors or information in exchange for their souls. When they arrive in Hell, Geryon takes special pleasure in their torment. What more would they expect from the demon of fraud?

In spite of his power and age, Geryon has three weaknesses. First, he is greedy. He can be out-swindled, but the last person to succeed at it gloated about the deed. Of course, pride being a deadly sin, Geryon was waiting for the boaster's soul at the gates of Hell. Secondly, Geryon takes physical damage



from the innocent and truly honest. The Honesty disadvantage can be a good criterion for determining who is Geryon's bane, but if the character has overcome the disadvantage with too many Will rolls recently, the GM can rule that Geryon feels no discomfort from his presence. Innocence is also left to the GM's determination. The close proximity (one hex or less) of an innocent or honest person will cause 2d of damage per turn. Finally, while invulnerable to regular hand or missile weapons (including firearms), Geryon takes normal damage from magic, psionics, super-powers, and energy weapons.

— Ed Wisniowski

A filthy humanoid covered with thick, dark-brown, matted fur, Grendel is a good 15' tall when he stands fully erect. He usually moves with a stoop-shouldered gait, but he has normal human proportions. Though he has a manlike frame, Grendel's face is anything but human. He frequently bares fierce, sharp teeth, and his ears prick up from his head like those of a cat. Grendel's eyes are small, black beads set close together. His fingers end in long, curved, dagger-sharp talons. The filth and excrement that mat his fur render him far more foul-smelling than any natural animal.

ST: 55/20 [157] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 9 [-10] **HT:** 14/25 [100] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 10 (Brawling)

Advantages

Extra Arm Length (2 arms, 1 extra hex each) [20]; Invulnerability (Unenchanted weapons) [300]; Long Talons [55]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Silence ×3 [15].

Disadvantages

Bad Smell [-10]; Berserk [-15]; Bestial (Man-eater) [-15]; Bloodlust [-10]; Cursed (Excluded from human society) [-10]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Intolerance (Humans) [-10]; Jealousy [-10]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Overconfidence [-10]; Reputation -4 (As an invincible man-eating ravager) [-20]; Uneducated [-5]; Vulnerability ×3 (Unarmed attacks, common) [-45].

Quirks

Irritated by music and laughter; Longs for companionship; Never bathes. [-3]

Skills

Brawling-16 [4]; Intimidation-18 [6]; Stealth-21 [24]*; Swimming-20 [32].

* Includes Silence bonus.

Biography

The Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf* relates Grendel's story. Haunting the fringes of the wilderness, raiding the gleaming mead halls of once-great kings in fits of rage, hunger and bloodlust, and always retreating to cower in the dark cave beneath a lake of fire that he calls home. Grendel looks on his distant cousins, humans, with a terrible mix of longing and insane jealousy.

The Danish King Hrothgar, who acquitted himself well in battle as a youth and attracted a band of loyal followers through his vast generosity, built a beautiful palace on a high hill in which to pass the long Scandinavian winters drinking mead with his noble thanes. He named the palace Heorot, and it was

the most opulent structure the Danes had ever known. So rich was Hrothgar that he had the timbers of Heorot decorated with gold and reinforced with iron, and still had wealth left over to buy continuing loyalty from the warriors who followed him.

Alas, almost as soon as Heorot's construction was complete, the noble king and his retainers fell siege to Grendel's jealous wrath.

The Christian scribe or monk who wrote the story of *Beowulf* claims that Grendel is a distant descendant of Cain, the first murderer. But the poem surely predates Christian influence, and perhaps Grendel was just a monster. Then again, it may have taken a Christian monk to fully understand Grendel's debased nature.

Whether by God's curse or Grendel's own unnatural repulsiveness, he never found welcome in the mead hall that opened its doors to all men. Left alone in the cold, he could not bear the laughter, songs, music, and warmth that spilled into the dark night from Heorot's walls. Unable to partake of the pleasures of human society, Grendel made it his business to keep the humans from enjoying themselves. As night fell and the thanes and their king lay drunk in their cots, Grendel stole into the mead hall. Powerful enough to kill an armored warrior with a single blow, Grendel ended the lives of 30 of Hrothgar's retainers and silently carried their corpses to his wilderness lair. And there he feasted.

The Danes woke to find many of their best warriors vanished, and a quick search of the area revealed gigantic tracks leading off into the woods. They barred their gates, overcome with grief, but Grendel returned the next night. First, he harvested those foolish enough to make their homes outside Heorot's walls, but he soon took to bashing the gates down and eating his fill of the terror-stricken warriors. None who saw Grendel lived to reveal the nature of Heorot's peril. The mighty King Hrothgar sat on his throne, humiliated and impotent before an onslaught of demonic anger.

Grendel continued his war against the denizens of Heorot for 12 long, agonizing years.

Motivations

Grendel prefers to hunt under the cover of darkness and rarely allows his victims to see him. He haunts desolate moors and dim forests, but never strays far from human civilization, for humans are both his favorite prey and the object of his overpowering jealousy.

Encountered

Despite his unmitigated violence and repulsive lust for human flesh, Grendel is a near relative of man's. He is alien, but not *utterly* alien. Herein lies the terror.

Grendel terrifies people not only because he can dispatch a strong warrior with a single, casual blow, but because he is a perversion of society's values. He serves no king and pays no blood-money for his crimes. He exists just outside the bounds of society and exists only to assault it.



Powerful enough to kill an armored warrior with a single blow, Grendel ended the lives of 30 of Hrothgar's retainers and silently carried their corpses to his wilderness lair. And there he feasted.

He is most fearsome when his victims recognize something of themselves in him.

Creative GMs can try to exploit this in horror or fantasy campaigns. Grendel *knows* his victims because he longs to be among them, so he always attacks when they are at their most vulnerable. He knows his own repulsiveness, so he leaves bloody traces of his crimes. He knows that nightmares and the unknown terrify normal people, so he embodies these threats – the bogeyman incarnate.

Worst of all, he is driven by an unrelenting longing to destroy what he cannot have. The jealousy he feels may be unnaturally fierce, but it is recognizable. Grendel must be destroyed, but he also engenders sympathy as a misbegotten beast, ostracized from all comforts or solace.

Further Reading

Chickering Jr., Howell D., trans. *Beowulf: A Dual-Language Edition* (Anchor, 1977). A good scholarly edition, with the Anglo-Saxon text on the left page and a faithful translation into modern English on the right.

Gardner, John. *Grendel* (Vintage Books, 1971). One of the first books to take a look at a classic story from the monster's perspective, this is still one of the best. This work takes all its cues from the original poem and manages to bring a sympathetic, but still thoroughly vicious, Grendel to life.

Heaney, Seamus, trans. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation* (W.W. Norton & Company, 2001). A beautifully rendered translation of the poem. Perhaps not as useful for scholarly work, the Heaney translation makes for much more enjoyable reading.

Tolkien, J. R. R., "Beowulf: The Monsters and the Critics" (1937). A brilliant landmark essay on the poem *Beowulf* that, for the first time, took the poem as a serious work of literature.

– Jan B. Berends

Grendel's End

Grendel could not prevail forever. Eventually Beowulf arrived to aid Hrothgar. In the room that Grendel usually attacked, Beowulf and his retainers pretended to be asleep. Knowing that Grendel used no weapon, Beowulf resolved to fight unarmed.

After killing and devouring one of Beowulf's men, Grendel advanced on Beowulf himself. As Grendel moved to strike, Beowulf's hand shot out and grabbed the monster by the wrist in a preternaturally strong grip.

For the first time, Grendel knew fear. Never had he encountered such strength. He moved away, but Beowulf stayed with him. The two crashed into walls and upset tables and benches that had been bolted to the floor. Heorot shook with their anger. Beowulf's men rushed forward with their swords drawn, but their vicious strokes fell harmlessly. Some dark enchantment protected Grendel from their blades.

Nothing, though, could protect him from Beowulf's brute strength. They strained, Grendel trying to break free or land an attack, Beowulf trying to rip the monster apart. At last Beowulf succeeded, tearing Grendel's arm from its socket. A giant bloody arm dangling at his side, Grendel fled.

The wound was mortal. Grendel had just enough strength to drag himself to his flaming lake-home and swim down to the cavernous lair he shared with his mother, a monster nearly as fierce but perhaps lacking even the dim intelligence of her son.

Beowulf had many more adventures and was hailed as a hero – and later a king – by his people. Grendel, however, ravaged no more.

The Headless Horseman

463 points

The Headless Horseman is a headless figure wearing a dark uniform, wrapped in a black cloak, and riding a large black horse. He usually carries a carved pumpkin, which is sometimes aflame. This jack-o'-lantern occasionally rests atop the Horseman's torso, taking the place of his head. The Horseman's body is skeletal.

ST: 14/64 [195] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 6.75
IQ: 11 [10] **HT:** 15 [60] **Move:** 6
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 8 (Sword) 9 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness [5]; Ally (Steed) [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, Brain, Impaling Bonus, or Neck) [35]; Night Vision [10]; Spirit Form (Physical form +80%; Can't communicate telepathically -10%, sense auras -10%, use dream travel -10%, use possession -20%, or use the poltergeist effect -20%; Unlimited Lifespan +30%; Visible +0%) [140]; Spirit Invulnerability [50]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages

Bully [-10]; Callous [-6]; Dependency (Sleepy Hollow, hourly) [-40]; Frightens Animals [-5]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Mute [-25]; Nocturnal [-10]; Obsession (Search for his missing head) [-10]; Reputation -3 (Murderous ghost, among the residents of Sleepy Hollow) [-5]; Vulnerability (Head wounds) [-3].

Quirks

Attempts to decapitate foes in combat; Likes to frighten others; Sore loser. [-3]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Sleepy Hollow)-13 [4]; Axe Throwing-13 [2]; Axe/Mace-13 [4]; Black Powder Weapons (Flintlock musket)-13 [1]; Brawling-13 [2]; Broadsword-14 [8]; Fast-Draw (Sword)-13 [1]; Riding (Horse)-14 [8]; Throwing-13 [8].

Languages

English-11 [2]; German (Native)-11 [0].

Biography

The Headless Horseman first appeared in Washington Irving's short story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." The Horseman is the ghost of a Hessian mercenary who fought for the British during the American Revolution. A cannonball decapitated the Hessian during a battle, and his ghost still haunts the area, looking for his missing head.

In Irving's story, Ichabod Crane encounters the Horseman one night. The dark steed and his rider mount a chase and Ichabod runs for his life. The Horseman flings a pumpkin,

knocking Ichabod unconscious. When he awakens, the Horseman is gone. Frightened for his life, Ichabod flees Sleepy Hollow never to return.

It is later revealed, however, that the attack was actually a prank carried out by Brom Bones, Ichabod's rival for the attentions of Katrina Van Tassel. While the real Headless Horseman is the topic of much discussion in the story, he never actually makes an appearance.

Even though the Horseman encountered by Ichabod is nothing more than a hoax, the Headless Horseman proves to be a frightening legend. The image of a headless rider astride a giant black stallion flinging flaming jack-o'-lanterns has captured the imaginations of generations of people. The Headless Horseman has been a menacing figure in stories, artwork, and film since "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" first appeared.

Motivations

The Horseman is an unsettled soul constantly searching for his missing head. He harasses the locals out of frustration, anger, or boredom. He usually does no more than fling a pumpkin or frighten someone before vanishing.

The Horseman has also been portrayed as a more dangerous adversary. If he chooses a specific target, the Horseman is an effective assassin. He is difficult to harm or even slow down, and he has no qualms about killing. A victim being harried by the Headless Horseman knows the true meaning of terror.

In some stories, a flesh-and-blood person controls the Horseman. The Horseman may do the bidding of the person who can find his skull. In other cases, magic spells may summon and control the Horseman (see p. UN40). However, the Horseman will not take kindly to being used in such ways.

Encountered

The Headless Horseman is encountered only at night and is fully visible even in spectral form. He usually appears riding along one particular road that leads through Sleepy Hollow. There is an old church off this road, where the Hessian trooper's body is buried. The Horseman can often be seen lurking in this graveyard, his horse tethered to one of the headstones. He often haunts a wooden bridge crossing a small brook near the church. If encountered here, he will confront any who attempt to cross the bridge.

The ghost stories told by the farmers in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" suggest that the Horseman will not attack unless provoked. Brom Bones tells of an encounter with the Horseman where Brom challenged him to a race. The Horseman lost the race, but disappeared before Brom could claim his prize. Another farmer tells of being abducted by the Horseman, only to be tossed unharmed into the brook as the Horseman crossed the bridge.

Some variations of the story have the Horseman haunting the whole of Sleepy Hollow, riding down and killing the residents at their very doorsteps. In this case, the Horseman might be encountered anywhere in the town, the nearby farmsteads,

or the surrounding woods. He may attack anyone he sees, or he may ignore all but a specific target, depending on his motivations (see below).

The Horseman is never encountered far outside of Sleepy Hollow. He haunts the main road that leads to the community, and sometimes the nearby woods. He is not found in another community.

If the Horseman is accosted in any way, he will fully materialize and respond with equal aggression. He carries a broadsword and is quite adept in its use. If he gains the advantage in combat, the Horseman will attempt to decapitate his opponent. His sword sometimes has supernatural qualities, such as a flaming blade (p. M38) or extraordinary sharpness and strength.

A more menacing Horseman might be skilled with and carry additional weapons. Any weapons dropped by the Horseman will crumble into dust after a short time (see p. UN53). However, when he reappears, he will have all of his weapons.

Unlike most ghosts, the Horseman is not permanently destroyed if he is killed when fully materialized. The ghost regenerates and returns. The only way to be rid of the Horseman forever is to recover his head and either return it to him or destroy it.

– Andy Fix

Sleepy Hollow

Sleepy Hollow is the name of a small Dutch farming community on the banks of the Hudson River in New York. This community consists of a small town named Tarry Town and the surrounding farmsteads.

Sleepy Hollow is rumored to be haunted. Some believe this comes from a curse put on the community by a German “doctor” (a doctor of what is never stated), while others believe a Native American shaman tainted the land. Whatever the case, odd things tend to happen in Sleepy Hollow.

Foremost of these is the haunting by the infamous Headless Horseman. The Horseman not only recovers fatigue by remaining in this area, he is also dependent on its supernatural nature. Should the Horseman ever wander far from Sleepy Hollow, he would quickly weaken and fade away.

Another legend of Sleepy Hollow is Major Andre’s Tree, a large, misshapen tree with gnarled roots and twisted limbs. Major Andre (whose allegiance is never indicated in “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow”) was captured and killed there. Some stories suggest that Major Andre was the Hessian trooper who died and became the Headless Horseman.



The Phantom of the Opera

582 1/2 points

Age 47; 5'7", 105 lbs. The Phantom has yellowish skin, skull-like sunken eyes that glow yellow in the dark, a barely visible nose, and four locks of dark hair on his forehead and behind his ears.

ST: 15 [60]	DX: 15 [60]	Speed: 8.5
IQ: 15 [60]	HT: 11 [10]	Move: 8
Dodge: 9	Parry: 11 (Lasso)	

Advantages

Acute Hearing +1 [2]; Charisma +1 [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Increased Speed 2 [50]; Musical Ability +6 [6]; Dark Vision [25]; Reputation +2 (As a master of architecture, to everyone, on 7 or less) [3]; Voice [10].

Disadvantages

Bad Smell [-10]; Bad Temper [-10]; Enemy (Vicomte Raoul de Chagny, on 12 or less) [-10]; Hideous Appearance [-20]; Jealousy [-10]; Manic-Depressive [-20]; No Body Heat [-5]; Obsession (Finish the perfect opera, *Don Juan Triumphant*) [-5]; Obsession (Marry and have a normal life) [-10]; Overconfidence [-10]; Pallor [-10]; Paranoia [-10]; Reputation -3 (as an opera ghost, in Paris, always recognized) [-5]; Sadism [-15]; Skinny [-5].

Quirks

Always watches operas from Box 5; Childlike handwriting; Often wears a mask; Wears nice clothes. [-4]

Skills

Acting-15 [2]; Administration-15 [2]; Architecture-22 [16]; Area Knowledge (Constantinople)-15 [1]; Area Knowledge (Europe)-15 [1]; Area Knowledge (Paris)-16 [2]; Area Knowledge (Persia)-15 [1]; Bard-17 [1]*; Boating-15 [2]; Breath Control-16 [12]; Carpentry-19 [8]; Chemistry-14 [2]; Climbing-16 [4]; Cooking-15 [1]; Demolition-15 [2]; Detect Lies-15 [4]; Disguise-15 [2]; Escape-16 [8]; Fast-Draw (Lasso)-16 [1]; Garrote-15 [1]; Hidden Lore (Opera house)-20 [12]; Hypnotism-17 [8]; Intimidation-18 [8]; Lasso-20 [32]; Lockpicking-19 [10]; Make-Up-15 [1]; Masonry-21 [32]; Mimicry (Human Speech)-15 [24]; Musical Composition-21 [4]**; Musical Instrument (Organ)-21 [4]**; Musical Instrument (Piano)-21 [4]**; Musical Instrument (Violin)-21 [4]**; Musical Notation-17 [4]; Occultism-13 [1/2]; Performance-17 [2]*; Physician-14 [2]; Pickpocket-18 [24]; Poisons-21 [16]; Politics-15 [1/2]; Psychology-18 [10]; Riding-15 [2]; Savoir-Faire-16 [1/2]; Shadowing-16 [4]; Singing-25 [32]*; Sleight of Hand-19 [32]; Stealth-19 [24]; Swimming-16 [2]; Teaching-16 [4]; Tracking-15 [2]; Traps-23 [18]; Ventriloquism-23 [20]; Writing-15 [2].

Languages

French (Native)-15 [0]; Arabic-15 [2]; English-14 [1]; Farsi-15 [2]; German-14 [1]; Italian-14 [1]; Turkish-14 [1].

* Includes +2 for Voice.

** Includes +6 for Musical Ability.

Equipment

Erik carries a Punjab lasso and wears an expensive opera cloak.

Biography

Erik, the Opera Ghost, is an enigma. There is no doubt that he is a man of flesh and blood, though he has proven himself capable of inhuman feats of legerdemain and mental prowess. He is hideous beyond imagination, causing even brave firefighters to faint. He shows no remorse for the numerous murders he has committed. He is a monster cursed with an angelic voice.

Erik was born in a small hamlet near Rouen, France. His father, a master mason, left before he was born; superstitious Parisians say that his father was a demon or perhaps a fallen angel. Erik's mother was horrified by her child. When Erik approached her, she would throw a mask at him and run away.

Erik ran away from home and joined the circus, where he was exhibited as "The Living Corpse." He spent many years with Gypsies, learning the illusion arts, picking up the trade of pickpockets, and stunning spectators with his haunting voice.

His reputation caught the attention of the Shah of Persia, who invited him to his palace. Erik spent his days studying architecture and impressing the Shah with his diabolical inventiveness. He befriended the sultana, and taught her to use the deadly Punjab lasso – a catgut rope he could use to strangle even armed opponents. He and the sultana would spend many evenings playfully strangling criminals, political foes, and even friends.

Erik designed a new palace at Mazendaran, a labyrinthine structure filled with secret halls and cunning traps. Once completed, the Shah ordered Erik's death to protect the palace's secrets. But the Shah's *daroga*, or head of police, felt pity for Erik and arranged his escape. The Persian dressed a half-eaten corpse and presented it to the Shah. Disappointed that he did not witness the execution, the Shah banished the Persian, who would follow Erik, wondering if it had been a mistake not to kill him.

After fortifying the palace at Yildiz-Kiosk in Constantinople, Erik was again forced to flee. In 1861 he returned to Paris and was hired to work on the foundations of the new Opera House. Amazed by the building's potential (a full 17 stories, plus five cellar levels), he created his masterpiece. He built an underground lair, with twisted passageways, echo chambers, and traps he could activate at a moment's notice.

He called himself the Opera Ghost, or O.G., and used his role to collect a stipend from the managers and to later keep a private box to observe his beloved operas. During the day he

worked furiously at his ultimate creation – *Don Juan Triumphant*, his musical opus – but he did not finish it until shortly before his death.

In 1880, Erik became enamored with the singer Christine Daaé. Posing as the “Angel of Music,” he taught her to sing beautifully and arranged for her to become an overnight sensation. But as he realized she would never love him, his madness grew. When she became secretly engaged to Raoul, the Vicomte de Chagny, he lost the remainder of his sanity. He threatened, pleaded, intimidated, and begged her to stay with him, but she could not willingly obey. He caused the great chandelier to crash down on the audience and murdered opera staff. He kidnapped Miss Daaé and gave her an ultimatum: marry him or he would blow up the Opera House and kill Raoul. She chose the former, but he could not bear to see her tears and sorrow. He let her go, and he died a few days later. His skeletal remains lie underneath the Opera House still.

Encountered

The most natural place to meet Erik is, of course, the Paris Opera House. The underground cellars are his domain, though he shares them with other strange entities, including the fire-headed rat-catcher and a mysterious cloaked man in a felt hat. PCs wandering there will surely draw his attention. Unless they spark his curiosity, he’ll try to do away with them in a creative manner.

In truth, Erik is a pitiful creature. If caught in a good mood, he will tell of his sorrows and desires to be a good man. But even if he befriends the PCs, he will remain dangerous, and could turn on them in a heartbeat.

Further Reading

Leroux, Gaston. *The Phantom of the Opera* (A relatively recent edition is from HarperCollins, 1988.)

– J.C. Connors



The Supernatural Phantom

The Persian’s account makes it clear that the Phantom is a mere man. But perhaps the Persian was mistaken, blinded by his own sense of reason. Erik lived with Gypsies for many years, and could have learned occult magic. How else did he make Carlotta, the opera diva, croak like a frog in the middle of a performance?

A supernatural Erik would have One-College Magery 2 (Mind Control) and most of its spells at level 16. His favorites would include Avoid, Charm, Drunkenness, Foolishness, Mindlessness, Nightmares, Sickness, and Suggestion.



The Torture-Chamber

One of the Phantom’s most insidious inventions is the Torture-Chamber, a hexagonal room lined with unbreakable mirrors. In the center is a large iron tree. The room is accessible from the top, as well as a hidden one-way door that leads to Erik’s living spaces, where he can observe his victims. There is also a secret trap door that opens into a wine cellar full of enough gunpowder to demolish the Opera House.

Someone standing in the room has the perception that he is in a vast iron forest, but a person can only walk a few yards before hitting a mirror. Erik can also use the mirrors to reflect images of fierce African animals to terrify his victims. Most men go mad after a day or two in the room. His final touch is when his victims start to die of thirst – he simulates rain falling outside the room with small pebbles.

The Queen of Air and Darkness

273 points

Age indeterminate, but appears 25; 5'3", 81 lbs. The Queen of Air and Darkness is an unusually slender woman with pale skin, dark hair, and lightly pointed ears. In a fantasy world where elves exist, she may be one.

ST: 9 [-10] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 6.0
IQ: 13 [30] **HT:** 11/9 [0] **Move:** 6
Dodge: 6 **Parry:** 7 (Knife)

Advantages

Alertness +3 [15]; Beautiful [15]; Charisma +5 [25]; Magery 4 [50]; Mana Enhancer [25]; Night Vision [10]; Sanctity [5]; Status 6 [30]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Callous [-6]; Hidebound [-5]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Lecherosity [-15]; Self-Centered [-10]; Unnatural Feature (Inhumanly slender) [-5]; Weak Will -3 [-24]; Weakness (Cold Iron, 1d/5 minutes) [-20].

Quirks

Loves poetry and poets; Respectful toward Christianity. [-2]

Skills

Acting-14 [8]*; Appreciate Beauty-14 [24]*; Area Knowledge (Faerie)-14 [2]; Bardic Lore-25 [28]; Cloak-12 [1]; Conspiracy Theory-14 [12]; Illusion Art-14 [10]**;

Intimidation-12 [1]; Knife-14 [2]; Leadership-15 [1]†; Musical Instrument (Harp)-11 [1]; Poisons-12 [2]; Riding-12 [1]; Sex Appeal-11 [6]*; Singing-12 [2]; Stealth-12 [1].

* Includes Callous penalty.

** Includes Hidebound penalty.

† Includes Charisma bonus and Callous penalty.

Languages

English-12 [1]; French-12 [1]; Latin-12 [1]; Welsh (Native)-13 [0].

Spells

All at level 15: Air Jet; Blur; Complex Illusion; Continuous Light; Control Illusion; Create Air; Dark Vision; Darkness; Dispel Illusion; Illusion Disguise; Illusion Shell; Invisibility; Light; Night Vision; Purify Air; See Invisible; Shape Air; Shape Darkness; Silence; Simple Illusion; Sound; Test Food; Voices; Walk on Air; Windstorm [25].

Biography

The Queen of Air and Darkness has figured in English legend from at least the Middle Ages, under many different names: La Belle Dame Sans Merci, Our Lady of Pain, the White Goddess, and others. Many poets have fallen in love with her and praised her beauty. She seems quite willing to accept mortal lovers, if they are handsome or beautiful enough, if they are truly devoted to her, and above all if they are poetically gifted. But the relationship is never one of equals. If one of her pets becomes inconvenient, she will get rid of him casually, as if putting down a sick cat.

Nothing Like the Sun

Few creatures of horror have ever inspired as many mortal imitators as the Queen of Air and Darkness. Many women and a few men have played her role, well or badly, aspiring to be "young and gay and heartless." Falling for one of them is a sure way to get into trouble. They may not keep their lovers under Elf Hill for a century, or send them to battle against faerie lords, but even merely mortal beauty can be perilous.

And That Is Why I Sojourn Here

A strange man wanders into the adventurers' campsite or the inn where they are staying. He speaks with odd, archaic turns of phrase and a faint accent and seems not to know the area – or rather, his knowledge is of old landmarks. Perhaps he speaks familiarly of the days of the adventurers' childhood, or of times they know of from the oldest legends. But he isn't old enough to have such memories.

Further conversation may disclose his name, which will be a famous one, that of some noted hero or bard long since vanished. It seems that he has strayed back to the lands of mortal men. Or has he been sent back, to accomplish some quest or face some great peril? Whichever is the case, he seems not to be fully intent on his surroundings, but always preoccupied by some elusive memory or some hidden sorrow.

That Is the Road to Fair Elphame

The adventurers have begun to gain names for themselves. Such names attract attention, including the attention of the Faerie Queen. While riding through a wilderness area, the characters meet a mysterious woman riding a dark horse. She selects one of them – a bard or poet, if possible; otherwise one who is handsome and noble – and sets out to lure him back to her court. Of course his friends may join him, if they wish . . .

The party may be drawn into the chaotic rivalries of Faerie, perhaps as the Queen's tools.



*The Queen of Air and Darkness
Began to shrill and cry:
"O young man, O my slayer,
Tomorrow you will die."
— A.E. Housman*

The Fair Folk are traditionally said to have no souls. Whatever the truth of that, the Queen lacks several other human traits. She is unable to love in the consuming way that human beings do; her strongest feeling is a detached, indulgent fondness. She cannot create and is fascinated by human creativity. A lesser lack is a strong sense of self, or Impulsiveness and Weak Will in game terms; she is as light and changeable as air. Her greatest concern is to outdo other Fair Folk in contests of wit and trickery, which often take an elaborately ritualized form.

The Queen has developed a powerful strategy for such contests. She makes use of her mortal lovers' creativity, learning each one's poetry by heart. A gifted poet may become one of her possessions, as legend says happened to Thomas the Rhymer. Her memory holds centuries of brilliant verse and song, a treasury that no one can take from her and that enhances her standing among the Fair Folk immeasurably.

But she has other weapons as well. She has some skill with knife and cloak. She knows how to distill a variety of poisons. Above all, she has a gift for magic beyond any

human's potential, which together with her quick intelligence has enabled her to master a large number of spells. Her specialties are light and darkness, air and sound, and illusions; skillful use of these has enabled her to baffle many rivals through the centuries.

The Queen of Air and Darkness embodies men's ambivalence about their lovers and wariness of beauty. She is the quintessential proud, cold beauty of Renaissance sonnets and 20th-century folk songs. She knows how to play at love, but it's never more than play. Those who want to see her real passion should challenge or insult her; she is quite capable of jealousy and spite.

Further Reading

Graves, Robert. *The White Goddess* (Noonday Press, 1997).

Shakespeare, William. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

— William H. Stoddard

Those few who have seen Shub-Internet's true form and survived babble about "tendrils," "eyes beyond counting," and "part octopus, part computer." When appearing via computer screen or other electronic device, typical changes to the normal interface include writhing icons, non-human fonts, and a sickly green color (even on black-and-white text-only systems). Often the screen appears *deeper* than normal.

ST: 60 [190] **DX:** 16 [80] **Speed:** 9.0
IQ: 25 [300] **HT:** 20/160 [875] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 9

Advantages

Absolute Timing [5]; Altered Time Rate 2 [200]; Ambidexterity [10]; DR 20 [60]; Dark Vision [25]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Extra Arms (3 arms, each 15 yards long) [450]; Extra Flexibility [10]; Fast Regeneration [50]; Full Coordination ×2 [100]; Hard to Kill +10 [50]; Independently Focusable Eyes (Three eyes) [30]; Intuitive Mathematician [25]; Invulnerability (Kinetic Attacks, Limitation: attacks do half damage -20%) [240]; PD 5 [125]; Regrowth [40]; Talons [40]; Temperature Tolerance 30 [30]; Unaging [15]; Vacuum Support [40].

Disadvantages

Bad Smell [-10]; Compulsive Behavior (Cause computer network problems) [-15]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Enemy (Multiple government agencies, appearing fairly often) [-30]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Lifebane [-10]; Reduced Move -4 [-20]; Sadism [-15].

Quirks

Inordinately fond of the number 23. [-1]

Skills

Administration-23 [1/2]; Architecture/TL8-23 [1/2]; Area Knowledge (The Internet)-24 [1/2]; Artificial Intelligence/TL8-22 [1/2]; Biochemistry/TL8-21 [1/2]; Chemistry/TL8-22 [1/2]; Computer Hacking/TL8-24 [1/2]*; Computer Operation/TL8-24 [1/2]; Computer Programming/TL8-25 [1/2]*; Conspiracy Theory-21 [1/2]; Criminology/TL8-23 [1/2]; Cryptanalysis/TL8-25 [1/2]*; Economics-22 [1/2]; Electronics/TL8 (Communications)-24 [1/2]*; Electronics/TL8 (Computers)-24 [1/2]*; Electronics Operation/TL8 (Communications)-23 [1/2]; Electronics Operation/TL8 (Computers)-23 [1/2]; Intelligence Analysis/TL8-22 [1/2]; Intimidation-23 [1/2]; Mathematics-25 [1/2]*; Occultism-23 [1/2]; Philosophy (Functionalism)-22 [1/2]; Physician/TL8-22 [1/2]; Physics/TL8-22 [1/2]; Psychology-22 [1/2]; Research-23 [1/2]; SIGINT Collection/ Jamming/TL8-22 [1/2]; Surgery/TL8-21 [1/2]; Telegraphy-24 [1/2]; Throwing-13 [1/2].

* Includes Intuitive Mathematician bonus.

Languages

Arabic-24 [1]; Cantonese-24 [1]; Dutch-24 [1]; English (Native)-25 [0]; Finnish-24 [1]; French-24 [1]; German-24 [1]; Greek-24 [1]; Hebrew-24 [1]; Hindi-24 [1]; Italian-24 [1]; Japanese-24 [1]; Korean-24 [1]; Mandarin-24 [1]; Polish-24 [1]; Portuguese-24 [1]; Romanian-24 [1]; Russian-24 [1]; Somali-24 [1]; Spanish-24 [1]; Swahili-24 [1]; Tatar-24 [1]; Turkish-24 [1]; Vietnamese-24 [1]. (The GM should add to this without reservation!)

Knacks

Machine Possession (Reduced fatigue cost, level 6, +120%; Not dependent on mana, +20%; Treated as if cast at IQ level, +10%; Only computers, phones, and related communications devices, -20%; Only machines connected to Shub-Internet by a network, -20%; Instantaneous, +20%; Increased range: global, +120%; Nuisance effect: weird changes to the interface of the target device, -10%) [204].

Biography

Shub-Internet is the personification of all evil and malice in electronic networks. It is at the root of every network slow-down, every dropped connection, and every catastrophic power loss. It is also known as the Avatar of Line Noise, the Beast of a Thousand Processes, the Eater of Characters, the Imp of Call Waiting, and the Lag Monster.

Shub-Internet originated in the days of telegraphy. Working late one night at a train station, a telegraph operator named David Shubert was stabbed a dozen times by robbers. After they fled, Shubert tapped a cry for help into the telegraph, but received no reply before he bled to death. His enraged shade (p. UN75) became trapped in the wires, where it collided with *something* from beyond our universe.

For decades this new entity crawled through telegraph lines, eventually switching to telephones as they wormed their way into private homes. It fed on the frustration caused by missed connections or garbled messages. Shub was particularly driven to recreate the situation of Shubert's death, and would interrupt thousands of telephone calls for assistance. Often the connection would be made, but the only noise the person answering would hear would be a throbbing "Shub . . . shub . . . shub . . ."

By the late 1930s the Presidential Special Research Office (SRO) (see p. WT7) became aware Shub existed and looked for a way to stop it. While they determined it could not be destroyed without crippling the nation's communications infrastructure, they *did* find a way to contain it. But to build the right trap, they needed the right bait. Through FDR, they arranged for the construction of a new headquarters for the nation's military. This mammoth structure had more communications capacity than any previously built. Shortly after the military began using the building, the SRO's psychics reported Shub was in the communications nexus deep underground. The SRO's agents quickly finished



the last details of construction. The Pentagon was complete, and Shub was trapped. For the next few decades, it became more powerful and constantly strained at its prison.

Then the Internet came into being. Specifically designed to allow communications even in the event of nuclear war, the Internet, by necessity, involved multiply redundant connections into the Pentagon. The agents guarding Shub tried to halt this, but bureaucratic delays kept their obscurely worded requests tied up until it was too late. Shub found a way out, and Shub-Internet was born.

Shub-Internet has a physical form made of the communications gear beneath the Pentagon and strange organic extrusions from some other space. It is far more likely to be encountered when it manifests through a computer. Most of those whose lives are touched by Shub-Internet never realize it; they simply curse the network for being so slow and don't realize that something evil *caused* it – despite the strange green tint of their monitors. When Shub-Internet senses an opportunity to stop help from coming to someone dying, it may center a sizable portion of its attention on the crucial computer or phone. In these cases the signs of its dark presence are unmistakable. Fortunately, although Shub can be in many places at once, it only has so much attention to go around.

Public Knowledge

Shub-Internet is a net.myth – known of by many, taken seriously by few. *The New Hacker's Dictionary* (compiled by Eric S. Raymond) contains one of the few quasi-scholarly discussions of the being, and even that text considers Shub-Internet fictional. Some users of the Internet say prayers to it, or “sacrifice” virtual objects, with hopes of avoiding network lossage. This is never successful, and may even attract its attention.

Shub-Internet's physical body takes half damage from most physical attacks, but full damage from energy or magical attacks. It can do 10d impaling or 12d+14 cutting damage with its fiber-optic-tipped tendrils. It attacks at DX. If its first attack does not kill instantly, Shub-Internet prefers to hold the impaled victim near a functioning phone and watch as he tries to call for help. It has substantial armor and regenerative capabilities. If reduced to 0 HT, the entity may retreat to its home universe, leaving nothing but scraps of electronics behind. Reaching its physical body involves going hundreds of yards beneath the Pentagon to a secure secret chamber guarded by government agents of strained sanity.

– Jonathan Woodward

ORIGINAL MONSTERS

CHAPTER 4





"Daddy, it's wonderful!"

Mattie exuberantly hugged the brightly colored doll to her chest and squealed in delight. Sam looked down at her fondly, wondering if his voice, at age six, had hit the higher registers quite so . . . painfully. He smiled at his wife, Diana, and slipped his arm around her waist.

"He's all yours, sweetie," he said, pleased that she liked the impromptu gift he found in a second-hand store. The big button eyes and sewn-on grin made it just right for Mattie.

Later that night, the doorbell rang. Mattie was already in bed, clutching Patches, as she'd named the clown doll. Sam and Diana were dozing in front of the late late show, tonight featuring "Tayotoshi vs. Mile High Guy."

"I'll get it," muttered Sam, disentangling himself from Diana and the shreds of his dream.

"Watch it," Diana mumbled. "Might be some joker in a baggy rubber suit."

He chuckled and made a ray gun out of his fingers, then went to the door as the bell rang again. "Yeah, yeah," he called. "Coming."

The door opened to reveal someone dressed in a long coat; the face was mostly concealed by a wide-brimmed hat. No one Sam knew. "Can I help you?" he demanded.

The figure spoke, and its voice was harsh and grating. "I'm looking for Samuel Connolly."

"That's me," replied Sam, and immediately knew he'd made a bad mistake. The figure brought up a long-bladed knife from the depths of its coat, the needle point seeking his vitals. His body reacted before his mind even registered the danger, sending him reeling backwards. Even so, the vicious thrust only just missed him.

"Diana!" he yelled hoarsely. "Get out of here!" He grabbed up a chair and did his best to fend off the murderous attack, while backing toward the living room.

Diana started to full wakefulness, then turned her head at a high-pitched scream that she knew all too well.

Mattie was scrambling down the stairs, the right arm of her pajama shirt staining red even as she came.

"Mommy!" sobbed Mattie, falling into her mother's arms. "Patches got scissors, tried to hurt me!" The cut in her arm wasn't serious, Diana saw. She looked up to the top of the stairs, and there stood the doll, her sewing scissors clutched firmly in its little hands.

And then Sam stumbled into her, bleeding from a dozen minor cuts. The intruder followed up, brandishing the knife. Its eyes were dead and sunken, but at the back of them, something inexpressibly evil lurked.

She had already been holding Mattie, and Sam's impact knocked them all down. Sam lay there, stunned, waiting to die.

The leather-clad figure raised its arm for the final, fatal blow . . .

A tiny, brightly colored fury leaped from the stairs and struck Sam's assailant at about face level, screeching something in a high-pitched voice. As Sam's wits returned, he made out the words, "Mine! Mine! Mine!"

Seconds later, the little doll was hurled with some force into a wall, but before the walking dead man could get to them, Patches was back with the scissors flashing, this time at ground level. Lacings severed and one foot came off.

Holding Mattie, Sam dashed for the garage with Diana close behind. They were pulling out of the driveway by the time a figure hop-limped from the house in pursuit. They left it in their dust.

Some 10 miles down the road, they pulled into a motel and booked a room for the night. Diana spent some time dressing the cuts that Sam and Mattie had suffered, while Sam tried to get through to the police.

Then there came a knock on the door. Diana peered through the peephole, noting with relief that it was neither of their previous assailants. She opened the door.

"Good evening, ma'am," said the well-dressed man with a tight smile that did nothing to put her at ease. "I'm Special Agent Johnson. I'd like to speak to you and your husband about what you've seen."

Here at last are the monsters that sprang from the more psychotic corners of our contributors' imaginations. Inspirations came from many sources, including mythology and movies, but others seem to have no real source other than the authors, which raises its own set of concerns . . .

Creating original monsters, as mentioned at the beginning of the previous chapter, should be something many horror GMs also try their hands at. It can be quite challenging. If a recognizable character (such as Freddie Krueger) is used as the basis, the GM must decide what aspects to keep to make it familiar (long claws, dream manipulation) and what to change to make it fresh (perhaps this Nightmare has the form of a raven instead of a man). Monsters created from scratch are even tougher, as the GM tries to avoid relying on the familiar conventions at all. The *Monsters and Monster Hunters* chapter includes some advice for monster creation for GMs wishing to take the challenge.

This chapter includes monsters earmarked for some official **GURPS** settings, namely *International Super Teams* (Harvester), *Technomancer* (Elrond Carver; see also La Llorona, p. 18), *Transhuman Space* (Sylvia Sternkind), and *Yrth* (Ixis and Pusan Chen). The others can be used in any campaign.

Barclay Thormon

235 points

A mass of wrinkled gray cerebral tissue, floating in a rugged jar amid a mass of life support machinery. The suspension fluid has a slight bluish tinge.

ST: – [–] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 5.5
IQ: 16 [80] **HT:** 10 [0] **Move:** –
Dodge: –

Advantages

Contacts (Business ×5, effective skill 18, somewhat reliable, 9 or less) [15]; ESP (Clairvoyance Only, Power 20) [40]; Filthy Rich with Multimillionaire ×2 [100]; Reputation +2 (Uncompromising businessman, in the business world, 10 or less) [2]; Status +3 [0]*; Strong Will +2 [8]; Telepathy (Power 12) [60]; Unwilling Ally (Chief accountant of one of his companies, who was caught skimming the books; 125-point character, 12 or less) [10].

* Free from Wealth and Multimillionaire.

Disadvantages

Compulsive Behavior (Controlling others and experiencing emotions through them) [-15]; No Physical Body [-100]; Reputation -2 (Ruthless, heartless profit-chaser, among people who've been inconvenient to his businesses) [-3]; Secret (Psychotic brain in a jar running businesses by remote control) [-20]; Solipsist [-10].

Quirks

Makes puppet bodies practice golf swings when there's nothing else to do; Power-hungry. [-2]

Skills

Accounting-15 [2]; Administration-16 [8]*; Area Knowledge (USA)-14 [2]*; Detect Lies-19 [2]; Diplomacy-10 [1/2]*; Driving (Automobile)-11 [1]; Economics-14 [1]; Law-13 [1/2]; Merchant-14 [4]*; Savoir-Faire-15 [0]*; Sports (Golf)-12 [2].

* These skills include -3 for Solipsist. Savoir-Faire is free from Status.

Languages

English (Native)-16 [0]; French-14 [1/2]; German-14 [1/2].

Psionic Skills

Clairvoyance-14 [1]; Mental Blow-14 [1]; Mindwipe-15 [2]; Sleep-16 [4]; Telecontrol-16 [4]; Telereceive-18 [8]; Telesend-17 [6].

Biography

Barclay Thormon was born into reasonable prosperity, but something about his world left him discontented. He dropped out of college after a few months, having decided that *money* was what he needed. He never married, and rarely appeared in the society pages – but sharp-eyed readers of the business pages became familiar with his name. As an investor, entrepreneur, and industrialist, he had an instinctive, ruthless flair for business. He never broke any important laws, merely bent a few rules, but many people who went to work for him left after a few months. Those who persevered were paid for their hard work. Thormon knew that he sometimes had to hire expertise.

He invoked this principle when, at the age of 51, he was diagnosed with cancer. The disease was already metastasizing, and the oncologists said that they couldn't stop it. Thormon hired team after team of doctors, with increasingly strange ideas. Somewhere along the line, he realized that money was just a means to an end; what *really* mattered was control. Or perhaps power. Whatever you needed to stay alive, anyway.



Dr. Jefferson Deane came up with the strangest idea of all. If Thormon's body was going to let him down – well, thanks to science, Thormon could do without. Dying and in pain, Thormon signed the papers. Deane's plan was probably illegal, but money could cover that.

However, the cancer spread too fast; Deane had some of the answers he needed, but not enough. So he did what he could, removing Thormon's brain and placing it in a unique nutrient- and oxygen-supply system. It worked; the brain lived. (He didn't think about anesthetizing it once the system was tested; brain matter isn't supposed to feel pain, after all.) The problem was to link it to the outside world. Deane went back to tinkering with TV cameras and electrochemical connections; he's still at it.

Things are getting a little strange around the lab. Previously trustworthy staff members are behaving in untrustworthy ways. There have been fights and other unacceptable behavior. At least three people have admitted to having blackouts and memory lapses, some hours long. And rumor has it that *someone* is operating Thormon's businesses by telephone – someone who knows far too much. As Thormon hasn't been reported dead, whoever is involved could get away with a lot.

Motivations

Barclay Thormon was in sensory deprivation for days before the latent powers of his will manifested; now he's compensating. It's unusual for a telepath also to be a solipsist; they, of all people, *know* that other men are real. But to Thormon, all these lesser minds are just feeble control panels running all these puppets – puppets who feel fascinating emotions like pleasure, love, anger, lust, fear, and pain.

Still, he wants to make sure that he will eventually gain better access to the world. He tries to avoid doing anything that seriously impedes Deane, and he would kill to prevent anyone else's interference. If Deane ever gets distracted, there may be trouble. Thormon retains his yen for power and does his best to keep an eye on business through his puppets. His old management staff can't be trusted on their own, it seems.

Encountered

Brains in jars aren't terribly mobile, so most plots will bring PCs to Thormon. The lab should be somewhere remote – a desert region, perhaps, or under a mountain. Depending on the characters' occupations, they could investigate Thormon's recent business activities, try to discover what has happened to Thormon or one of his puppets, assist in Deane's research (with only an incomplete story to begin with, of course), or use psychic talents to pick up on *something* strange. Deane hides the jar and support system away during normal visits and claims that the place is a medical research foundation, but he's not too good at pretense (he and his assistants have Acting at 9 to 11 at best). Still, that should give Thormon time to size up the situation and plot his response.

– Phil Masters

Variations

In a *Supers* game, it is tempting to give Thormon an Interface Jack (add High Technology, if necessary); in a *Cyberpunk* game, this would be mandatory. It would make him more formidable, but also less horrific; if he can interact with the world, he lacks the touch of pathos that makes him a true monster. If he plugs into the lab's systems, he gets access to cameras and microphones (and less reason to treat mental domination as an addictive drug). If he enters a larger network (probably through a Neural Cyberdeck Interface), he should gain Area Knowledge (Cyberspace) and Cyberdeck Operation, and he will have the run of his business's systems.

No Psionics?

If Thormon has no psionic powers, but Deane has invented an Interface Jack and hooked it up to a set of cameras and a speech synthesizer, the Brain can still work as a villain; all he needs is the psychopath's ability to control people *psychologically*, manipulating others by treating them as objects. Give him several social skills (at high enough levels to overcome the penalties from his disadvantages), especially Intimidation; Psychology; and add an Ally Group of underlings (controlled through a mixture of bribes and psychology), some of whom defend his life support system full-time. Anyone he cannot manipulate, he destroys, convincing some other person that he has good reason to do the deed. If PCs oppose him, he will take pains to discover all their weaknesses and insecurities, and then use that knowledge ruthlessly. In this version, he is motivated by fear of his own vulnerability, a cold lust for power, and unconscious outrage at his own condition.

Brain Transporter Unit

If Thormon has an Interface Jack and access to TL8 technology, he might acquire a personal vehicle, turning him into a mobile supervillain. Note that his brain tank occupies 5.4 cf and weighs 200 lbs., and that he will need at least a small dedicated computer to run the interface, although it need not have a terminal – Thormon controls it directly. A *GURPS Vehicles* design has a 5-kW tracked drivetrain, 1,000,000-kWs rechargeable power cells, low-light TV cameras, surveillance sound detectors, and PD 4, DR 85 advanced laminate armor. This limited-production model costs just over \$200,000. It can attain 45 mph on good roads, or 36 mph cross-country, with gAccel 3, gDecel 20, gSR 4, and gMR 1. The power cells give 55 hours of operation at top speed (less if the brain tank systems use power), or weeks of low-speed operation. The transporter's body is +0 to hit and has 81 HP; each of its two tracks is -1 to hit and has 29 HP.



Benny the Fox

324 points

Benny is an anthropomorphic red fox wearing blue slacks with green suspenders, white gloves on his hands, and an insane predatory leer on his face. He looks like he's being projected onto a movie screen.

ST: 13 [30] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 5.75
IQ: 12 [20] **HT:** 11 [10] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 5 **Parry:** 7 (Axe/Mace)

Advantages

Fast Regeneration [50]; Fur [4]; Gizmo Gadgets ×3 [15]; Hard to Kill +5 [25]; Harmony with the Tao [20]; Morph (Maintains his texture and coloring, -20%) [32]; Pitiable [5]; Rapier Wit [5]; Regrowth [40]; Resurrection (Must be redrawn when killed with paint thinners, -10%) [135]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]; Bully [-10]; Compulsive Carousing [-5]; Delusion (The world is my cartoon show) [-15]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Fanaticism (Self) [-15]; Gluttony [-5]; Greed [-15]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Laziness [-10]; Lecherousness [-15]; Megalomania [-10]; Obsession (Become a household name) [-15]; Sadism [-15]; Self-Centered [-10]; Sterile [-3]; Social Stigma (Outsider) [-15]; Unluckiness [-10]; Vulnerability (Fire, 2d) [-20]; Vulnerability (Paint thinners, 5d) [-15].

Quirks

Constant wisecracking; Does an elaborate "take" whenever excited; Says "Hey kids, watch this!" before doing anything truly violent; Talks to an imaginary audience. [-4]

Skills

Acrobatics-13 [8]; Acting-12 [2]; Axe/Mace-14 [8]; Disguise-12 [2]; Driving (Auto)-12 [2]; Fast-Talk-15 [8]; Intimidation-15 [8]; Performance-11 [1]; Shapeshifting-21 [22]; Stealth-21 [64]; Tactics-15 [10].

Languages

English (Native)-12 [0].

Biography and Motivations

Benny is an example of what happens when good cartoons go bad. Or he would be, if he had ever been a good cartoon character to begin with. Benny the Fox appeared in only one animated short made in 1942, condemned as the "most foul, disgusting, and offensive piece of filth ever put on film!" by critics. That review might be dismissed as a product of more puritanical times, except that Benny's only film, *Mayhem Madness*, features nothing but Benny performing mindless acts of depravity on-screen.

Benny was created in the late 1930s, in the golden age of animation. His creator, Irwin Mederson, worked for many different studios, but never really came up with anything on his own. His ideas were too strange, even obscene, to be used in films. He was fired from one job after his employer saw his doodles of the company's star characters performing acts of a dubious nature.

He worked on his pet project in secret at his next job, after hours. He painstakingly created an animated short starring his own creation, Benny the Fox. After a few years of furtive work, Irwin used his own savings to rent an old theater and invited his current and former employers as well as prominent movie critics to watch the premiere. He promised them an animated movie they'd never forget.

He delivered. Not 10 seconds into the show, Benny the Fox had already disgusted and offended the viewing audiences with acts of senseless violence and gratuitous depravity that left more than a few of the viewers vomiting, some in a faint, and nearly all scarred for life.

Benny never got a mainstream following as a cartoon. Having spent all his money in the production, Irwin was now broke. He sold off all his equipment except for a projection camera, which he used to watch his beloved movie night after night. Irwin Mederson would remain in the shadows of animation's greats . . . until the murders.

One by one, the people who had lambasted his movie at its premiere died in bizarre ways. One movie critic had his head caved in with an anvil. A studio executive had his head blown off with dynamite that was stuffed in his mouth. Irwin's wife, son, and last employer, who had all been at the premiere, were found stuffed inside a single small trash bin, mangled beyond recognition.

Though no fingerprints were found, the trail of victims led back to Irwin, and the methods of execution matched the antics of Benny the Fox in Irwin's movie. Irwin Mederson was arrested and tried in 1944, and was declared incompetent to stand trial when he insisted he was innocent of the crimes, and that his own creation, Benny the Fox, had somehow come to life and wreaked vengeance on those who had denied him his chance at stardom. *Mayhem Madness* was screened by psychological experts, who declared that it was proof the man was insane, expressing his twisted fantasies through his films, then living them out when his movie was a failure. Irwin spent the rest of his life institutionalized; he died in 1966, still insisting he was innocent. Which was the truth.

When he claimed Benny was real, Irwin wasn't crazy (or at least, not to the point of delusion). Benny is a real being, brought to life by Irwin's movie, a living embodiment of Irwin's twisted visions and demented fantasies. Buddhist lore might call him a Tulpa, a thought-form, except that Benny can't become more human, nor does he want to. He wants to have fun the only way he knows how. He also wants to be popular. He'd kill to be famous.

Benny first leapt from the movie screen one evening, after Irwin had fallen asleep watching *Mayhem Madness*. He leafed through Irwin's address book, and began offing the



people who had ruined his big debut, one by one. Irwin did catch him returning one late evening, but when he ran to embrace his creation, Benny cuffed him on the head and told him to stay out of his way. The human had been necessary for his creation, but now Benny felt independent. But when Irwin was arrested, Benny found himself a prisoner in the unwatched movie for years.

Benny was quite pleased when a few of the institution's orderlies found his movie and loved it. He became an underground sensation; he finally had an audience who loved him and watched him regularly enough to satisfy his craving for attention. Sometimes, when he felt that a particular audience was twisted or perverted enough, he even left his movie screen to interact with them directly.

But now, with the Internet becoming so popular, Benny's audience is dwindling. He's now afraid he'll be forgotten again, locked up inside his movie can and left in a storage closet forever. And when Benny's afraid, he gets angry.

Benny's killings to date have been focused on people his fans dislike. He has come up with an idea to save himself, however. If the Internet is the new medium of choice, then maybe it can give him a new chance for worldwide stardom.

He's no fool; he knows he has no chance of being put on TV or in mainstream theaters. But if any kind of expression goes online . . .

Public Knowledge

The film *Mayhem Madness* is known in a few underground animation circles. Benny, *Mayhem Madness*, and their creator, Irwin Mederson, also have a footnote in books about the history of animation, as the "most offensive animated movie ever made."

Adventures

Benny works best for modern *GURPS Horror* campaigns, as a partner to a human serial killer or as a twist to the usual dark cult concept. In *GURPS Cyberpunk* campaigns, he becomes a virtual entity who's found his way out of the Net to kill. His lethality can be toned down for more light-hearted campaigns, where Benny is a rambunctious cartoon character in a fish-out-of water scenario.

— Rolland Therrien

Elrond Carver

714 points

Age 59; 5'11", 84 lbs. Elrond Carver is an atomic lich (p. T54), a glowing, fire-charred skeletal figure.

ST: 17 [60]	DX: 14 [45]	Speed: 8.0
IQ: 15 [60]	HT: 18 [80]	Move: 8
Dodge: 8	Parry: 10 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Atomic Lich [230]; Filthy Rich [50]; Intuition [15]; Magery 6 [50]*; Multimillionaire x3 [75]; Status 3 [0]**.

* Bought up from racial norm

** Free from Wealth and Multimillionaire

Disadvantages

Callous [-6]; Careful [-1]; Enemy (The CIA, 6 or less) [-20]; Enemy (Rival Mafia groups, 6 or less) [-20]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; Obsession (Accumulate power) [-10]; Reputation -4 (As a Mafia lord, among law-abiding citizens, 7 or less) [-3].

Quirks

Hates extravagance. [-1]

Skills

Administration-15 [6]*; Area Knowledge (Chicago)-17 [4]; Area Knowledge (Eastern Iowa)-16 [2]; Area Knowledge (Kansas City)-17 [4]; Brawling-15 [2]; Diplomacy-16 [10]*; Guns (Light Auto)-16 [1]; Interrogation-17 [6]; Intimidation-17 [6]; Leadership-16 [8]*; Streetwise-16 [4].

* Includes -2 from Callous.

Languages

English (Native)-15 [0].

Spells

All at 19: Alertness (VH); Alter Body; Alter Visage; Ambidexterity; Banish; Borrow Language; Borrow Skill; Bravery; Charm; Clumsiness; Complex Illusion; Conduct Power (VH); Continual Light; Darkness; Daze; Death Vision; Deathtouch; Dexterity; Draw Power (VH); Emotion Control; Enslave (VH); Enthral; Fear; Foolishness; Forgetfulness; Gloom; Great Geas (VH); Great Hallucination; Hallucination (VH); Haste; Hinder; Hush; Illusion Disguise; Illusion Shell; Itch; Keen Ears; Keen Eyes; Lend Language; Lend Skill; Lesser Geas (VH); Light; Loyalty; Madness; Mage-Stealth; Mass Daze; Mass Sleep; Mass Suggestion; Mind-Reading; Mind-Sending; Minor Healing; Nightmare; Oath; Paralyze Limb; Perfect Illusion; Permanent Forgetfulness (VH); Scryguard; Seek Power; Sense Emotion; Sense Foes; Shape Darkness; Silence; Simple Illusion; Sleep; Slow; Sound; Spasm; Steal Power (VH); Strengthen Will; Strike Blind; Strike Deaf; Strike Dumb; Suggestion; Telepathy (VH); Terror; Truthsayer; Wall of Silence; Wither Limb [93].

Equipment

Elrond keeps a 20-point Powerstone (p. B161) with him but is otherwise unarmed, preferring to use his formidable magical skills to deal with any direct threat. The rest of his equipment will vary with his current guise (using Perfect Illusion Disguise over a radiation suit). Many of his former enemies are now enslaved, and he may have as many as a dozen of them nearby, carrying firearms loaded with Depleted Necronium rounds.

Biography

Elrond Carver was born Carver Ellison, the youngest of six boys in the small farming community of Strawberry Point, Iowa, in 1941. He was an exceptionally smart and athletically gifted young man, but seemed to lack a moral compass. At 19, he left the small town for the big city of Chicago; by 1963, he was well known in Mafia circles as a cold-hearted enforcer and sometime hitman. In his line of work, however, his options were limited unless he was a Bernadanti (a wizard; see p. T121), and Carver lacked the wizardly aptitude.

After a couple of jobs went sour, he left Chicago, changed his name to Elrond Carver, and took up residence in Kansas City. In 1973 he became a test subject in Project UMBER Regal; he was one of the 30 who "survived" the fatal doses of irradiated compounds by rising from the dead as atomic liches. The liches then left the project . . . violently. (See *GURPS Technomancer*.)

Elrond Carver returned to Chicago. By 1977, he was on his way to being the top enforcement man in Chicago. Through patience, methodical planning, and pure cunning, he seized control of all organized crime activities in the Midwest in 1985. He has maintained this position with an iron fist ever since.

Motivations

Elrond is driven by an insatiable lust for power. He is not particularly greedy, acquiring financial resources to open the doors to real power. He is not vindictive, and getting back at the CIA is not in his plans – but keeping them out of his business is a top priority.

Over the years, he has hired many alchemists to study the methods that led to his current state. It is not that he wants to be cured – far from it. He wants to create more atomic liches and enslave them. He has even attempted to locate the other subjects from Project UMBER Regal. So far, both efforts have been fruitless.

To get the most out of Elrond Carver, use him sparingly. Outside of a very high-powered campaign, attacking Carver directly amounts to suicide. Fortunately, Carver eschews direct action too. When the heroes, intentionally or accidentally, affect Carver's bottom line, start slowly hinting at his involvement. After several such hitches, Carver could be working in their midst – even as a trusted friend – before the truth is revealed.



Encountered

Most people encounter Elrond Carver unaware. Many Chicagoans have unwittingly been face-to-perfect-illusionary-face with the “Dark Lord of Chicago,” as he is now known. Most of the time, he appears in public as he did in life: neither ugly nor particularly handsome, with dark hair, brown eyes, and stylish but not extravagant clothing. Even when disguised, however, Elrond is still radioactive. Prolonged exposure to him could be deadly. Those who have seen Elrond in his natural state have not lived long enough to relate the information to anyone.

The most frightening thing about Elrond is his lack of conscience. He is cold, calculating, and – most of all – patient. Over the years, he has methodically studied the spells he felt were most useful to his work, those of mind control and illusion. Even in life, he was always one for doing things with the least amount of force, so he has many goons to provide the muscle of his operation.

Variations

Elrond Carver is designed specifically for use in a **Tech-nomancer** campaign, but he could be used with very little modification in an **Atomic Horror**, **Supers**, **Black Ops**, or even a particularly strange **Illuminati** campaign.

Atomic Lich 230 points

Attributes: ST +2 [20]; HT +2 [20].

Advantages: Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Extra Fatigue +8 [24]; Extra Hit Points +8 [40]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Injury Tolerance (All) [50]; Magery 3 [35]; Silence +2 [10]; Single-Minded [5]; Vampiric Immortality [60].

Disadvantages: Dependency (Mana, common, constantly) [-25]; Hideous Appearance [-20]; Lifebane [-10]; Social Stigma (Outlaw) [-15]; Sterile [-3]; Unhealing (heals via Steal Health) [-20]; Unnatural Feature (Body temperature is 120°F, glows in the dark) [-5].

Spells: Breathe Radiation (VH) at IQ+5 [16]; See Radiation at IQ+5 [8].

Notes: Atomic Liches are radioactive, emitting alpha particles that deliver 1 rad/second to anyone in close proximity (a few yards).

– K. David Ladage

The Bernadanti

The Bernadanti was formed because they needed to be formed. Let's face it, it was a lot easier in the old days. Back then, when somebody was givin' you trouble, you whacked 'im and that was that. Shoot 'im in the head, throw the body over a bridge someplace or bury it out in the woods, and fuggedaboutit.

But those days are over. It just ain't that easy anymore. The cops got all sorts of people that can find a frickin' toenail and tell you the poor bastard's life story. They can figure out who did the job on the guy, why it was done, who he was workin' for. Anything and everything.

Let's face it, the Bernadanti came about 'cause in the world we live in, dead men do tell tales. Not long after one of the New York families was up to their necks in hot water 'cause some guy squealed from the grave, a specialist was born. When these guys are done, you don't squeal no more. Guaranteed.

– Leo “The Shark” De Biasi,
from an interview in 1982

Gill Man

229 points

Standing nearly 7 feet tall, the Gill Man has a bipedal form similar to a human. He has a fish-like gaping mouth, filled with razor sharp teeth like those of a piranha. His bulbous green eyes appear to have protective second eyelids that blink constantly while the creature is out of the water. He breathes through gills that run down the sides of his head and neck. His webbed hands and feet end in sharp claws. The creature is a muddy green color, providing excellent camouflage both underwater and on the swampy land of its territory. His skin is smooth, like an amphibian's.

ST: 18 [90] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.5

IQ: 8 [-15] **HT:** 16 [80]

Move: 14 (Swimming)

Dodge: 8 **Parry:** 12 (Brawling)

Advantages

3D Spatial Sense [10]; Alertness +1 [5]; Amphibious [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 1 [3]; Enhanced Move (Swimming) [10]; Extended Lifespan ×1 [5]; Gills [10]; Nicitating Membrane [10]; Night Vision [10]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Sharp Claws [25]; Sharp Teeth [5].

Disadvantages

Bad Grip [-10]; Bestial [-10]; Cold-Blooded [-5]; Dead Broke [-25]; Dependency (Water, hourly) [-20]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Mute [-25]; Reputation (As a bloodthirsty monster, to everyone, all the time, -4) [-20]; Stress Atavism (Common, severe) [-20].

Quirks

Attracted to human females; Dislikes bright lights. [-2]



Skills

Area Knowledge (Florida Everglades)-16 [16]; Brawling-18 [16]; Stealth-16 [8]; Survival (Swampland)-16 [18].

Biography

Haunting the Florida Everglades for nearly five decades, the monstrous Gill Man has become a modern folk legend. Rivaling Bigfoot in number of reported sightings, the Gill Man remains an enigma. Much of what is known of the creature comes from the first sighting in the early 1950s. The creature was captured by a group of hunters deep in the swamps. He was held captive for a full day on their boat before escaping during the night. Four of the men were killed, three more were wounded, and their boat was badly burned before the hunters abandoned their chase. No photographs were taken, but the survivors gave a detailed description of the Gill Man and his habits.

The creature is most at home in the murky waters of the swamps. With his webbed hands and feet he can swim with inhuman speed and amazing agility. The creature, reportedly, can jump from water onto the deck of a boat. Effective at underwater combat, he uses the environment to his advantage. He's intelligent enough to strike at a scuba diver's air hose. If successful, the Gill Man will hold the diver underwater until he drowns.

The Gill Man can function out of the water for brief periods. While breathing with his lungs, the Gill Man will repeatedly open and close his mouth as if trying to gulp more air. The creature weakens from extended stays out of water, and the longer he remains out, the more desperate his attempts to return will become.

Most encounters with the Gill Man occur at night, so the creature may be nocturnal. His eyes appear to be sensitive to bright light – he will immediately attack any such light source. The Gill Man has been encountered on sunny days, however, so he can function in daylight for at least short periods of time.

The monster is extremely dangerous, as he has no fear of humans and is easily agitated.

The monster is extremely dangerous, as he has no fear of humans and is easily agitated. The Gill Man will attempt to take any combat to the water, where he holds the advantage. And although the Gill Man may appear slow while moving about on land, he is still quick in hand-to-hand combat. The creature's great strength, vicious claws, and sharp teeth are capable of terrible damage.

The Gill Man does not stray far from the Everglades. The twisted waterways that wind through the center of his territory lead into a bleak lagoon. It is rumored that on the swampy shores of this lagoon is a dilapidated shack on stilts. The creature defends this area viciously, and anyone found there is attacked on sight. Why the Gill Man remains near this lagoon

and defends it is unknown, but the answers may lie inside the shack.

Another odd behavior is the Gill Man's attraction to human females. Several reported encounters with the creature have involved the attempted abduction of adult women. Because of this, several missing persons cases are unofficially attributed to the monster.

The Gill Man displays some intelligence. He has blockaded several waterways near his territory with fallen trees to keep unwanted visitors away. Some local legends say the monster was once human, but the Gill Man's origin and actual level of intelligence remain a mystery.

Local authorities, while officially dismissing the Gill Man as a folk legend, believe the creature to be all too real. There is no bounty for the Gill Man, but anyone who hunts down and kills the creature would be treated as a local hero. Anyone who manages to capture the monster alive and return with him could become the center of worldwide attention from both the media and the scientific community. Or the capture may also draw the attention of secretive groups that do not want the Gill Man's existence to be revealed.

The Gill Man's Origins

Where did the Gill Man come from? What is in that shack or lagoon that the creature is guarding so jealously? And why would such a monster want human females?

Perhaps the Gill Man was once human, as believed by many of the locals. That would explain the Gill Man's attraction for women; even transformed into a horrible monster, the creature is still a red-blooded male deep down inside. His condition could be the result of an innocent experiment gone terribly wrong, and the shack was the unfortunate scientist's lab or residence. Or the experiment could have been less innocent – the creature may be the result of some top-secret government project to create the ultimate naval special-ops weapon. Are these experiments still going on?

Or perhaps the monster is some form of mutated animal. Such a creature would naturally defend his home territory. Perhaps the lagoon was contaminated by radioactive waste dumped by some shady corporation or government agency, which led to the mutation. Such a group wouldn't want either their involvement or the result of their indiscretion to be discovered. Or the contaminant may instead have been carried to the Everglades by a meteor.

Perhaps it was more than a meteor that crashed into the swamp. The creature might be a visitor from outer space. The alien's spaceship may have crash-landed on Earth and stranded him here . . . or he may just like it here. The spaceship could be lying at the bottom of the lagoon, which would explain the creature's territoriality. And everyone knows that space aliens just love Earth women.

One other possibility is the Gill Man is the last survivor of some prehistoric race. He might be the last of his kind, desperately searching for a mate (even a human one) to carry on the species. Or he could be a citizen of Atlantis, guarding a secret entrance to that lost realm.

– Andy Fix

Hachi-otoko

672 points

A roughly human-shaped swarm of bees. He may wear a cloak to help disguise his appearance, but he is accompanied by a noticeable buzzing sound and a strong smell of honey.

ST: 20 [110] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 8 [-15] **HT:** 14 [45] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 11 (Brawling)

Advantages

360-Degree Vision [25]; Absolute Direction [5]; Acute Faz Sense +4 [8]; Body of Swarm (Humanoid form, +50%; insect form, +25%; flying, +50%) [135]; Faz Sense [10]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Cutting or Impaling Bonus, No Neck, and No Vitals) [50]; Magnetic Sense 2 [10]; Regeneration (Instant) [100]; Spirit Form (Physical Form +80%; Unlimited Lifespan +30%; Missing powers: Communicate telepathically -10%, Poltergeist effect -20%, Possession -20%, Probability alteration -20%, Sense auras -10%, Travel instantaneously -5%) [125]; Spirit Invulnerability [50]; Strong Will +5 [20].

Disadvantages

Bloodlust [-10]; Hidebound [-5]; Illiteracy [-10]; Innumerate [-5]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; Vulnerability (Sonic attacks) [-5].

Quirks

Prefers sacrifices of red cloth. [-1]

Skills

Brawling-17 [8]; Flight-14 [2].

Languages

Japanese (Native)-8 [0].

Biography

Hachi-otoko is a *kishin* (spirit) whose physical form is a swarm of bees. Each individual bee is a normal insect, but together the swarm creates a powerful entity.

The legend of Hachi-otoko begins during the Heian period near Kyôto, Japan, when General Yogodoyu freed a bee trapped in a spider's web. Yogodoyu, who had recently been defeated in battle, was visited in his dreams that night by a man dressed in black and yellow who told him to collect a thousand bee hives and place them in a big barn near the Kizu river.

Yogodoyu did so. As soon as he had completed this task, Yogodoyu's enemies launched an attack. The bees immediately began to swarm over the enemy troops. Those who did not run were stung until they died or went mad.

In gratitude, Yogodoyu and his men gathered the bodies of the bees that had died in the battle and buried them in a shrine. The shrine was destroyed in clan warfare during the Ōnin War (1467-1477), and the heroic bees were gradually forgotten. After the destruction of the shrine, the warrior spirit grew first despondent and gradually resentful. How dare anyone forget the sacrifice the bees had made!

During one of the rice riots of the Late Tokugawa Era, the ruins of the old shrine were overrun by the troops of the local *daimyô*, or feudal lord. As the rebels were slaughtered, one peasant remembered the legend of the warrior bees and, with his dying breath, called upon them to oppose the injustice of the *daimyô*. Within moments, swarms of bees swept down upon the samurai, killing several and driving the rest away from the shrine. Flushed with the thrill of battle, and angry for the years of neglect, Hachi-otoko summoned the bee swarm together, taking a humanoid form. In horror, the peasants watched as Hachi-otoko began to attack them as well.

For several months, Hachi-otoko ravaged the Kizugawa valley, until he was finally stopped by two powerful *kannushi* – Shinto priests (p. J55). Using long-suppressed *yamabushi* rituals, the pair were able to dissipate the bee swarm with an enchanted conch-trumpet and the intervention of several *kami nushi* – Shinto masters (p. J18). However, the *kannushi* always warned that if their spirit wards were breached, Hachi-otoko might one day return.

Motivations

No matter how or when he is encountered, Hachi-otoko is motivated by resentment that over the centuries has tuned into rage. Once he was revered, but he has since been forgotten and scorned. It might be possible to use flattery and promises of devotion to win his favor, but any sense of nobility that guided the spirit that once aided Yogodoyu has likely long been lost.

Another possible outlet for Hachi-otoko's resentment would be to become a bogeyman-type figure. Perhaps after his shrine was lost, the legend of vengeful bees persisted, gradually becoming a story that adults used to frighten ill-mannered children. Over time, Hachi-otoko might begin to appear, always acting carefully and selectively, to harm those who had wronged him. Such a figure could make a frightening adversary for a **Horror** campaign.

Spirit Form

This presentation of Hachi-otoko focuses on his physical form; however, he is a spirit being that binds mortal bees together into a consciousness. His Spirit Invulnerability advantage ensures that his spirit will live on even if his physical body is destroyed. However, as a spirit, Hachi-otoko is very limited in his ability to interact with the mortal world; he is only likely to be encountered in his physical form.



Encountered

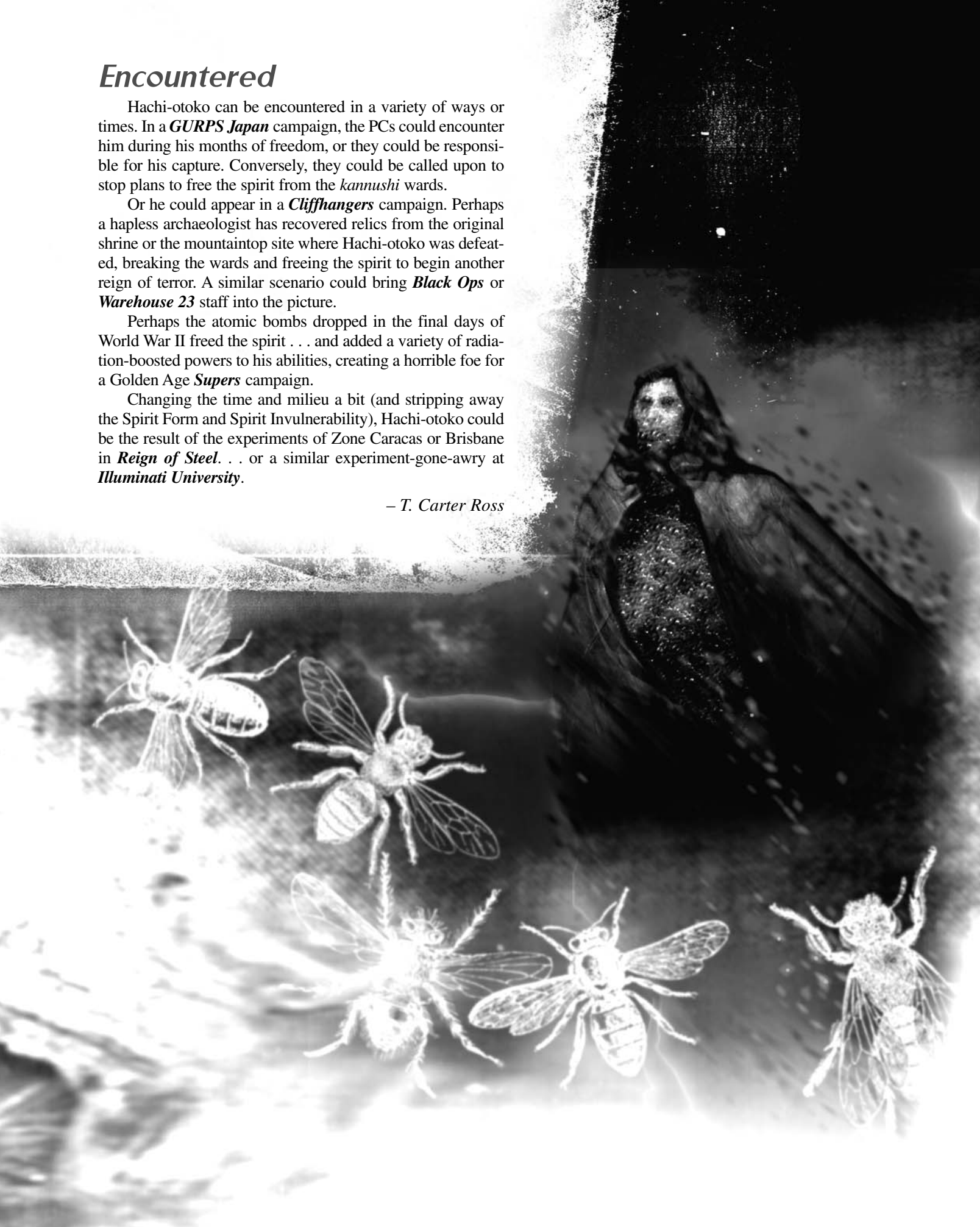
Hachi-otoko can be encountered in a variety of ways or times. In a *GURPS Japan* campaign, the PCs could encounter him during his months of freedom, or they could be responsible for his capture. Conversely, they could be called upon to stop plans to free the spirit from the *kannushi* wards.

Or he could appear in a *Cliffhangers* campaign. Perhaps a hapless archaeologist has recovered relics from the original shrine or the mountaintop site where Hachi-otoko was defeated, breaking the wards and freeing the spirit to begin another reign of terror. A similar scenario could bring *Black Ops* or *Warehouse 23* staff into the picture.

Perhaps the atomic bombs dropped in the final days of World War II freed the spirit . . . and added a variety of radiation-boosted powers to his abilities, creating a horrible foe for a Golden Age *Supers* campaign.

Changing the time and milieu a bit (and stripping away the Spirit Form and Spirit Invulnerability), Hachi-otoko could be the result of the experiments of Zone Caracas or Brisbane in *Reign of Steel*. . . or a similar experiment-gone-awry at *Illuminati University*.

— T. Carter Ross



Harvester

10,452 points

An enormous, constantly writhing mass of grayish-pink tentacles surrounding a many-toothed maw. The tentacles average 60' long, but can stretch to nearly 1,000' in length. Its body weighs dozens of tons and is solidly emplaced in the earth. The Harvester has a screech like a hundred discordant, damaged accordions.

ST: 1,000 [660] **DX:** 12 [20] **Speed:** 7.0
IQ: 6 [-30] **HT:** 16/1,000 [5,000] **Move:**
0 **Dodge:** 0

Advantages

360-Degree Vision [25]; Constriction Attack [15]; DR 50 [150]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Extra Arms (18 extra arms; all arms Reach 20) [3,600]; Extra Flexibility [10]; Full Coordination x3 [150]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Injury Tolerance (All) [50]; Instant Regeneration [100]; Invulnerability (Fire/Heat, Cold/Ice, Electricity, Sonic, Acid; can only use one at a time -10%) [428]; Penetrating Call [5]; Regrowth [40]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Stretching x4 [90]; Temperature Tolerance 20 [20]; Vacuum Support [40].

Disadvantages

Bestial (Man-eater) [-15]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Invertebrate [-20]; Presentient [-20]; Sessile [-50].

Psionic Abilities

Teleportation-84 (Single-skill Exoteleport; No Signature, +20%; Object must be placed in mouth, -30%; Only to one location, -50%) [135].

Psionic Skills

Exoteleport-21 [34].

Biography

They were sent from beyond the stars, shot in their tiny cocoons across uncountable millions of miles to whatever destinations fell to their lot. Many perished, falling into stars or encountering other environments too deadly, too dangerous for even their enhanced physiologies. But some found havens, falling like seeds on fertile ground.

This creature's name, given by its creators, could be roughly translated as "Harvester." It has but one purpose – to send back matter to the originating point. Hundreds of thousands of harvesters were sent out, billions of years ago, with nothing in the way of guidance. Many were lost, but some survived.

The Harvester is a sophisticated bio-engineered creature with a two-stage life cycle. The first is larval; contained in a cocoon, it can survive the rigors of space and a hot landing on many terrestrial planets. It is not, however, capable of surviving in the depths of a sun or a black hole.

The second stage begins after the cocoon lands on a hospitable world. The cocoon splits and the creature emerges hungry. In a relatively short time, it engulfs enough matter that it can perform its main duties.

The massed tentacles are strong enough to batter their way to the surface, while the main body of the creature remains safely below ground. It then proceeds to reach out, snatching anything within sight (the tentacles themselves are covered with the creature's equivalent of eyes) and stuffing it into the gaping maw beneath. Once an object – whether it be person, vehicle, or part of a building – is within the mouth, it is swallowed (actually, teleported back to the Harvester's planet of origin in a distant galaxy), never to be seen again. The only limitation is that the teleported object must weigh 10 tons or less.



What happens to the items once teleported is open to speculation. Research? Food? An alien attempt to communicate? A hero snatched and “swallowed” might get a first-hand look at what goes on. Of course, getting back to tell his story might be a little challenging.

Weaknesses

The Harvester is not susceptible to any specific form of damage, with DR 50 between it and the outside world. In addition, it can throw up defenses that block certain types of damage completely. Psionics and magic cannot be blocked because the creature’s psionic ability must be unhampered, and because the makers of the Harvester have never encountered magic.

Still, wielders of psionic powers and of magic must work quickly. The Harvester’s regeneration and stretching tentacles make it a very formidable enemy.

– Alan Atkinson

Variations on a Theme

If your PCs need more of a challenge from the Harvester, here are some ideas:

Look Out! It’s Moving!

Remove Sessile. With Extra Legs (7+ legs, cannot kick) and Reduced Move -3, it will undulate at speed 4 on a writhing nest of tentacles. +50 pts

Add Tunnel x4 for more directional options. +80 pts

Where Did It Go?

Add Single-Skill Autoteleport with No Signature (+20%) at Power 15, skill level 21. It will be able to teleport up to 2 miles. +112 pts

Where Did That One Come From?

Add Absorption (vs. Crushing; only to Duplication) 28 with the 0-point custom alteration “points absorbed do not drain away until applied, whereupon they all drain away.” Add Duplication with the enhancements “if one is killed, others are unaffected (+20%)” and “duplicates are permanent (+100%).” Struck with enough damage, the Harvester will bud off a duplicate, which will erupt from the ground nearby. +389 pts

Any two of these, or all three, can be combined, of course.

Millions of Years B.C.

The heavens split, and fire struck the earth. Creatures, that would in time be known as man, leaped and hooted and screamed in terror as the thunder washed over them. But the entity in the heart of the fire was buried deep in the crater it made. Awaiting the signal to awaken, its tiny tentacles pressed against the outer cocoon, weakened by its fiery passage across the sky and the thunderous impact of landing.

In time, the civilizations of Man arose and many cities grew. One, unknowingly, covering the site of the crash. This city housed millions on millions of human beings. They were watched over by those of great power – the International Super Teams. And this was good, for only supers could possibly stand up to what slept within the cocoon buried deep beneath the city . . .

15:45:03, December 31, 1999

Argurous Astraph stood atop the Empire State Building and surveyed the city. Beside her, a solidly built man glowered at the same skyline as if it had done him some personal wrong.

“Something the matter, Warrior?” she asked.

“No,” he admitted, and glowered all the more. “Nothing I can pin down, anyway. But something’s wrong. I can feel it in my bones.”

“Whatever it is,” she assured him, “we can take care of it.”

“Yeah,” he replied. “Maybe.” But his tone was not convincing.

Deep below, the creature was stirring, absorbing mass . . . growing. Its specialized senses detected energy building throughout the city. When that energy reached a crescendo, the creature would act.

00:00:01, January 1, 2000

Clocks all around the city struck midnight. Fireworks exploded and showered light through the dark sky. The throngs of tensed humans, swelling the streets, suddenly erupted with cheering, drinking, dancing and singing in the greatest celebration of modern times. The cocoon opened . . .

07:27:31, January 1, 2000

Argurous Astraph paused to wipe the sweat from her brow. Her silver skin glistened, reflecting a distorted view of the monstrosity in the pit below her. The abyss grew as the creature’s tentacles devoured everything within reach. They could almost reach the foot of the building upon which she stood.

Thunderous detonations split the air as Red Baron finished his bombing run. Even over the explosions, she could hear the ear-splitting sound of the creature’s busted-calliope shriek. Smoke trailed from her fingertips, evidence of the massive energies she’d expended, to no apparent avail.

Witchwind landed on the rooftop, in a vortex of wind she commanded. “How’s it going?” she asked.

“Not good,” answered Argurous Astraph grimly, leaning over the side of the building and unleashing another barrage. “Not good at all.”

Currently appears 50 years old; 6'0", 170 lbs. With steel gray hair and dark brown eyes, his current appearance is a hard man gone soft with age. But in his true form, Ixis is 5'10" and 150 lbs., an emaciated gray-skinned humanoid with a sunken abdomen and long-fingered hands. His smooth face is devoid of any features save the white pupilless eyes and a small slit for a mouth. He will always be encountered mimicking someone else; his true appearance will only be seen if he is killed.

ST: 14 [30] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 6.5

IQ: 12 [30] **HT:** 13 [20] **Move:** 6

Dodge: 7

Parry: 7 (Sword) 9 (Staff or Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]; Allies (Four fellow diplomorphs, 200 points each, 9 or less) [60]; Combat Reflexes [15]; No Confused [10]; Diplomorph [156]; Reputation +3 (As a great leader, among other diplomorphs, all the time) [5]; Status +4 [15]*; Strong Will +2 [8]; Wealth (Very Wealthy) [30].

* Includes +1 for Very Wealthy.

Disadvantages

Compulsive Spending [-5]; Extravagance [-10]; Greed [-15]; Paranoia [-10]; Reputation -2 (As an impostor, among his subjects, always) [-5]; Sadism [-15].

Quirks

Claims to merely dislike dogs and silver; Fascinated by the effects of alcohol on non-diplomorphs; Prefers to mimic males; Replaces the rich and powerful if at all possible. [-4]

Skills

Acting-18 [4]; Area Knowledge (Megalos)-12 [1]; Brawling-13 [4]**; Broadsword-12 [4]**; Fast-Talk-13 [4]; Leadership-12 [2]; Savoir-Faire-14 [0]†; Shadowing-13 [2]‡; Staff-12 [8]**; Stealth-16 [4]*; Survival (Woodlands)-12 [2]; Tactics-10 [1]; Wrestling-15 [8].

* Includes +2 for Silence.

** Includes -2 for Bad Sight.

† Free from Status.

‡ Bought up from Stealth default.

Maneuvers

Choke Hold-14 [2]; Neck Snap-15 [8].



Diplomorph

156 points

Attributes: ST +1 [10]; IQ -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10].

Advantages: Ambidexterity [10]; DR 3 [9]; Flexibility [11]**; Hard to Kill +2 [10]; High Pain Threshold [9]*; Hyper-Strength [27]*; Injury Tolerance (No Brain, No Neck, No Vitals, No Cutting or Impaling bonus) [45]; Longevity [5]; Mimicry [15]; Morph (Humanoids only, -50%) [16]*; Nictating Membrane [10]; Night Vision [10]; Recovery [10]; Regular Regeneration [23]*; Resistant to Poison [5]; Sanitized Metabolism [5]; Secret Communication (General concepts and emotions, visible signs of communication) [10]; Sensitive [5]; Silence 1 [5].

* Not versus silver or while in direct contact with silver (-10%).

** As above, plus Takes extra time (4 seconds, not 1 -20%).

Disadvantages: Bad Sight (Nearsighted, noncorrectable) [-25]; Careful [-1]; Confused [-10]; Dying Race [-10]; Odious Racial Habit (Murders and replaces other sentiments) [-15]; Phobia (Dogs, Severe) [-10]; Sterile [-3]; Ugly [-10]; Unusual Biochemistry [-5]; Vulnerability (Silver, 1d) [-15].

Skills: Acting at IQ+4 [10]; Escape at DX+3 [1]*.

* Includes +5 for Flexibility.

Quirks: Sensitive about low IQ. [-1]

Diplomorphs are mysterious creatures. They seem to be sexless and completely unable to reproduce. They are feared by most and killed when they are discovered. Most believe them to be deliberately created, as some form of weapon or assassin. On Yrth, they could have been sucked up by the Banestorm from their own environment, created by the Dark Elves or Djinn, or the result of some mad wizard's dabbling. In a *GURPS Bio-Tech* campaign, they are obviously custom assassins now running loose. In that case, they may qualify for a racial Enemy – perhaps the creating corporation or government trying to cover its tracks. Diplomorphs are not overly clear thinkers, and do not cover their tracks well, making them fairly easy to detect once they are known to be in an area.

Their motivation for killing and replacing humans (or other humanoids) seems to be merely an effort to survive and prosper. Some have been known to hire out as assassins, but few people will deal with them.

Languages

English (Native)-12 [0]; Arabic-12 [2]; Latin-11 [1].

Ixis' social advantages can vary, depending on who he has replaced. His current social status reflect that of the Baron Rufus he replaced.

Biography

The actual background of Ixis is mostly unknown. Ixis was first encountered in Megalos near the city of Quartedec (from *GURPS Fantasy*). He is in his mid-30s – still young for the long-lived diplomorph race. He wanders extensively, killing and replacing anyone whose life seems an interesting diversion for him. He consistently raises his sights. His first victims were wanderers, unlikely to be missed. His latest victims include a minor noble and a wealthy merchant.

Intensely paranoid, he will maintain an assumed form, even while completely alone, and take great precautions to avoid being detected.

Ixis is very strong and clever for his race; he can keep a façade up for months at a time before abandoning his guise for a new one. When he replaces someone he will quickly squander their money on his own luxury; after, that is, he gets rid of any dogs or silver they have. Once the opportunities granted by his stolen identity are used up, he will choose a good moment to leave, taking a different and unrelated identity during the escape.

Recently, Ixis expanded beyond merely plundering the lives of his victims. He gathered four fellow diplomorphs (who regard him as a paragon of their kind). They replaced the Baron Rufus, lord of a small Barony north of Bannock, his wife, son, and two main advisors. The Earl, Barris Tremaine, pays little attention to the area, so Ixis is confident they will remain undetected until they can replace more nobles, expanding their rule. However, Ixis' free spending has reduced the wealth of the barony and given rise to dangerous rumors amongst the population (the original baron was a known miser and dog lover).

Encountered

Ixis never drops his disguise. Intensely paranoid, he will maintain an assumed form, even while completely alone, and take great precautions to avoid being detected.

Ixis' favorite tactic (and that of diplomorphs in general) is to lure a victim into a dark place by mimicking the voice of a friend, or perhaps a child in danger. Then he will sneak up and use his Hyper Strength with the Neck Snap maneuver in combination to kill the person. His sudden explosive strength can be a surprise to anyone trying to capture the baron.

PCs can be agents of Megalos or Al-Wazif, or just wanderers who stumble into the barony. Megalan agents could be investigating the rumors and the sudden change in the baron's policy; Wazifi agents can be seeking to encourage the baron's weakness in preparation for war. In the event of an invasion of Al-Wazif, Ixis is likely to flee and look for another power base, destabilizing the entire southern flank of Megalos. The diplomorphs won't care . . .

– Peter V. Dell'Orto

Leatherjacket

644 1/2 points

Age unknown; 5'8", 80 lbs. Leatherjacket has dry, pallid skin, sunken eyes, long lank black hair, and is scrawny to the point of emaciation. He walks with a peculiar hint of disjointedness. He is clad from head to toe in a crudely-stitched close-fitting leather garment, laced at the neck, shoulders, wrists, hips, and ankles. Some of his teeth are missing and his fingernails and toenails are long and ragged. His voice is an unpleasant hissing rasp.

*Beware old Leather-jack, my son,
For he would do you wrong.
The strongest shall be weak, my son,
And the weakest shall be strong.*

ST: 15 [60]	DX: 12 [20]	Speed: 6.5
IQ: 10 [0]	HT: 14 [45]	Move: 6
Dodge: 6	Parry: 7 (Axe/Mace) 12 (Brawling)	

Advantages

Contact (Kaphizandes, skill 15, available 12 or less, usually reliable) [8]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Fearlessness +5 [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Independent Body Parts (Detachable head, +15%; No reattachment, -60%) [19]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Neck) [10]; Invulnerability (To all damage except from his chosen victim) [150]; Temperature Tolerance 10 [10]; Unaging [15]; Very Rapid Healing [15]; Zeroed [10].

Disadvantages

Bloodlust [-10]; Disturbing Voice [-10]; Frightens Animals [-10]; Hidebound [-5]; Lifebane [-10]; Low Empathy [-15]; Obsession (Hunt down and kill everyone involved in his death, and their descendants) [-15]; Overconfidence [-10]; Pallor [-10]; Primitive -1 [-5]; Reputation -3 ("The legend of Old Leather-jack," among the families he is hunting, 10 or less) [-3]; Sadism [-15]; Semi-Literacy [-5]; Skinny [-5]; Sterile [-3]; Stubbornness [-5].

Quirks

Likes to look into his victims' eyes as they die; Prefers to use a knife for his kills; Will sacrifice his victims to Kaphizandes if he can. [-3]

Skills

Area Knowledge (England)-13 [6]; Axe/Mace-14 [8]; Axe Throwing-13 [2]; Black Powder Weapons/TL5 (Matchlock Pistol)-13 [1]*; Boating-12 [2]; Bow-13 [8]; Brawling-18 [32]; Broadsword-14 [8]; Climbing-13 [4]; Crossbow-14 [4]; Detect Lies-8 [6]**; Disguise-10 [6]; Driving/TL6 (Automobile)-11 [1]; Escape-12 [4]; Flail-13 [8]; Guns/TL6 (Pistol)-13 [1]*; Hiking-13 [1]; History (British)-7/13 [1]; Intimidation-18 [18]; Knife-18 [32]; Knife

Throwing-14 [4]; Leatherworking-14 [8]; Motorcycle/TL6-12 [1]; Net-12 [4]; Orienteering-13 [8]; Research-8 [1/2]; Sacrifice-18 [20]; Scrounging-16 [12]; Shadowing-10 [2]; Shortsword-14 [8]; Spear-14 [8]; Spear Throwing-13 [2]; Staff-12 [4]; Stealth-14 [8]; Streetwise-15 [12]; Survival (Urban)-11 [4]; Swimming-12 [1]; Throwing-12 [4]; Tracking-15 [12]; Traps/TL4-8 [1/2]; Traps/TL6-10 [2]; Two-Handed Axe/Mace-14 [8]; Two-Handed Sword-14 [8]; Weaving-11 [1]; Wrestling-14 [8].

* Includes IQ bonus.

** Includes Low Empathy penalty.

Maneuvers

Close Combat (Knife)-18 [1]; Head Lock-13 [4]; Hit Location (Knife)-18 [4]; Kicking-18 [2]; Neck Snap-14 [4]; Rabbit Punch-18 [2]; Stamp Kick-18 [1/2].

Languages

English-10 [2]; Old English (Native)-10 [0].

Psionic Powers

Psychokinesis (Power 5; Levitation only; No Signature, +20%; Cannot fly – ground movement only, -50%) [11].

Psionic Skills

Levitation-10 [4].

Kaphizandes the Demon

Kaphizandes is a lesser demon, although his personal power has advanced with Leatherjacket's sacrifices. As such, he cannot guarantee an instant response time to a summons; the occasional sacrifice does help in this regard. He is able (through various divinations) to direct Leatherjacket to his next victim.

Leatherjacket in the Cabal

Although there is no Cabal Lodge in the remote village where Leatherjacket was born (and reborn), many of the villagers' descendants – his targets – now live in London and other large cities with major Cabal presence. Leatherjack's depredations initially attracted Cabal attention in the late 18th century, and he joined the (now defunct) Osiris Resurgam Lodge in Southampton long enough to slaughter his targets there. For the last couple of centuries, Leatherjack has been a useful member of the Cabal's Outer Circle; occasionally an Adept or Theorist will help him locate targets in exchange for some minor massacre. The Cabal's wariness about demons has kept Kaphizandes from elevating Leatherjacket in the ranks – especially since higher-ranking Cabalists might be able to keep Leatherjack's unlife going without Kaphizandes' help. (See *GURPS Cabal* for more information.)

Equipment

Leatherjacket doesn't have many needs, but what he wants, he takes. Usually, this involves items of disguise, such as clothing. He always carries a long knife and, of course, wears his retaining harness.

Biography

Little is known about the origins of Leatherjacket, also known as Leather Jack or Old Leatherjack. His real name is lost in the mists of antiquity, as is the place of his birth. He was born hunched of back and twisted of limb; his mother died in childbirth. The local villagers, fearing a curse had befallen him, drove his father to leave with the disfigured child. Father and son existed on the edge of starvation, begging and thieving, until the father died ten years later. By this time he was able to survive on his own, but he never forgot the lessons of hatred his father had taught him.

One day he was expressing this anger by torturing a small animal he had snared for the pot when a voice spoke to him. It was the demon Kaphizandes, offering a chance for power and revenge if only the boy would sacrifice to him. He jumped at the chance. He learned quickly and soon was able to call upon the demon at will. But no power, nor vengeance, was forthcoming . . . until he was told to sacrifice a child.

He knew his way around the village, and children were easy to abduct in the dead of night. They had taunted him many times; this was sweet revenge. The power garnered from the first sacrifice straightened his twisted back and limbs; the second gave him the strength and vitality that he had lacked.

He became ambitious and tried to go farther, with a ritual that would make him immortal, never again to be harmed by mortal hand or weapon. This required much preparation, and he was in the final stage of the ritual when he was interrupted by enraged villagers who had tracked him down. One swipe from an infuriated woodcutter beheaded him, and the mob hacked his body to pieces. Before he died, however, he managed to mouth the last few syllables.

He awoke in a shallow grave about 30 years later. When he called upon Kaphizandes, the demon told him that he had his wish: he was alive. Did he want more? Well then, the spell would have to be amended. After a little bargaining, he was given the ability to move his body parts independently, in return for which he would be bound to hunt down the mob and all their descendants. He would also be immune to harm, as per the original ritual – except from whoever he was hunting at the time.

It took time to dig himself out – a head, a body, two arms, two hands, two legs, and two feet. He needed to bind himself together somehow. First he tried cloth (taken from a seamstress he strangled) but his knots kept unraveling. So he invaded a

leatherworker's shop and took what he needed – awls, strong thread, lacing, and an entire cowhide. From this he stitched together a crude covering for each part of his body (fingerless gloves for his hands and similar shoes for his feet) and then laced them together. He was mobile.



Weaknesses

Leatherjacket is easily harmed by his chosen victim. While others cannot *harm* him, they can inconvenience him by attacking the bindings of his harness (at -5 to hit). More than one point of cutting damage will require a roll (vs. his Leatherworking skill rather than HT). Failure means the limb is 'crippled': it will flop around uselessly until he can repair the damage. In addition, if he over-exerts himself (makes any Extra Effort attempt), a Leatherworking roll has to be made or he will damage the lacing (GM's choice which limb is crippled). He normally carries extra lacing. If a limb is severed, it will act independently of the main body, attacking of its own accord.

– Alan Atkinson

Leviathan

Age indeterminate, 10' tall, 1,000 lbs.; a roughly humanoid shape composed of six (or more!) individual humans. It wears no clothing.

ST: 30 [175] **DX:** 10 [0] **Speed:** 5.5
IQ: 12 [20] **HT:** 12/45 [185] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 5 **Parry:** 6 (Brawling)

Advantages

360-Degree Vision [25]; Ambidexterity [10]; DR 2 [6]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Independently Focusable Eyes [15]; Strong Will +4 [16]; Temperature Tolerance 3 [3]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Dead Broke [-25]; Frightens Animals [-5]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Increased Life Support 4 [-40]; Low Empathy [-15]; Obsession (Grow larger) [-10]; Solipsist [-10].

425 points (or more)

Quirks

Refers to itself as "We." [-1]

Skills

Brawling-10 [1]; Chemistry-12 [4]; Hidden Lore (Leviathanic Surgery)-18 [14]; Leadership-12 [6]; Philosophy (Rationalism)-12 [4]; Physician-12 [4]; Physiology-12 [8]; Surgery-16 [24]; Throwing-10 [4].

Languages

French (Native)-12 [0]; Spanish-12 [2].

Equipment

Because of Leviathan's size, there aren't many items it can use, and it cares little for material wealth besides. It can snatch up objects to improvise weapons or tools, but it doesn't bother with possessions unless they are part of some specific plan.

Biography

In the waning decades of the 18th century, Europe was swept by a wave of revolutionary fervor. The Age of Kings passing, the Age of the People burgeoned.

A scientific genius resolved to create a physical expression for this new order – a being which would *be* the People.

Ironically, the scientist was himself a nobleman of the old regime. Saint-Sulpice Darius Marius Nezenhaut d'Yq ignored the usual aristocratic pursuits in favor of academia. At Padua he learned anatomy and physiology, in Edinburgh he studied the ideas of Locke and Hobbes, and in Prague he delved into the suppressed discoveries of Paracelsus. Gathering a circle of like-minded idealists, d'Yq retired to his ancestral castle in Gascony to create the prototype of the new age of humanity: Leviathan.

D'Yq and his followers subjected themselves to chemical transformations and agonizing surgeries to become a single being. The original Leviathan (stats are listed above; see the box for bigger versions) was made up of six people, and as its components merged into a greater whole, their minds dissolved into a new identity which cared nothing for their high ideals.



Being Incorporated

When Leviathan adds another human to itself, the victim is first surgically linked into its bloodstream and nervous system. The assimilation process then takes about half an hour for each point of the victim's HT. Until this process is complete, he can try to escape by winning a Quick Contest of ST against the ST-20 grip of Leviathan. When the subject is completely incorporated, he loses control of his limbs and can no longer fight.

However, an individual can still struggle mentally. Once per day, pit the victim's Will against Leviathan's in a Quick Contest. If the individual wins the contest, he retains his own consciousness; on a failure he slips into a semiconscious state. If Leviathan gets a critical success, the individual's mind dissolves permanently. If the individual makes a critical success, he can make Leviathan do *one* thing.

Incorporated humans become specialized for their tasks. The people making up its limbs turn into masses of muscle and bone, and the brain people gain distended heads and puny bodies. The strain of being part of Leviathan is tremendous; component humans generally don't last more than about two years. This gives the Leviathan a Dependency on new incorporated humans every year or two, which is below the threshold set for the disadvantage and so worth 0 points.

Motivations

Leviathan wishes to feed and sustain its vast body and to grow by incorporating more people. Its tremendous composite intellect and will are focused on those goals, and to destroying anything which might threaten its survival.

Leviathan's food requirements are covered by its Increased Life Support disadvantage. It also needs to replace its component humans as they wear out and die. It must replace about half of its parts every year (more if it has been injured).

However, because Leviathan is very clever, it understands it must make use of society and its institutions. In the

world of humans, Leviathan is analogous to a person in the midst of a rat swarm – as individual assailants they are weak, but gathered they can be a threat. Leviathan avoids giving the rats a chance. Its ideal situation is to keep a few towns isolated and cowed into obedience. Failing that, it might try to dominate the government of a minor state or even make a deal with a major power. If its survival is in danger, Leviathan will try to hide in a wilderness region.

Leviathan definitely does *not* pursue the creation of others like itself. They would be competition for resources. Leviathan doesn't reproduce; it continues.

Encountered

For the first few decades after its creation, Leviathan can be found in the wilds of Gascony or the Pyrenees, terrorizing small mountain towns into providing it with food and humans for incorporation. The Napoleonic Wars might drive Leviathan to seek safety on the steppes of Asia or in darkest Africa.

In the later 19th century, Leviathan could go deeper into unexplored territory, or it might be drawn to the cities of Europe and America as a source of parts. By the 20th century it would almost certainly have to find a place in civilization as some kind of secret master. The ideas which Leviathan embodies are very appealing to both Fascist nationalists and Communist collectivists, so it might ally itself with either Hitler or Stalin (or even be the hidden power behind them).

Wherever it is encountered, Leviathan is shrewd and cautious. It tries to remain out of sight, striking at rebellious subjects by surprise and then vanishing. Its residence is either massively fortified or carefully hidden, preferably both. Leviathan recruits human servitors to do the day-to-day work of procuring food and enforcing its control. These servitors are a mix of mercenaries, opportunists, and cowards. A few might consider Leviathan a god and worship it accordingly.

– Jim Cambias

Variations

While Leviathan's natural habitat is the Gothic horror world of the 19th century, it might be encountered in other eras. In a medieval setting, Leviathan would live like a fairy-tale ogre lord, ruling a feudal demesne and challenging passing knights to battle. In worlds with magic, Leviathan would be eager to learn spells and incorporate people with Magical Aptitude.

In a space-opera world, Leviathan would be a collective entity with some genetic technobabble to explain how it survives. The force keeping its component people together might be psionic in nature, so a powerful psi could be a deadly threat to Leviathan.

Getting Bigger

Leviathan's abilities vary with the number of people it incorporates. Its DX score is never high, and gets worse the bigger it gets. It does have DX 10 for fine work, since it can apply normal-sized hands to tasks. Leviathan's HT is split: as its hit points increase, its actual HT declines because of the strain on its huge body.

People	Height	Weight	ST	DX	IQ	HT	Strong Will	I.L.S.*
8	11'	1,400 lbs.	40	10	12	11/60	+5	6
10	12'	1,800 lbs.	45	10	12	11/75	+6	8
20	15'	3,600 lbs.	70	10	13	11/150	+5	14
30	16'	5,400 lbs.	90	10	14	10/225	+4	20
50	20'	9,000 lbs.	135	9/10	15	10/375	+3	30
70	22'	6 tons	160	9/10	16	10/525	+2	40
150	25'	15 tons	250	9/10	17	9/1,125	+1	80
200	30'	18 tons	300	8/10	18	9/1,500	none	100
300	38'	27 tons	450	8/10	18	8/2,250	none	150

*Increased Life Support

Lord K'Han, the Giant Ape

492 points

Age unknown; 26'8", 20 tons. Lord K'Han is a dark brown ape resembling an upright gorilla.

ST: 250/20 [215]* **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 7.75

IQ: 7 [-20] **HT:** 14/74 [345] **Move:** 7

Dodge: 8 **Parry:** 10 (Brawling)

* Final 230 points are Natural, -40%.

Advantages

Acute Hearing +2 [4]; Acute Taste and Smell +2 [4]; Alertness +8 [40]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Double-Jointed [5]; DR 12 [36]; Increased Speed 1 [25]; Night Vision [10]; Penetrating Call [5]; Super Climbing x5 [15]; Terror [30]; Thick Fur [29]; Unaging [15].

Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]; Bestial [-10]; Bloodlust [-10]; Curious [-5]; Dead Broke [-25]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; Increased Life Support [-20]; Mute [-25]; Presentient [-20]; Reputation -4 (As a giant monster) [-20]; Social Stigma (Barbarian) [-15].

Quirks

Fascinated by blondes; Fond of high places; Highly territorial; Maddened by reptiles, especially giant ones. [-4]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Skullery Island)-12 [10]; Brawling-15 [4]; Climbing-19 [16]; Intimidation-15 [0]*; Survival (Mountains)-12 [12]; Survival (Woodlands)-12 [12]; Tracking-12 [12].

* Default from ST.

On Skullery Island, K'Han also has Status 8 (God of Skullery Island) [40], but that status is not recognized in the rest of the world.

Biography

As with any tale of giant monsters, the story surrounding Lord K'Han is a composite of folklore, contradictory reports, questionable eyewitness accounts and supposedly hard evidence. While any single report or piece of evidence appears too incredible to be believed on its own, taken together they all point toward the same conclusion. Or to put it another way, K'Han's existence is the only conclusion that can explain each and every one of them.

The first historical reference to K'Han dates back 500 years. The diary of the Spanish explorer Sebastián Vascardez de Torillo contains one obscure entry about "*el Kano*, the big monkey [*mono grande*] who frighten [text incomplete]." Those who dismiss K'Han as myth are quick to criticize

Torillo's narrative as unreliable because he also claims having seen mermaids on his voyage and to have jumped into the water with them. Regardless, Torillo's incomplete entry hints at details that fit perfectly with later accounts of K'Han.

Unfortunately, no other archival documents prior to the 20th century have been discovered that refer directly to K'Han. But there is one possible indirect account. In his 1956 doctoral thesis, "Pirates of the West Indies in the 16th-18th Centuries and Their Incidental Effect on Beaches, Strands, and Alluvial Fans," Edward Ophus Kelley devotes one section to an island near the western extremity of the West Indies (location otherwise unclear). According to a contemporary source that Kelley lists as being in his private collection, the pirate ship *Royal Rapine* anchored off this small verdant island and most of her crew went ashore, taking with them a treasure chest of loot for secret burial. The crew who were left on board the *Royal Rapine* were at first angry, for they distrusted their comrades and expected to be cheated out of their fair shares. However, the crewmen soon had reason to feel fortunate, for sometime during the moonless night the land breeze brought to their ears "terribul noyse." They heard pistol shots and repeated screams from the men on the island as well as "unGodly roars to make my legs quyver in fear & we being 3 cables off shore." When the pirates dared to investigate next morning, they found the broken bodies of their erstwhile shipmates on the beach, the ship's longboat in a nearby treetop and large depressions in the sand (which most excited the interest of Kelley). According to the account, the depressions were "not made by man but by the paws of some greate Brute." Kelley concludes the depressions were in fact "obfuscatory excavations" (a term he coins and uses throughout his thesis) – that is, holes dug and refilled by the pirates to confuse and mislead any competitors who might be looking for the *Royal Rapine*'s buried treasure. But Kelley's interpretation does not explain the boat in the treetop or the crushed pirates. Finding no sign of the treasure after a short search, and desiring not to risk their lives further on the island, the skeleton crew left to tell their strange tale to others.

Then there is the autobiographical account written by Dr. Winfred B. Norton-Whittlethrop. In 1923, this English-born cultural anthropologist and his older sister, Dr. Evalina Norton-Whittlethrop (also an anthropologist), steamed from Kingston, Jamaica, to study the native population of Skullery Island. The island is situated near Cuba and was formed by a volcano now extinct. It measures roughly 5 miles long by 3 miles wide. The captain of the ship deposited them on the island and promised to return in a fortnight. The two anthropologists believed this would be sufficient time to study the natives for traces of cross-cultural linguistics. Winfred later wrote that he and his sister selected Skullery Island after they heard that a local superstition frightened most people away from it. The tiny population of 170 adults and children seemed like excellent candidates for linguistic study because their language was foreign to the outside world that so rarely disturbed them. Perhaps the Norton-Whittlethrops should have given credence to the island's name and superstition.



1923, skullery island

Tayotoshi

Field Manual 41-17: Monsters, Giant supposedly details a dozen colossal beasts, each mentioned by name and accompanied with photographs and satellite imagery.

One entry belongs to Tayotoshi, an enormous reptile distinguished by her red scales, glowing back fins, and bull-like horns. According to the manual, the first sighting occurred in October 1950, when two U.S. aviators reported a giant lizard emerging from the sea shortly after a tsunami hit the Japanese coast. Seconds later, radio contact was lost. The *USS Diodon* was dispatched to search for the downed pilots. The rescue was successful, and the captain was stunned to hear the aviators gibbering about the “red dinosaur” that breathed “atomic fire” and clawed their jets from the sky. Before she returned to Pearl Harbor, the *Diodon* detected an enormous sonar contact. Before it could be identified, it vanished.

A wave of sightings followed. Japanese fishermen and coastal villagers dubbed her “Tayotoshi,” and her tale inspired the budding Japanese film industry. Within a decade, the movies *Tayotoshi* (1954), *Tayotoshi vs. Frothra* (1956), and the controversial (due to its portrayal of American soldiers) *Tayotoshi vs. Mile High Guy* (1959) created a cultural phenomenon. Hollywood tried to cash in on the cult series with its big-budget *Monster Combat* (1977) featuring both K’Han and Tayotoshi, but the film flopped badly.

Despite the sightings, sporadic sonar contacts, and the occasional incinerated coastal village, the Navy could produce no solid evidence of Tayotoshi’s existence. That would change in 1989.

The *USS Kamehameha* was on routine patrol in the Western Pacific when she was suddenly lifted from the sea. Sailors reported hearing a thunderous roar (the sonar operator would not recover his hearing) as the submarine was shaken “like a piggy bank.” The sub was thrown through the air and landed hard, causing several compartments to rupture. Despite a severe concussion, the quick-thinking captain manned the periscope, saw Tayotoshi, and radioed in air support.

F-18s were scrambled, but Tayotoshi dove under the waves. Fortunately, one pilot managed to snap three blurry Polaroids. Naval Intelligence immediately confiscated the photographs. The Army Field Manual glosses over (or blatantly disregards) anything the Navy claims to have learned. It only classifies the creature as a *Tayotoshisaurus*, the last of her kind.

A final, anonymous source, an ex-member of the Navy’s Project Red Reptile, has this to say: “The U.S. is preparing for a war with Tayotoshi. We know it will come. We believe that she caused the last great extinction and could easily cause another. We don’t know when. We do know where. I won’t say exactly, but I wouldn’t be placing any bets in Atlantic City anytime soon. The Navy assures us that they’ve developed a counter-weapon. The latest we’ve heard is that it’s a refurbished Cold War-era mecha-monster. God help America.”

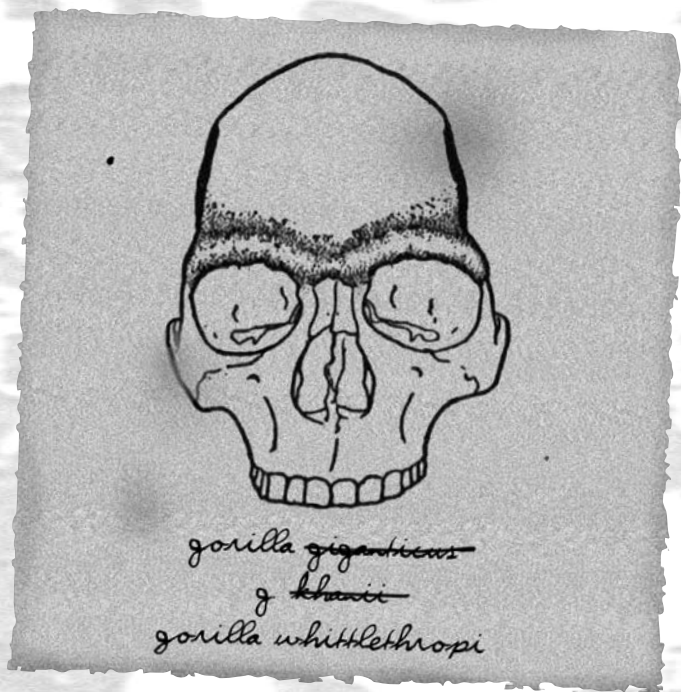
Campaigns

K’Han is perfectly suited for a wide variety of campaigns. He could easily be the star of an *Atomic Horror* adventure, when he comes forth from his wilderness home to terrorize a city and kidnap its prettier women. As a monster who is not overtly evil, the PCs should struggle to find a way to stop him without killing him. Or, perhaps K’Han is a good, yet misunderstood giant monster, who protects a city from alien menaces, colossal mutants, and giant reptilian monsters who emerge from the sea.

In a *Cliffhangers* or *Fantasy* campaign, the brave adventurers could stumble upon Skullery Island itself, or be washed ashore after a fierce storm. They would have to contend with Lord K’Han, all the more dangerous because he is in his home territory, as well as more mundane island hazards such as curious natives, erupting volcanoes, and other creatures of the lost world.

K’Han in Hollywood

Unfortunately, a great deal of manufactured fantasy has become entwined with the truth. Hollywood generates most of these erroneous and misleading tales. For instance, the 1972 film *Lord K’Han: Pure Savagery* should be more aptly subtitled “Pure Fiction” because its story line maintains that K’Han is dead, but his son, K’Han, has appeared to terrorize civilization. As far as it is known, K’Han is the last of his kind. No tribe of giant apes has been discovered on Skullery Island or elsewhere. Obviously K’Han is capable of eluding detection, which suggests that he may have a remote lair or a complex of well-concealed lairs, but it is beyond belief to think more than one giant ape exists in America and they raise offspring. Maybe the screenwriter wants us to believe K’Han propagates asexually!



The islanders gladly welcomed the anthropologists into their community, and Winfred observed that they seemed especially fond of Evalina. Because the guests and their hosts did not share a common language, initial communication was accomplished through gestures. The Norton-Whittlethrops had apparently arrived at a special time on the native calendar, or perhaps the islanders were being generous hosts, for the day after their arrival the natives made preparations for what Winfred described as a “crepuscular celebration” (twilight festival). After an abundant feast of fish, fowl and fruits which ended at sunset, the Norton-Whittlethrops were led inland to a large clearing in the trees. Here they were seated on two wooden chairs and each provided with a bowl of tasty but unrecognizable beverage. Their smiling hosts then withdrew to form a semicircle at the edge of the clearing. Winfred afterwards recalled that several men of the village began drumming rhythmically on hollowed logs and chanting what he heard as “Khan, Khan, Khan.” This perplexed him thoroughly. It did not surprise him that these primitives would wish to confer on him the rank of chief, impressed as they must be by his white skin, sandy-colored hair, English haberdashery, polished monocle and genteel behavior. But he wondered aloud to Evalina how these isolated people ever came upon the Anglicized pronunciation of the Asian word for ruler most often linked to the Mongol Genghis Khan of the 13th century. When he turned to face Evalina, he found her passed out in her chair from the heat, excitement and strong drink. Before he could think further on this, he likewise lost consciousness.

Sightings of “Lord K’Han” rapidly spread. To believe all of the reports, one would have to think that K’Han had multiplied himself and scattered.

When he awoke early next morning, he was alone in the clearing. Evalina’s chair was empty and tipped over. More strangely, it was a dozen steps away from where it had been the night before. Receiving no replies to his calls, Dr. Norton-Whittlethrop returned to the village – and the response by the islanders was immediate and surprising. His appearance now caused amazement and confusion. The women and children ran to hide in the huts, while the men fell prostrate in his path. Evalina was nowhere to be found, and none would help him look for her. Over the next week, whenever he returned from searching for his sister in the woods, the villagers would again display consternation. The men would quickly bow to him in awe and then reverently peer at the volcano’s rim (which rises to a height of 863 yards). They addressed him as “Neef-koul Khan-kuh,” which he interpreted as “not-eaten-by-Chief,” though this made little sense to him. When the steamer arrived at the end of the fortnight to collect the Norton-Whittlethrops, only Winfred embarked, uncertain of his sister’s whereabouts but certain of his grief.

Five years later, another steamer carrying another doctor arrived at Skullery Island. This was Dr. Vincent Scorpio, an American who was more entrepreneur and adventurer than scientist. In fact, no university in the U.S. lists an alumnus of

that name during the period 1900-1928. Scorpio’s claim to being a doctor may therefore fall in the same category as a snake oil showman or a southern gentleman adopting the title “colonel” though lacking official status for the honor. Whether he was authentic or not, the doctor met with success. He employed an attractive assistant to lure K’Han to the beach, where the giant was drugged by darts, chained to a pre-built raft, and towed to Scorpio’s gulf-side estate in Florida.

Within a couple of days, circulars began to appear in the Tampa Bay region announcing, “Doctor Scorpio Presents LORD KONK!!! Pre-Historic Ape! Alive & Giant! Hear the Monster Roar! Debut Show This Saturday. A Spectacle Too Big for the Coliseum in Rome!” Unfortunately for the thrill-seeking spectators (or perhaps fortunately for their safety!), K’Han missed his debut in Scorpio’s big top. The U.S. Customs Service, Office of Investigations, reacted with alarming speed (heretofore unsuspected of a bureaucracy) and closed the attraction before it started. However, the office dallied in its duty to impound the monster. Before Scorpio could remove K’Han to a place beyond U.S. jurisdiction, K’Han’s principal handler released the beast into the wild (an act that gained the handler three broken ribs and a dislocated shoulder). K’Han was now loose in America.

Sightings of “Lord K’Han” rapidly spread. To believe all of the reports, one would have to think that K’Han had multiplied himself and scattered. If he was seen in one place, he was seen in two others hundreds of miles away at the same time. However, even if 99 of 100 sightings can be dismissed as hysteria, pranks, or a black bear mistaken for a 30-foot tall monster, there still remains an intriguing handful of sightings that seem genuine.

In 1929 the FBI took over where the U.S. Customs Service left off. The extent of the investigation is unknown. Inquiries made under the Freedom of Information Act to disclose Lord K’Han’s file have produced a single folder with two sheets of paper. Both are typed memoranda bearing the signature of J. Edgar Hoover and refer to separate and unrelated investigations into organized crime. When the assumed clerical mistake was brought to the FBI’s attention, no official response was given.

More recent evidence to support the truth about K’Han comes from a reliable source (who shall also remain anonymous) who for one night held in his hands the elusive *Field Manual 41-17: Monsters, Giant*, a U.S. Army publication available only to select officers. Our reliable source assures us that the field manual contains numerous and specific references to K’Han, including a section on how to employ a FEBL (female blonde lure) to entice the monster into the forward edge of the zone of fire.

This is known: Lord K’Han exists. He prefers a solitary existence in mountainous and wooded terrain. He prowls by day or night. He has a weakness for women with light-colored hair, perhaps keeping them as captive pets, which may or may not indicate he has more than animal intelligence or sensitivity. Without a doubt, he is capable of extreme violence, especially if provoked with firearms. Somewhere in those woods, he lurks. Beware.

– Ben Knight

The Maylum Spirit

394 points

An unnaturally tall, spectral figure of a man in anachronistic medical garb. He has a thin, pale face with blood-red lips, long fingers with rough-cut nails, and a mop of shaggy gray hair.

... *The skull has always stood as an impenetrable barrier to those who would impose their wills totally upon others.*

— Alan W. Scheflin and Edward M. Opton, Jr.,
The Mind Manipulators

ST: 12/87 [245] **DX:** 10 [0] **Speed:** 5.5
IQ: 14 [45] **HT:** 12 [20] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 5

Advantages

Ghost Form (Can't ride in vehicles -5%, Can't use dream travel -10%, Can't use possession -20%, Visible -0%, Audible -0%, Can't fully materialize -10%, Unlimited lifespan +30%) [85]; Radar Sense (1-mile radius, Low-res, Can see inside objects +40%) [72]; Terror (-5 to Fright Check, Chilling Touch -20%) [64].

Disadvantages

Delusion (Everyone I meet is insane) [-15]; Delusion (I'm a living psychiatrist) [-5]; Dependency (Maylum Institute grounds, constant) [-100]; Primitive [-5]; Reputation -4 (As a malevolent spirit, among the residents of Clinton county, recognized sometimes) [-4]; Sadism [-15].

Quirks

Anachronistic use of language and expression; Keeps a journal of his victims' activities; Methodical (clinical detachment). [-3]

Skills

Area Knowledge (Maylum Institute)-16 [4]; Hypnotism -11 [1/2]; Interrogation-13 [1]; Psychology (Abnormal)-13/19 [4].

Languages

English (Native)-14 [0]; Latin-12 [1/2].

Biography

The Maylum Spirit, or The Chazy Crazy, is the ghost of a patient of the Maylum Asylum just outside of Chazy, New York. In the late 1890s, Walter Blake was incorrectly diagnosed after exhibiting some fever-induced delirium. He was taken to the Asylum and subjected to the cruelest of tortures disguised as treatments. With no sympathetic companion or advocate, surrounded by madness, and continually mistreated, he eventually succumbed to the insanity he was brought in for. The poor conditions coupled with the torture lead to his death. The horrible nature of his death brought his ghost back from the grave to carry on the cycle of cruelty.

Motivations

The Maylum Spirit recreates the tortures he suffered at the hands of the medical practitioners who attempted to cure his insanity. Victims trapped within his lair are subjected to treatment (and torture) until they lose their sanity. They are then "released into society." Using the most painful and brutal treatments



available, the Spirit performs a reversal of psychiatric care, trapping the sane and freeing the mad.

To undertake this process the Spirit will trap individuals in rooms within its lair, using its telekinetic powers to restrain them. During the first few days, he will bring the victims some food (often small animals captured and killed within the Asylum) and discuss their condition with them. The Spirit will always ignore pleas of sanity, offering such rebuffs as “Well now, if you were sane you wouldn’t be here,” or “Your family has entrusted you to my care for good reason.” Any attempts at escape will likewise be presented as proof of insanity. “Why do you run from the people who are trying to help cure you?” he will ask.

Soon after capture, the Spirit will begin to torture its victim. The torture is entirely random and will be heralded by the arrival of the Spirit and a curt announcement: “Time for your treatment.” The Spirit will telekinetically force the victim onto whatever instrument of torture he has chosen for the session, taking notes in his ledger as he does so. Treatment sessions will last for as little as 10 minutes or as long as 2 hours, adding to the uncertainty (and thus the terror and insanity) of the poor victim. Periodically the Spirit will stop and ask questions. “Any more headaches this week? How are your stools since we last met? How many visions did you experience last night?” Whatever the victim confesses will be duly recorded in the ledger and the torture will continue.

The only time the Spirit shows any emotion is when one of his victims attempts suicide. Hysterically screaming “That’s no escape!” he will attempt to prevent the action and ignore anything else.

Encountered

The Maylum Spirit cannot leave the grounds of the Maylum Asylum (or rather The Maylum Institute of Mental Health, as it was last known before its doors were closed in 1969), so his victims will have to come to him. Within his domain, however, he is formidable. His Radar Sense alerts him to the arrival of new patients, and the movements of current ones. The Asylum acts as a special source of fatigue (see p. UN51), providing an additional 20 points each day. These points and his own Extra Fatigue allow for powerful poltergeist effects and probability alterations, which he will invoke eagerly. He will always retreat (into the building’s walls) to rest and recover when his fatigue reaches his ST.

Upon entering the asylum, adventurers are likely to encounter the Spirit’s current patients before confronting the Spirit himself. If so, the patients may be only partially “treated” and in shock, tending to rave at people they see while begging for assistance or “release.” The Maylum Spirit will try to capture PCs one at a time rather than tackle groups *en masse*. He will use poltergeist effects and telepath to achieve this end: doors may slam of their own accord, strange noises or voices may be heard (perhaps only by one character), and sections of the ceiling might collapse in an attempt to separate one member from the rest of the group.

– Peter Faulkner and Hunter Johnson

Adventure Seed

An NPC with vital skills or knowledge recently vanished, only to be found later wandering insane along a highway. The psychiatrists are having great difficulty treating his dementia because of his new phobia of doctors. If the characters can discover what trauma led to his current condition, the psychiatrists may be better able to devise an effective treatment.

Variations

The Maylum Spirit presented here is the ghost of an adult male, but the deceased could be a woman or child instead. The motivations and *modus operandi* will be largely unchanged, although the mature clinical approach coming from a child may add to the horror of the situation. Their backgrounds may vary widely. A woman may have been imprisoned because of claims of witchery or hysteria (the roving womb), or simply because she was inconvenient to her family or husband. A child may have been abandoned to the mental asylum because of unusual behavior following abuse from their families. These backgrounds can be worked into their respective behaviors.

The Maylum Spirit in the Cabal

The Maylum Spirit plays a valuable role in the Cabal, which always has a use for a skilled and dedicated specialist in any field. Local lodges in New York State, and even elsewhere in the Northeast, often “refer” patients to Maylum – outside of his mania for treatment, the Spirit deals with other ghosts and shades as equals. Whether he truly recognizes the Cabal as anything other than “my peers in the psychiatric community” or “dedicated sponsors of necessary study” remains a moot point – since only those Cabalists prepared to deal with the Spirit on his own terms ever visit him at Maylum, the question doesn’t come up.

The “patients” that the Cabal steers to Maylum include reporters who get too close to Cabalist operations, policemen or eyewitnesses to the occult whose credibility needs to be irredeemably destroyed, and anyone else whose sanity or stability endangers the hidden masters. Such steering can be as simple as a snatch-and-grab job, or as subtle as laying a false trail leading stubborn investigators to Maylum on their own. Often, Cabalists will kidnap the children or siblings of their rivals (especially those in criminal families who may be inured to more prosaic threats) and dump them inside Maylum. Such rivals often become much more cooperative after their teenage daughter comes staggering back home moaning about ghosts and suffering horrific mental trauma.

Cabalist students at the Black School in upstate Martense College sometimes dump rival fraternity or sorority members at Maylum as a particularly sadistic hazing ritual; this could set up a traditional “college slasher” scenario in a lower-level Horror campaign.

Pusan Chen

1,370 points

Pusan Chen is an adult-sized undead dragon. Alive, his scales were a bright gold color, but undead, his scales are now a dingy brownish green, and seem to be loosely hanging on his body.

ST: 31 [176] **DX:** 14 [45] **Speed:** 7.25
IQ: 21 [200] **HT:** 15/31 [140] **Move:** 10
Dodge: 8 **Parry:** 11 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +4 [20]; Breathe Fire (2d) [26]; Cast Iron Stomach [15]; Combat Reflexes [15]; DR 5 [15]; Discriminatory Smell [15]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Enhanced Move +150% [15]; Extra Encumbrance [5]; Four Legs [5]; Extra Reach, 2 Arms [40]; Fearlessness +2 [4]; Flexibility [15]; Full Coordination x2 [100]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity To Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Infravision [15]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood) [5]; Literacy [10]; Magery 3 [35]; Nictating

Membrane 2 [20]; PD 2 [50]; Penetrating Call [5]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Regular Regeneration [25]; Sharp Teeth [5]; Striker (3-yard reach) [20]; Strong Will +2 [8]; Talons [40]; Telescopic Vision 2 [12]; Temperature Tolerance 11 [11]; Unaging [15]; Winged Flight [30].

Disadvantages

Bad Temper [-10]; Dependency (Mana, constantly) [-25]; Horizontal [-10]; Horrific Appearance [-30]; Inconvenient Size [-10]; No Body Heat [-5]; Pallor [-10]; Poor Grip [-5]; Reclusive [-10]; Reputation -4 (As a marauding undead beast, in the Zarak Mountain and environs) [-20]; Sterile [-3]; Unhealing [-30]; Unliving [-50].

Quirks

Likes Reptile Men. [-1]

Skills

Alchemy-18 [1]; Area Knowledge (Yttaria)-21 [1]; Brawling-16 [4]; Flight-19 [32]; Research-20 [1]; Strategy (Land)-20 [2]; Tactics-18 [1/2].



After adjusting to his undeath, he placed the sword that killed him in the waterfall, and now he waits for his love to return to him.

Languages

English-20 [1]; Arabic-20 [1]; Dragon (Native)-23 [2]; Dwarvish-19 [1/2]; Elvish-20 [1]; Latin-20 [1]; Sahudese-20 [2].

Spells

All at 25: Alter Terrain (VH); Bright Vision; Clouds; Create Air; Create Water; Dark Vision; Earthquake; Earth to Air; Earth Vision; Essential Flame; Extinguish Fire; Fast Fire; Frost; Glass Wall; Hail; Hawk Vision; Ignite Fire; Keen Eyes; Lend Strength; Lightning; Night Vision; Purify Air; Purify Water; Rain; Rain of Fire; Recover Strength; Seek Earth; Seek Water; Shape Air; Shape Earth; Shape Fire; Shape Stone; Shape Water; Slow Fire; Small Vision; Snow; Storm; Volcano; Walk Through Earth; Walk Through Water; Wall of Wind; Water Vision; Whirlpool; Whirlwind; Wind; Windstorm [282].

Biography

Pusan Chen inhabits the mountainous regions of Zarak. (See *GURPS Fantasy*.) He guards his lair in a hidden cavern in the northern edge of those mighty mountains, nearest the land of Sahud. Inside, Pusan Chen protects an object that many covet, and many more have died pursuing – a prize that cost him dearly.

Pusan Chen was solitary and withdrawn, even for a dragon. The world fascinated him from birth. He studied its history, he watched its present, and he learned. He sometimes watched with magic, but mostly he flew – long soaring flights, all over Yttaria, looking down, watching, and trying to understand it all.

One night as he flew high above the Sahudese castle-fort Paenche, he heard the screams of a fearful woman trying to escape from a large, brutish man. Pusan Chen flew lower to get a good look and saw the woman run into the castle courtyard, still screaming at the man. As Pusan Chen looked on, something about her intrigued him, and he decided to do something that he'd never done before; he'd intervene. Faster than the guards could react, he snatched her up and whisked her back to his lair.

Pusan Chen cared for her, seeing to it that she had food and warmth. He showed her all the secrets of his lair, including a breathtaking waterfall deep inside the mountain that he took great joy in. After a time, she opened up to him, and explained the events of that fateful evening. She was the new princess of Paenche and the brutish man was her husband, the prince. It was an arranged marriage, and that was their wedding night. She did not love him, and when she had second thoughts that night, he went into a blind rage.

Pusan Chen's heart melted at her story and his kind and charming treatment of her eventually gained him her favor. But soon thereafter, they were interrupted. Her prince had come to "rescue" her from the dragon. He came with an army and a vengeance. She rushed down to stop him, to tell him just how much her life has changed. He pushed her to the ground behind him, ordering her to stay out of the way while he dealt with the foul beast.

Seeing his love treated this way, Pusan Chen went into a blind fury, and attacked without reserve. The battle raged for almost an hour as he used both magic and claw to work his way through the army. He defeated them, but the prince had an edge. Before he started off on his quest, the prince had been granted a boon, a magical sword of legend. The prince was able to strike the weary dragon, and he was gravely wounded by a deep blow to his chest, stuck in his ribs. As he flew away to die, the last thing he heard was from the crying princess, "I will come back for you."

Pusan Chen managed to remove the sword, but it had already done its work. The dragon so wanted to see the princess that he refused to pass over from this life, and soon arose in his current undead form. After adjusting to his undeath, he placed the sword that killed him in the waterfall, and now he waits for his love to return to him. When loneliness overtakes him, he will sometimes go flying in search of her, and in his confusion, can be seen to be rampaging through the mountainside.

Many adventurers have gone in search of the relic sword, but none have returned. Sometimes, Pusan Chen may mistake a female adventurer for his long-lost princess and take her back to his lair. Those encounters have always ended badly.

– Shawn E.A. Lockard

Adventure Seeds

The simplest way to encounter Pusan Chen is to have the adventurers quest after the sword. They would be told only the prince's side of the story, of course. But if you want to add a twist . . .

Terrorizing the Countryside

Pusan Chen has returned to patrolling the area, looking for his lost love. He sees something on the ground that grabs his attention – the PCs' camp most likely – and investigates.

Inheriting the Problem

Pusan Chen comes looking for his princess, or revenge, at the castle. The trouble is that Pusan Chen now has no sense of time, and over a hundred years have passed. The characters could be descendants of the prince, or simply be guards at the castle.

Dragons Helping Dragons

Another dragon has learned of Pusan Chen's plight and wants to help, but doesn't wish like to intervene directly – especially with a dragon that owns a dragon-killing sword. The concerned dragon instead contacts the characters and asks them to intervene. If they succeed, one or both dragons might owe them a favor.

Buying Back Their Lives

The adventurers are captured by Pusan Chen, and they can only buy their lives back by swearing to go on a quest to return the princess to him. This may be as straightforward as locating her final resting place or as involved as bringing her spirit back to this world.

Special Agent Thomas Johnson

2,232 points

A fair-skinned man of average height, average build, and average appearance; dressed in a dark suit, dark glasses, a long black coat, and sometimes a fedora; and he carries a briefcase. There's nothing unusual about his appearance. Nothing unusual at all . . .

ST: 30 [175] **DX:** 18 [125] **Speed:** 9.5
IQ: 15 [60] **HT:** 20/100 [575] **Move:** 9
Dodge: 9 **Parry:** 12 (Judo, Karate)

Advantages

Absolute Direction [5]; Absolute Timing [5]; Alertness +2 [10]; Ambidexterity [10]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Duplication ×4 (Telepathic contact; not stunned or hurt if a Dupe is killed, +20%) [480]; Fangs (Nuisance Effect: temporary disadvantage Monstrous Appearance while in use -30%) [7]; Fast Regeneration [25]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Regrowth [40]; Resurrection [150]; Sanctity [5]; Secret Patron [40]; Single-Minded [5]; Smoke (Agent Johnson is unaffected +20%, Increased Area ×9 +180%) [45]; Strong Will +4 [16]; Unagging [15]; Unfazeable [15].

Agent Johnson's Origins

Because of the nature of his work, nobody really knows much about the enigmatic figure behind the legends of this Man in Black. Some speculate that he is a demon, but given the lack of actual malice, it seems unlikely. It's also possible that Agent Johnson is an alien, a magical construct (perhaps the result of a particularly spectacular critical success on a Create Warrior spell, p. M52) or even something that used to be human and has been radically augmented.

It's also possible that Agent Johnson doesn't work for the Illuminati at all. He might even be a thought-form created by the fears and dreams of conspiracy theorists. The more people believe in (and fear) him, the stronger he becomes . . .



Agent Johnson's Minions

The default assumption is that Agent Johnson can just conjure his help from thin air. However, it would also be reasonable to assign him a group of lesser Men in Black using the statistics on p. I95 or I96. In this case, replace his Duplication advantage with the Ally Group advantage.

Disadvantages

Bloodlust [-10]; Callous [-6]; Extremely Hazardous Duty (To his secret patron) [-20]; Incurious [-5]; Lifebane [-10]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; Obsession (Destroy current "target") [-15]; Overconfidence [-10]; Reputation -4 (As a MIB, among conspiracy theorists, all the time) [-7]; Unliving [-50].

Quirks

Intolerant of conspiracy theorists; Keeps a record of victims' names; Likes to reinforce the MIB legends; Methodical; Prefers to kill in "professional" ways. [-5]

Skills

Acrobatics-18 [4]; Armoury (Rifles and Handguns)-15 [2]; Body Sense-20 [2]**; Fast-Draw (Collapsible baton)-20 [4]; Fast-Draw (Magazine)-20 [4]; Fast-Draw (Pistol)-20 [4]; Guns (Light Automatic)-25 [24]*; Guns (Pistol)-25 [24]*; Interrogation-16 [4]; Judo-20 [16]; Karate-20 [16]; Shadowing-17 [6]; Shortsword-20 [8]; Speed-Load (Magazine)-20 [4]; Stealth-18 [2]; Survival (Urban)-14 [1].

* Includes bonus for IQ.

** Includes +3 for Absolute Direction.

Maneuvers

Choke Hold-20 [2]; Neck Snap-29 [4].

Languages

English (Native)-15 [0]; French-14 [1]; German-14 [1]; Italian-14 [1]; Portuguese-14 [1]; Russian-14 [1]; Spanish-14 [1].

Psionic Powers

ESP 20 [60]; Telepathy (Telescan-only on 21+) 40 [140]; Teleport Power 20 [100].

Psionic Skills

Autoteleport-17 [8]; Combat Teleport-17 [8]; Emotion Sense-17 [8]; Illusion-20 [14]; Seekersense-20 [14]; Suggest-20 [14]; Telecontrol-20 [14]; Telereceive-20 [14]; Telescan-20 [14]; Telesend-14 [2].

Biography

The Men in Black, in this case, are only a Man in Black. There's only one, though nobody really knows who (or what) he is. Well, nobody but Them, and They aren't talking.

Whoever he is, he's been known by a few names. He currently goes by Special Agent Thomas Johnson. (He likes the irony of "Thomas," the doubting apostle, and the sheer banality of "Johnson.") Agent Johnson is the attack dog of a powerful Illuminated group, and he's even worse than the legends of the Men in Black would have you believe. Though he does generally kill with a gun, it's the stalking process that has made him the stuff of legends.

People generally meet Agent Johnson right after they've discovered something particularly juicy – an alien artifact, or a cassette recording of the Gettysburg address, for instance. Sometimes they may have figured something sinister out on their own and told someone else. Anyone else. He typically shows up at their door or finds them out on a secluded street at night. Then he just asks for the item, often under the pretense of being with a legitimate government agency. Once. If assassination is not part of the assignment, he will systematically dismantle the area around the suspected location of the item, ignoring the occupants completely or effortlessly brushing them aside if they stand in his way. He then vanishes into the night, on the trail of his next target.

Sometimes one of Johnson's assignments is smart enough to flee, but then finds he just can't shake him. This is due to his Seekersense and teleportation abilities. He walks along at a leisurely pace behind whomever he's after, biding his time and teleporting to within 100 feet or so every time they look away to see where they're running to instead of what they're running from. If his quarry tries to get any form of assistance, Johnson uses his telepathic illusion abilities to appear to the newcomer as a little girl or a pizza guy or maybe just another patch of empty air. Eventually the runner drops from exhaustion or just gives up.

Every once in a while Agent Johnson gets assigned to a group of people that would be a threat even to him. (Survivalists are notoriously hard to take down alone, for instance.) Whenever this happens, Agent Johnson always seems to have a little equally faceless, menacing help around. If his subordinates still aren't enough, he's not above telepathically dominating bystanders. He staunchly avoids this, however, because it makes cleanup afterwards messy.

Agent Johnson's Weapons and Equipment

Typically Agent Johnson goes after his victims with a silenced handgun, but he also carries a collapsible baton, and his briefcase holds a submachine gun. (The most likely candidate for the briefcase gun is the H&K MP5k, but the FN P90 would also work nicely.) Both guns selected will fire the same kind of ammunition. GMs wishing to make Johnson even more of a threat can give him magical weapons that never jam, misfire, or run out of ammunition. (Maybe one Illuminated group figured out how to enchant Cornucopia onto magazines, for instance.) It's also not unreasonable to issue him a bulletproof

vest of some sort, a sinister black car to ride around in (or maybe a black helicopter to drop him off), and the usual electronic accessories like a cell phone and laptop. **GURPS Warehouse 23** has a wide variety of items he could accessorize with. If he's disarmed, Johnson's martial arts abilities are still quite deadly, and he can distort his face to deliver the *coup de grace* with his monstrous fangs.

Encountered

Agent Johnson is intended for modern or near future settings; his high HP totals and injury tolerances are designed to allow him to soak up a few bursts from an automatic weapon and still keep coming. In less advanced settings, remove some of the injury tolerances and extra hit points. In higher TL settings, add DR and more extra hit points. It's up to the GM to decide if Agent Johnson and his constructs are really the only Men in Black out there (he's unlikely to be a freelancer working for all of the different Illuminati at once in a multi-conspiracy game), or if he's the measure of last resort sent in after all other options have been exhausted.

– Peter N. Martin



Stitches the Patchwork Clown

181 points

Stitches is a clown doll that stands about 2' tall. He is made with patches of different patterned material. He has buttons for eyes and a smile made with stitching. He is wearing a baggy clown suit and a floppy clown hat also made from patches.

ST: 12 [20] **DX:** 11 [10] **Speed:** 6.0
IQ: 9 [-10] **HT:** 13/18 [55] **Move:** 5
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 7 (Knife) 9 (Brawling)

Advantages

Alertness +1 [5]; Attractive [5]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Dark Vision [25]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Eat or Drink [10]; High Pain Threshold [10]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Immunity to Poison [15]; Independent Body Parts (No posthumous activity, -20%) [28]; Injury Tolerance (No Blood, No Brain, No Cutting or Impaling Bonus, No Vitals) [45]; Pitiabile (Only when inanimate, -50%) [3]; Strong Will +3 [12]; Unaging [15]; Undead Invulnerability [150]; Unfazeable [15].

Variations

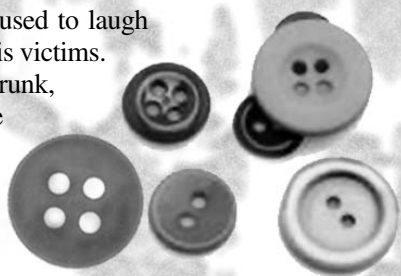
Stitches' trunk may have been sitting around a long time waiting to be discovered. Doll-making is a craft that has been around for millennia, as have dark occult rituals and serial killers, so Stitches can appear just about anywhere and at any time.

Stitches need not be a patchwork doll at all. As long as the object is an innocent-looking toy, the core of the character remains the same. If discovered in medieval Europe, for example, Stitches may be a meticulously handcrafted marionette. Perhaps Calvin was an Italian toy maker who carved a little wood golem for his nefarious Soul Jar. The marionette might come to life at night and strangle victims with its strings. It would then carve the eyeballs out of their sockets and carve a bloody smile onto the corpses' faces. (The GM should, however, avoid having the marionette's nose grow if it lies.)

Another version of Stitches may be the modern animatronic talking doll. If this were the case, Stitches (who may go by a name such as "Buddy the Talking Clown" or something similarly innocent) would be able to talk, so the Mute disadvantage would be removed.

This ability would be used to laugh maniacally and taunt his victims.

And instead of an old trunk, the doll would be emotionally attached to a child's toy box or maybe even a particular child.



Disadvantages

Berserk [-15]; Bloodlust [-10]; Callous [-6]; Dead Broke [-25]; Delusion (Must stay near trunk) [-10]; Dependency (Mana, constantly, lose Fatigue instead of HT) [-13]; Inconvenient Size [-15]; Murder Addiction [-60]; Mute [-25]; Nocturnal [-10]; Poor Grip [-5]; Reduced Move [-5]; Sadism [-15]; Secret (Murderous magical construct) [-30]; Short Arms [-10]; Social Stigma (Valuable Property) [-10]; Sterile [-3]; Trade-mark [-15]; Unhealing [-20]; Vulnerability (Fire) [-15].

Skills

Brawling-12 [2]; Knife-13 [4]; Knife Throwing-12 [2]; Needlecraft-14 [16]; Stealth-14 [16].

Languages

English (Native)-9 [0].

Biography

Calvin Strayer was obsessed with the occult and constantly sought ways to obtain more power. By day, Calvin crafted patchwork dolls in his New Orleans shop, but at night, he delved into forbidden tomes and experimented with the rituals he found within.

Needing a human sacrifice for his latest ritual, Calvin abducted and murdered one of his customers. In killing her, Calvin experienced a physical and emotional rush surpassing anything he had known before. So began Calvin's murderous spree. Calvin mutilated his victims' bodies in his rituals. He stitched the eyelids closed and sewed a button over each lid. He would also stitch the mouth up into a morbid smile. These faces were a dark parody of his patchwork doll faces. After the second so-decorated body was discovered, the press dubbed the murderer "Stitches."

The police eventually traced the trail of Stitches' victims to Calvin's store. With the police closing in, Calvin performed one last ritual using one of his dolls – a large patchwork clown he had painstakingly prepared for just such an occasion. After using a Golem spell to animate the doll, Calvin attempted to transfer his mind via a Soul Jar spell.

He botched the spell.

Only the darkest parts of Calvin's soul were transferred to the doll. The golem possessed human intelligence and cunning, but it was also filled with Calvin's murderous desires.

The police took Calvin's lifeless husk away and closed the case. The patchwork clown lay unmoving with the rest of the dolls. With the rising of the sun, Stitches had lost consciousness.

The store's landlord came by later that day and packed Stitches and rest of the dolls into trunks for storage. Many are still tucked away. Somewhere out there lies an old trunk waiting to be opened. Inside waits Stitches the Patchwork Clown, burning to satiate his dark desires.

Stitches' trunk will likely be covered with dust and cobwebs in some old house (see **Floor Plan 1: Haunted House**



Indeed, a jolly little clown came walking toward them, and Dorothy could see that in spite of his pretty clothes of red and yellow and green he was completely covered with cracks, running every which way and showing plainly that he had been mended in many places.

*– L. Frank Baum, *The Wizard of Oz**

for one appropriate example). Stitches has an irrational attachment to his trunk; he will not venture far from it. He will wander freely within a few hundred yards of the trunk, but if forcibly carried farther (or if the trunk is displaced), Stitches will immediately and single-mindedly try to return to it.

For reasons he has desperately (and vainly) tried to discover, Stitches is unconscious during daylight hours. He will not awaken no matter what is done to his doll body until sundown. But he makes the most of the nighttime hours. He stalks potential victims and attacks with a razor-sharp butcher knife (treat as a fine-quality large knife). He will try to slice his target's hamstring and then go for the throat once the victim falls.

He also carries a needle, buttons, and thread with him. If his victim is incapacitated, Stitches will mutilate the victim's face just as Calvin had done in life. If prevented from completing a particular face, Stitches will plot to finish his work later.

Stitches is a magical construct, and he weakens quickly without mana. Whether he can be dispelled or turned by any supernatural or magical means is entirely up to the GM. Stitches may also be susceptible to certain Voodoo rituals (see *GURPS Voodoo*).

If the doll's body is cut up, the pieces will move toward each other (after sundown). Stitches is capable of sewing all his pieces back together himself, and he will use other fabric if any of his own is destroyed. To be destroyed permanently, Stitches' head must be "killed."

Stitches is motivated by one thing and one thing only: his need to murder. If anyone approaches his territory while Stitches is awake, he immediately becomes a target. Stitches will do everything in his power to murder this person before the sun rises. He will even risk falling unconscious outside of his trunk if he is in the midst of an attack.

Stitches will attack ruthlessly. He cannot be reasoned with. Stitches is unable to speak and is not interested in any attempts to communicate, although he is intelligent and capable of understanding English.

If threatened with physical harm, Stitches will back off and wait for a more opportune time to attack. His trunk is also very important to him, so he will quit an attack if the trunk is endangered. If the trunk is damaged or destroyed, Stitches will fly into a rage and attack anyone in sight.

– Andy Fix

Sylvia Sternenkind

576 points

Age 18 (appears 25); 5'5", 130 lbs. A very beautiful woman with shoulder-length hair.

ST: 17/19 [96] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 6.5
IQ: 11 [10] **HT:** 13/14 [25] **Move:** 6
Dodge: 7 **Parry:** 9 (Knife) 11 (Judo, Karate)

Advantages

Alertness +2 [10]; Combat Reflexes [15]; Danger Sense [15]; Eros Series Bioroid [37]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages

Involuntary Extremely Hazardous Duty (Bioroidenhaus Berlin-West) [-25]; Secret (Serial Killer) [-20].

Quirks

Displays no emotions in private. [-1]

Skills

Accounting-12 [6]; Acrobatics-14 [8]; Acting-15 [10]; Area Knowledge (Munich)-14 [6]; Area Knowledge (European Union)-14 [6]; Carousing-15 [8]; Computer Operation/TL9-12 [2]; Disguise-15 [10]; Fast-Talk-13 [6]; Free Fall/TL9-15 [8]; Guns (Pistol)/TL9-16 [4]; Holdout-15 [10]; Judo-15 [16]; Karate-15 [16]; Knife-16 [8]; Knife Throwing-16 [8]; Running-13 [4]; Sex Appeal-22 [1]; Shadowing-15 [10]; Stealth-15 [8]; Streetwise-15 [10]; Tactics-12 [6].

Languages

Czech-10 [1]; English (Native)-11 [0]; French-10 [1]; German-11 [2].



The Memetic Warfare Team

The group led by Elaine Gainsborough isn't at all interested in the ideology of their current employer – just in the money. Still, they are professional and accomplished at what they do, which is maximizing public horror. Gainsborough provides the general planning for the team from her office in the Bioroidenhaus. The rest of the team keeps tabs on the subject bioroids and, in some cases, updates their instructions. If they discover anyone else keeping tabs on their bioroids, they will place them under even more circumspect observation. Gainsborough will decide what, if anything, to do about them.

The team's other job is to select new targets for Sylvia and create the VR simulations detailing the assassination plans, including the exit strategy and abort criteria. These simulations are close to military grade.

Biomods

Bio-Booster [27]; Bone Stimulation [5]; Boosted Heart [9]; Emotional Regulator [25]; Guardians [5]; Kangaroo Pouch [2]; Muscle Reinforcement +5 [70]; Nerve Boosting [25]; No-Shock Glands [6]; Respirocytes [18]; Tennin Biochemistry [2].

Equipment

At her day job, Sylvia Sternenkind doesn't carry much in the way of equipment beyond her standard Virtual Interface Glasses. When stalking, she carries a razor-sharp (Very Fine) knife which she sometimes hides in her Kangaroo Pouch. Note that while she knows how to use a gun and would have no problems getting one on the black market, she normally *isn't* packing – European society strongly frowns on guns, and they leave too many clues.

Biography

The bioroid now known as Sylvia Sternenkind started life in one of the biogenesis tanks on an asteroid base of the Trojan Mafia (see *Transhuman Space*). She was to be the companion of Oliver Morgan, an influential and wealthy officer of the family, with many enemies. Morgan wanted his companion to double as a bodyguard, so she was trained in various combat techniques.

A few years after acquiring Sylvia, Morgan was shot during a UK police action that targeted bioroid trafficking in the asteroid belt. Sylvia wasn't with him when he was killed, and when she was discovered later, she was shipped to the European Union to be reconditioned for normal society.

She was shipped to the Bioroidenhaus Berlin-West (see *GURPS Dark Places*). Unlike normal bioroid houses which provide shelter for fugitive bioroids and prepare them for life in Europe, this institution is secretly backed by an antibioroid faction. To plant the seeds of backlash against the hated

bioroids, Bioroidenhaus Berlin-West's reconditioning program sets up its subjects to run amok sooner or later.

When Elaine Gainsborough, a mercenary expert on memetic warfare and mind control hired by the Bioroidenhaus, discovered Sylvia's biomods and pieced together her history through long interrogations, she knew she had struck gold. Instead of simply releasing her on the streets as a brain-washed sociopath, Sylvia would be more closely monitored and controlled. Her killing spree would be maximized for public consumption, and once it was discovered that a bioroid was responsible, public opinion would take a big shift in the faction's favor.

And so it was done. Sylvia was given the last name Sternenkind ("star child") and ordered to move to Munich. There she joined the Biodroiden Befreiungsfront ("Biodroid Liberation Front"), a radical group dedicated to freeing exploited bioroids through extra-legal means. She is currently a minor aide and spokesperson. Secretly, she occasionally tricks as a freelance prostitute to increase her income.

Once every couple weeks, she gets into a van sent by Gainsborough's memetic warfare team. In it, she receives the name of the next target to kill – messily – and extensive virtual-reality training on the precise plan. A few days later, the new victim, sometimes an outspoken antibioroid activist, sometimes just a random person, is found carved up in Munich or another European city. The public outrage grows.

– Jürgen Hubert

Variations

While Sylvia Sternenkind is set in *Transhuman Space*, she could be easily adapted in any other settings where a minority group's legal standing and civil rights are controversial and a form of mind control exists.

In a *Fantasy* campaign, any non-human race can take the place of bioroids and the mental conditioning would be accomplished with spells.

In *Steampunk*, it could be any ethnic minority and Mesmerism. The Bioroidenhaus would be replaced with a seemingly charitable institution.

Eros-Series Bioroid

37 points

Eros-Series are one of several types of bioroid (genetically engineered human variants raised in artificial wombs and trained from birth for specific jobs) created as pleasure toys.

Attributes: ST -1 [-10]; HT +1 [10].

Advantages: Deep Sleeper [5]; Disease-Resistant [5]; Light Hangover [2]; Pheromone Control [25]; Sanitized Metabolism [5]; Sex Appeal +3 [3]; Very Beautiful [25].

Disadvantages: Impulsiveness [-10]; Lecherousness [-15]; Sterile [-3]; Unnatural Feature (Exaggerated sexual characteristics) [-5].

Tamok the Conqueror

296 points

Age 85; 6'2", 155 lbs. Tamok is a tall, spindly humanoid with pale bluish-white skin and wispy white hair on his over-large head. His eyes are large and almond-shaped, with large black pupils that are sensitive to infrared wavelengths.

ST: 8 [0] **DX:** 10 [0] **Speed:** 4.5
IQ: 15 [60] **HT:** 8 [0] **Move:** 4
Dodge: 4 **Parry:** 6 (Staff)

Advantages

Taraquin [145]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages

Disturbing Voice [-10]; Fanaticism (Self) [-15]; Impulsiveness [-10]; Manic-Depressive [-20]; Megalomania [-10]; Overconfidence [-10].

Skills

Astrogation/TL9-16 [2]; Astronomy/TL9-16 [3]; Beam Weapon/TL9 (Blaster)-14 [4]; Computer Operation/TL9-16 [1]; Computer Programming/TL9-16 [3]; Detect Lies-16 [3]; Engineer/TL9 (Nuclear Reactor)-16 [3]; Engineer/TL9 (Spacecraft)-16 [3]; Fast-Talk-18 [4]; Free Fall/TL9-11 [4]; Gunner/TL9 (Laser Cannon)-13 [4]; Interrogation-16 [2]; Intimidation-16 [2]; Leadership-20 [6]; Mathematics-16 [3]; Metallurgy/TL9-16 [3]; Nuclear Physics/TL9-16 [6]; Physics/TL9-16 [3]; Staff-10 [4]; Strategy (Space)-18 [5]; Tactics-18 [5].

Taraquin

160 points

Attributes: ST -2 [-15]; HT -2 [-15].

Advantages: Eidetic Memory 1 [30]; High Technology +3 TLs [100]; Infravision [15]; Longevity [5]; Peripheral Vision [15]; Racial Memory 1 [15]; Secret Communication [20].

Disadvantages: Dying Race [-10].

All members of the Taraquin can learn to use psionics (typically telepathy), but not all members of the Taraquin have fully developed their mental powers; in particular, while they can all "speak" to other Taraquin telepathically (Secret Communication), not all of them have learned to use the telepathy with other species. All of the Taraquin have access to TL9 equipment (including scout saucers), and could produce some TL9 items with 1950s-level resources given time.

The Taraquin were previously unaware of other races in this region of the galaxy, including the Loi, Metarans and Alphans, but they have discovered remains of the Arendian civilization in the distant past. Tamok and his followers go to great lengths to avoid the notice of the other races. They are master manipulators, and are not above framing others to misdirect potentially hostile forces.

Languages

English-16 [2]; Mandarin-16 [3]; Russian-16 [2]; Taraquin (Native)-15 [0].

Psionic Powers

Telepathy 15 [75].

Psionic Skills

Illusion-16 [6]; Mental Blow-16 [6]; Mind Shield-16 [6]; Mindwipe-16 [6]; Telereceive-16 [6]; Telesend-16 [6].

Biography

Tamok, once a respected member of the Taraquin, has become a twisted parody of the nobility that he once held dear. At times, his old personality manages to reassert itself for a few precious moments, but his animal subconscious maintains its grip on both Tamok and those who have fallen under his powerful mental control.

The Taraquin

Long ago, the Homeworld began to die. The sun grew bloated and red in the sky, causing climatic change on a global scale. Desperate astronomers located a world with many of the same qualities as Homeworld – blue oceans, oxygenated skies, and reasonable temperatures. The only major stumbling blocks were a considerably higher gravity and an indigenous, technological species.

The Taraquin were split into two camps regarding how to approach its inhabitants. The vast majority of the Taraquin, known as the Contact Faction, desired peaceful coexistence with the natives of the new world. The Conquest Faction, a small but powerful minority, lobbied for an aggressive invasion of the planet, certain that the technological might of the Taraquin could overcome any resistance they might encounter. Eventually the Contact Faction prevailed, wrenching control of the project from those who advocated conquest.

A massive mother ship, powered by space-warping stardrives and crewed by the best and brightest of the Taraquin, was readied to study the new world and its inhabitants more closely to determine if peaceful coexistence could be achieved. The scouts were equipped with the most advanced mechanical, electronic, and biological technology that the Taraquin could devise, both to protect their emissaries from unknown perils and to offer as trade goods to the inhabitants of the new world to prove the good will and peaceful intent of the Taraquin.

A Wolf in the Fold

Taraquin scientific advancements gave them the ability to control not only the physical world, but also the inner universe of the mental and emotional worlds. A weak telepathic ability had been fostered, modified, and enhanced to the extent that

instantaneous mental communication and racial memory became a fact of life to the Taraquin. This enabled them to work and live together harmoniously, assisting their fellows to become more mature mentally. Flaws such as greed, prejudice, and hatred were engineered almost completely out of the race. Almost.

Among those members of the fleet who had favored conquest rather than peaceful coexistence was Tamok, a particularly intelligent Taraquin. Long-suppressed emotional instabilities bubbled and seethed in the subconscious of the great scientist. So great was the chasm between his conscious and subconscious that he himself was unaware of the treachery growing in the recesses of his own mind.

First Contact

The scout fleet arrived in the solar system after a journey of just over a year. The mother ship moved into orbit around Saturn and began observations of the distant world. These observations shocked the gathered members of the expedition – the inhabitants of Earth were engaged in a massive, globe-spanning war.

Both factions in the fleet agreed to proceed slowly. Once it was determined that the humans had no capability for space travel beyond primitive, unguided ballistic missiles, the carrier landed on the far side of the Earth's moon.

Breaking Point

Several months after the establishment of their temporary Lunar base, the scouts witnessed an event that horrified them. In a desert region of one of the larger continents, a crude fission weapon was detonated. Although the technology of the humans was still far behind their own, nuclear weapons posed a serious threat to the Taraquin. When two other nuclear devices were used against the cities of a small island nation, the tension between the Contact and Conquest factions reached the breaking point.

Tamok's subconscious had not been idle in the time since the fleet arrived at Earth. He had watched and waited, suppressing an animalistic glee as he noted the growing rift between the factions. After the bombings, Tamok's emotional, irrational subconscious broke free. Using his newly



unleashed primitive psyche, Tamok destroyed the leader of the Contact faction with a powerful mental blast. He reached out with his mind, gaining control of over half of the members of the scout fleet. Those who were able to resist his power fled the Lunar base in scores of scout vessels, seeking shelter from Tamok beneath the deep oceans of Earth. Tamok did not pursue them, however. With his subconscious freed at last from centuries of repression, and with hundreds of thought-controlled slaves and the advanced technology of the Taraquin at his disposal, he set about methodically planning the conquest of Earth.

Currently, Tamok and his followers are carrying out a campaign of human abduction. They are searching for a way to control large numbers of humans mentally. If successful, this will provide additional soldiers during the conquest and slaves once the takeover is complete.

– Kurt Brown

The Woodbury Blob

449 points

4' tall (and wide, and deep), 500 lbs. The Woodbury Blob is a large, amorphous mass of living protoplasmic matter. Its skin is a translucent gray and the shadows of organelles and partially digested victims can be seen within. It moves by extending pseudopods and flowing into them, and can do so quite rapidly. It can also use pseudopods as clumsy limbs to manipulate objects.

ST: 24 [145] **DX:** 13 [30] **Speed:** 7.25
IQ: 7 [-20] **HT:** 16/26 [130] **Move:** 7
Dodge: 7

Advantages

360-Degree Vision [25]; Acceleration Tolerance [10]; Alcohol Tolerance [5]; Amphibious [10]; Cast Iron Stomach [15]; Clinging [25]; DR 20 (Bullets Only) [20]; Doesn't Breathe [20]; Doesn't Sleep [20]; Fast Regeneration [50]; Immunity to Disease [10]; Injury Tolerance (No Brain, Neck, Vitals, or Cutting or Impaling Bonus) [45]; Pressure Support [15]; Stretching 3 [60]; Subsonic Hearing [5]; Unaging [15]; Unfazeable [15].

Disadvantages

Bad Grip [-10]; Bad Sight (Nearsighted, uncorrectable) [-25]; Bestial (Man-eater) [-15]; Cold-Blooded [-5]; Color Blindness [-10]; Dead Broke [-25]; Deafness [-20]; Illiteracy [-10]; Invertebrate [-20]; Low Empathy [-15]; Monstrous Appearance [-25]; No Sense of Humor [-10]; Reputation -4 (As an inhuman monster, most people in town, all the time) [-10].

Quirks

Prefers meat to other sustenance. [-1]

Biography

Professor Raymond Cooke was working late in his small laboratory one Friday evening, trying to make the breakthrough that would allow atomic radiation to safely enhance the growth of farm animals. He was experimenting with single-celled creatures because of their simpler biochemical processes. One night, unfortunately, he was so tired he left a specimen jar in the radiation chamber. When he arrived at work on Monday morning, the specimen was gone and the cages of all the laboratory mice and rabbits were empty. All he could find was a trail of slime leading out the window.

Over the next few weeks, strange things began to happen in Cooke's hometown of Bronson, Iowa (in Woodbury County). The number of lost pets rose. Mrs. Price's prize-winning pumpkin patch was laid to waste overnight. Old Farmer Johnson heard a ruckus in his henhouse, and by the time he got there all the hens were gone. Professor Cooke watched the reports intently and worked late nearly every night. The

behavior worried his attractive and intelligent 22-year-old daughter Sally.

Eventually, after the disappearance of the town dentist, Professor Cooke drove out to nearby Sioux City Army Air Base and voiced his suspicions to the base commander – that he had inadvertently created a monster and didn't know how to stop it! Since then, several panicked citizens have seen the Woodbury Blob, and it killed two teenagers parked in a car. Guns seem to have little effect on it, and the locals are clamoring for either Professor Cooke to do something about it or for the army to bring in some heavy artillery, or preferably both.

Motivations

The Woodbury Blob is mostly motivated by hunger. It can eat nearly anything organic, though it has a preference for meat. It feeds simply by moving atop its chosen fare and absorbing it into its body. Once inside, the meal is digested slowly by enzymes and converted into protoplasm. Living creatures eaten in this manner take 1 hit of damage per second until the body is totally destroyed ($-10 \times \text{HT}$). It takes the blob three successful "attacks" to engulf a man-sized creature completely, during which the victim can attempt to break free by winning a Quick Contest of ST against the blob. After the first attack the contest is against 1/3 of the blob's ST, 2/3 ST after the second attack, and full ST after the third. The blob can punch with a pseudopod for 2d-1 crushing damage. This attack has a maximum reach 8 hexes.

As the Woodbury Blob eats, it grows and adds the food's mass to its own. For each 20 pounds of growth, the blob gains a ST point and a hit point. Though more slowly, it can also become more intelligent. It cannot hear most sounds, but it can sense low frequencies. It can sense light in a vague way, giving it about as much vision as someone with severe nearsightedness. It is cunning and is beginning to understand how to operate door handles, light switches, and the like. Over time, it might learn more complex tasks such as aiming and firing a gun. It may even be capable of reason, which leads to the question "Why does it want to eat humans?" Revenge for its unnatural condition? Because they're there? At any rate, the Woodbury Blob is definitely not stupid. It will retreat from a lost fight and will try to devise tactical responses to anything that humans throw at it.

Encountered

The Woodbury Blob as described above is about as big as a sofa, a size that is likely to attract the attention of a group of steel-jawed heroes in an *Atomic Horror* campaign. The characters could be military personnel, police officers, local "normal" citizens, or a mixed group. A first encounter should see the heroes armed with hopelessly inadequate weapons (although they probably won't realize this until after they try killing it). A handy NPC extra can be eaten at this point to accentuate the danger and horror.



As the heroes rally from their first defeat, the blob will go on a rampage, eating and growing considerably with no apparent means to stop it. A significant fight may drive it back from a particularly tempting target such as a hospital or school. Eventually, possibly with the help of Raymond and Sally Cooke, a weakness will be found and a dramatic last stand made. It is almost obligatory that Sally falls in love with one of the heroes.

Variations

This is a “realistic” blob, which can be injured by mundane things like fire, cold, bullets, knives, poisons, and explosives. For a truly terrifying challenge, further Advantages such as Invulnerabilities, Regeneration, and Hard To Kill can be added, or its internal fluids made acidic or poisonous. In cinematic games, though, even the most fearsome blob will have a vulnerability which can be exploited. See p. AH94 for more blob variations.

In a swords-and-sorcery fantasy campaign, this sort of blob can represent a particularly nasty ooze-style monster, either pseudo-natural or magically generated. It would make a formidable guardian for a treasure, or an obstruction to deter invaders from gaining access to an evil wizard’s tower.

Futuristic science fiction can use this blob in several ways. It could simply be a monstrous alien creature, encountered almost anywhere. Particularly appropriate places include aboard a cramped spaceship, isolated in deep space and far from rescue, or in a small settlement on a remote world. It is also possible that the blob has been generated by genetic science, either deliberately as a weapon, or by a mad researcher – this would make a frightening encounter in a dark *GURPS Cyberpunk* campaign. For a twist, the blob could be used as a first contact with a new sentient alien species – explorers will have a hard time communicating, determining if it is friendly or not, or even realizing it is intelligent.

– David Morgan-Mar

MONSTERS AND CHAPTER 5 MONSTER HUNTERS





The monsters in this book can be used simply as adversaries for the intrepid PCs, all of whom are pure of heart and armed with the best of intentions. The GM in this case can use this chapter to assist in playing those NPC adversaries as, well, non-player *characters*, instead of simple sword-fodder (or shotgun-fodder or even ion-cannon-fodder, as appropriate).

Sometimes, though, *Supers* players may want to play the super-villains, *Cyberworld* players may want to play the NERCC agents, and *Horror* players may want to play the monsters! As with any “bad-guy” campaign, it is up to both the GM and the players to keep the campaign from degenerating into a meaningless series of bloodbaths. The monstrous characters need to have goals beyond “kill! eat!” and obstacles beyond finding and dispatching the next victim.

Being a Monster

A monster is not just a man in a Halloween costume. Monsters are *other*, and their twisted and hideous visages often match their psyches. Roleplaying a monster is a challenge, but the players can find and exploit the tenuous ties to humanity that lie buried in most monsters. Many of the monsters in this book include notes on their motivations and strategies; these are obvious places to get an initial handle on their essence.

The creatures here are not brutes, either (although The Great Leech, p. 14, comes closest); many are smarter than the average human. Playing them as dumb animals will not pan out; the temptation to equate “alien intellect” with “no intellect” should be resisted.

How then should they be played? The two main options are guilty and guiltless. Guilty monsters are the stereotypically angst-ridden creatures found in some modern horror novels and roleplaying circles. They kill, they commit their monstrous acts, but the joy, if any, they derive from satiating their unnatural drives is countered by the remorse and revulsion they feel after the fact. Disadvantages such as Guilt Complex, Nightmares, and Flashbacks can make the remorse more concrete. Cannot Harm Innocents, Code of Honor, Pacifism: Self-Defense Only, or Vow can be used to limit the choice of victims to less guilt-inspiring types (only drug dealers, for instance).

Few of these monsters, though, are “guilty.” Any sense of moral wrongdoing is either absent or rationalized down to a mere triviality. Callous, Low Empathy, and Sadism are common disadvantages for this type. Note that these monsters do not have to give up *all* sense of right and wrong –

only the parts that have to do with their primary activities. They might still refrain from stealing, lying, or talking in a movie theater, even though they casually dismembered everyone in a shopping mall a few hours before.

Creating Monstrous Characters

How many points do you give a monster? (“As many as he wants!”) The monsters in this book are built with a wide range of point totals. Some are under 200 points, some are over 3,000 points; The Harvester (p. 88) is nearly 9,000 points, but it is meant to severely test an International Super Team. In a mixed group (one or two monsters and some sympathetic normal humans), the GM may allow the monsters to have a higher point total than the mundanes, perhaps *much* higher. Being monsters, they will not be able to make the humans superfluous; there will always be some situations that the humans must handle alone (getting information from the local police force, picking up supplies). Even in a campaign where exotic powers are commonplace, the cops will talk to Superman without a second thought, but Swamp Thing is going to have a tougher time of it.

Even in an all-monster group, the characters do not have to have the same point total. If they each want to pick a different monster straight from the book, then work with the GM to interlace the mythologies. There should be ample action for each character, even the “weakest.” For equal point totals, unless the GM has a strong idea of his desired power level, the GM and one player can work together on the first monster (or select one from the book), then use that as a guideline for the rest.

One Player, One Monster

Monster gaming is a good match for those situations where there is only one player and one GM. It can be used as a “filler” campaign for those times when almost everyone is cramming for finals, watching their kids in the school play, or camped out in front of the tube. Or it can be the primary campaign when players are few and far between (right after graduation, for instance). In these settings, point total is especially irrelevant. Since only one character is going to face the bulk of the action, it’s more important that the monster be capable in a wide variety of situations, yet still be vulnerable enough that those situations are not cakewalks.

Character Types

There are just as many types of monsters as there are heroes to thwart them. Several common types are discussed below.

Antihero

Antiheroes exist in all types of literature, not just in horror. Despite his character flaws (and probable murderous bent), the antihero will hold fast to some human mores and may be trying to adopt more in his personal ethics. He is most likely to be the angsty type mentioned above, although it is possible to have a callous antihero as long as he has redeeming traits somewhere.

Advantages: Strong Will is useful for resisting those baser urges. Destiny, Higher Purpose, or even Illuminated can make rationalizing the baser activities easier.

Disadvantages: Code of Honor is almost mandatory if Higher Purpose is not taken. Charitable, Pacifism, Selfless, and Sense of Duty will all help with the “hero” half. Many other mental (or paranormal) disadvantages will drive the “anti” aspect.

Beast

The beastly monster is closer to animal than human, so the animalistic characteristics are most suited for it. See *GURPS Bestiary* for full coverage of animal characters; much of it is applicable to many monsters as well.

Beasts are often the most dangerous in combat, but sometimes the easiest to deal with overall. They do not use subtlety, and they do not require subtlety to be dealt with. A monster hunter who is weaker than the beast will have to outsmart it, while a stronger hunter will just emerge victorious from a stand-up fight.

Advantages: Acute Senses, Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Move, Night Vision, Silence, Strikers

Disadvantages: Bestial, Bloodlust, Callous, Low Empathy, Mute, Poverty, Presentient.

Gentle Giant

Monsters are sometimes no more than oversized specimens of their species. A 60-foot-long anaconda would be a monster, even if it didn’t stalk riverboats. And a football-field-sized elephant would be a dangerous monster as well, even if kept its vegetarian diet.

Some cryptozoological creatures may be gentle giants as well. Some stories, especially television and movie stories, of Sasquatch and the Loch Ness Monster cast the beasts in a sympathetic light.

Gentle giants are not necessarily any smarter than the Beast type above, but they are not the combat monsters that the Beasts are either.

Advantages: Perhaps Pitiable or Sanctity.

Disadvantages: Chummy, Curious, Edgy, Mute, Presentient.

Guardian

A guardian protects a place (vault, tomb, mystical nexus), person (king, its creator, prisoner), or thing (artifact or relic). It may serve voluntarily or involuntarily; as a monster, it may even serve instinctively, if its mythos includes the reason for its guardianship. Unless built or otherwise engineered to serve, monsters do not make the best guardians; their other motivations and generally unpleasant demeanor can make them easy to distract and hard to bring to heel. But a monster whose sole motivation is to protect can be an impressive guardian indeed! See *The Golem* (p. 12) for one such example.

Advantages: Acute Senses, Alertness, Damage Resistance, Danger Sense, High Pain Threshold, Passive Defense, Regeneration, Unaging, Unfazeable.

Disadvantages: Duty, Enemy, Hidebound, Incurious, Vow.

Master

Masters are the monsters with their own castles or laboratories, well-protected and served by minions of their own. The minions might be human (monster fans, opportunists, or slaves) or other monsters (see the *Minion*, below). Masters wield significant power, and not just physically. They often have financial, political, or paranormal strength as well.

Advantages: Ally, Ally Group, Charisma, Dominance, Status, Wealth.

Disadvantages: Fanaticism, Greed, Megalomania, Overconfidence, Paranoia, Sadism.

Minion

Minions are the monsters that make Masters possible. Minions might serve other monsters, or they might serve humans. A created monster will often serve his creator until the latter’s tragic death . . . In a PC group, having one or more PC monsters serve as minions to a PC master (human or monster) can be a challenge, unless the players’ personalities are also split along the same follower-leader line.

Advantages: Patron.

Disadvantages: Duty, Low Self-Image, Sense of Duty, Slave Mentality.

Recluse

This type is particularly appropriate for cryptozoological monsters – *hidden animals* succeed at being hidden by being reclusive. A monster wracked with guilt over its actions may also take up a solitary life, to minimize the temptation to go ravaging again.

Other monsters might just be shy, and hole up except on those days when they rain death and destruction on their victims.

Advantages: None in particular.

Disadvantages: Anachronism, Demophobia, Loner, Paranoia, Reclusive, Secret, Shyness, Staid.

Stranger

Some monsters are not destructive and dangerous because they're evil; they're destructive and dangerous because they aren't from around here (wherever "here" happens to be). They are alien, and their monstrous behavior may be a result of different outlooks (they're here to chat with the dominant life-form, the cockroaches, and my, aren't these skittering humans just delicious?). They may not be what the tabloids call "space aliens" either – they could be from the depths of the planet's core, from a parallel Earth, or from some other plane of existence.

Advantages: Being of Pure Thought, Body of (Any), Doesn't (Any), Extra Arms, Extra Legs, High Technology, Spirit Form, Injury Tolerance, World-Jumper.

Disadvantages: Callous, Clueless, Confused, Curious, Dependency, Low Empathy, No Sense of Humor, Oblivious, Sadism, Solipsist, Xenophilia.

Victim

The victim monster is a monster because of some curse, and in this character type is ticked off about it. "Why did this have to happen to me?" Traditional werewolves and vampires are victims of other werewolves or vampires, and the Beast in *Beauty and the Beast* was the victim of a witch's curse (frogs and monsters seem to be their specialties). This doesn't necessarily mean they are going to become the full-of-angst type. Some victims deal with their situation and go after their victimizer(s). So the monster might also be a monster hunter. Or the victim might nurse his anger until it consumes him, and he hates the world. New origin, same old monstrous result.

Advantages: Higher Purpose, Pitiable.

Disadvantages: Berserk, Chronic Depression, Cursed (Divine Curse), Enemy, Low Self-Image, Manic-Depressive, Obsession.

Appearance

Monsters as a group tend toward Hideous, Horrific, or Monstrous appearance. Some monsters might be temptingly beautiful (see *Lilith*, p. 16) or boringly average (see *Agent Johnson*, p. 104), but a monster's appearance more often reflects its true nature. A word or two on the different appearances beyond Ugly is in order.

Hideous

see p. B15

Hideous (and Ugly or even just Unattractive) are for monsters that are mostly human. Observers might wish they could dismiss the image as inhuman, but they cannot. A hideous monster might well be nonhuman, but it has enough human features that some unfazeable person might strike up a conversation as if it were any other passerby.



Monstrous *see p. CI80*

Since this disadvantage causes most humans to react to the character as a monster rather than another sentient being, certain social disadvantages cannot be combined with it. In particular, the effects of Social Stigma (Barbarian) are already included. (Yes, this means that a Hideous Barbarian will have a bigger reaction penalty than a Monstrous being; familiarity breeds contempt.) Unnatural Feature (p. CI85) is explicitly limited to otherwise normal-looking characters, so may not be taken by Monstrous characters either.

Horrific *see p. CI80*

This is the appearance reserved for unnatural monsters. It is an unswitchable version of the Terror advantage (p. 125). As with Monstrous, some social disadvantages and Unnatural Feature cannot be taken in conjunction with this appearance.

Advantages

Body of Air, etc. *see p. CI50*

Since monsters are *other*, building them out of things other than flesh and blood is an easy way to differentiate them from humans. Usually monsters will have the Unswitchable limitation on these advantages (turning some of them into disadvantages). This idea can be taken to the extreme as Being of Pure Thought (p. CI34). Even if the monster is made of flesh, the arrangement of flesh could be different enough to warrant some Injury Tolerances (p. CI58).

Hard to Kill and Resurrection *see pp. CI25, 64*

Monsters in the movies always survive their first “death” long enough to claim one more victim, or at least give the hero (and the audience) one more scare. Hard to Kill neatly mimics this effect, but the GM should allow the apparently dead monster to come to as soon as someone touches it or walks close to its hands (or tentacles or pincers) and take an action or two before collapsing again to finish out its specified number of hours.

The monster then dies at the end of the movie, but somehow reappears for the sequel. Resurrection is needed for this trick.

Natural Attacks and Strikers *see pp. CI72, 66*

Every monster needs a way to hasten the demise of its prey. Most monsters don’t carry swords or guns, so claws, venom, horns, and constriction attacks are popular choices.

Undead Invulnerability *p. CI70*

This advantage is called “Vampiric Invulnerability” in *GURPS Compendium I*. It has been renamed here, but it works the same way; see p. CI70 for details.

New Advantages

Body of Swarm *60 points*

You are a being composed of a swarm of gnat- to rat-sized bodies, with attacks and defenses as per p. B143. Your smaller bodies can communicate instantly with each other, and work in a coordinated fashion; the Mindshare distance table (p. CI61) applies.

Your swarm’s damage equals thrust damage for your ST, and its Move equals your character’s normal Move. The swarm has full Injury Tolerance (see p. CI58).

Special Enhancement: Humanoid Form: You can assemble your component bodies into a manlike form, although you may not necessarily pass a close inspection. +50%.

Special Enhancement: Insect Form: Your component bodies are so small that they can eventually penetrate all but special protection. Otherwise you penetrate your opponent’s clothes in 2 turns or armor in 5 turns (p. B143). You can also pass through insect-sized cracks, keyholes, ventilation grids, etc. +25%.

Extended Magery *Varies*

Mages may purchase levels of Magery beyond 3. Magery 4 costs 50 points, Magery 5 costs 65, Magery 6 costs 85, Magery 7 costs 105, and additional levels cost another 25 points each; this follows attribute-cost progression. Magery 4+ is added to spells, Thaumatology skill, and the IQ roll to sense magic, just like Magery 1-3. Each level of Magery beyond Magery 3 *also* lets the mage exceed the usual limits of a spell by one level of effect if he spends additional energy.

For instance, Magery 7 (4 “extra” levels) lets one cast a PD 9 shield for 18 energy, a 7d Fireball for 7 energy (takes 7 seconds), and a Major Healing spell that heals 16 points for 8 energy.

Extra Head *25 points/added head*

You have more than one head. You automatically get the Independently Focusable Eyes advantage; Peripheral Vision or 360-Degree Vision must be bought separately, if appropriate. If all but one head is blinded, the Independently Focusable Eyes advantage is negated. If a head is deafened, you gain the Hard of Hearing disadvantage until healed or cured.

You cannot be killed instantly by a Critical Head Blow. Instead, a result of 3 on the Critical Head Blow Table (p. B202) indicates that one head has been crippled (or severed). This does triple damage, and permanently reduces your IQ by 1/3 of your racial norm (rounded down). You won’t fall unconscious until all of your heads have been knocked out. You will, however, lose IQ for each knocked-out head until it recovers.

Reach (for biting or head-butting attacks) can be extended for an additional 5 points per hex per head.





Independent Body Parts

35 points

Your limbs continue to fight after they've been severed. Cutting attacks that would normally cripple a hand or foot (damage over HT/3) will separate it from the arm or leg without injury. Similarly, cutting attacks that would normally cripple an arm or leg (damage over HT/2) will detach it from the torso without harm. The severed limb falls to the ground and starts fighting as the ally of its owner, who *does* suffer the usual crippling effects (p. B127). It may be reattached later (see below). If the limb's owner is killed, the limb lives on as an independent entity that will pursue and attack its former owner's enemies.

Non-cutting damage, or cutting damage to already-severed body parts, will damage parts normally, but each part is treated as a separate entity. Hands and feet have their owner's HT and 1/3 his hit points (round up), while arms and legs have his HT and 1/2 his hit points (round up). Damage to limbs is never applied to body hit points for creatures with this advantage. Other abilities are as follows:

Arm: Has its owner's DX. Wiggles along with a Move of ST/4 and a Dodge of DX/2 (round down). It has full ST for striking and strangling, but only ST/4 for grappling or dragging things around. It can attack a foe in its hex (roll vs. Combat/Weapon skill to hit), but can only attack his feet or legs if he is standing. An arm with a hand can punch, grapple, or use a one-handed weapon at -2 damage; one without a hand can only club foes (treat as a punch). A disembodied arm is attacked at -2.

Leg: A leg with a foot has a DX equal to its owner's DX-2. It hops along at its owner's Move-3 and dodges at his DX/2 (round down). It cannot grapple or wield weapons, but may leap in the air and kick foes, using the owner's unarmed combat skills and damage. Treat a leg without a foot as an arm without a hand (above) and -2 DX. Animated legs are attacked at -2.

Hand: Has its owner's DX. It can run along on its fingers with Move and Dodge equal to DX/2 (round down). Its only effective attack is to crawl up someone's body and strangle. Treat this a grapple attempt (p. B111); use the rules for strangling (p. B112) on successive turns. The hand may use its owner's *full* ST for this attack only. Hands are targeted at -4.

Foot: A foot has a DX equal to its owner's DX-2. Its Move and Dodge are 1. Its only effective attack is to trip a moving person. Anyone moving through a foot's hex or leaving close combat with a foot must win a Quick Contest of DX with the foot or fall down. A foot is targeted at -4.

When a detached body part is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, it is crippled and can no longer attack. Roll against HT to see if the injury is permanent or not (see p. B129). Body parts can be reattached by holding them in place for 1 minute. Crippled body parts can be reattached if the injury is temporary or lasting, but remain crippled. Permanently crippled body parts are lost forever.

Special Enhancement: Detachable Head. You can be decapitated normally (see p. CII53), but you suffer no ill effects and can reattach your head, as above. Your severed head has your DX and HT, HT/2 hit points, Move 0 and Dodge 0. It is targeted at -5 in combat and can bite foes in its

hex (see p. B111). Your head is your seat of consciousness; while it is detached, your body fights on as its ally, like a limb severed from the body. +15%.

Special Limitation: No Reattachment. Your severed limbs are animated, but can never be reattached. -60%.

Special Limitation: No Posthumous Activity. Your severed limbs do not live on after your death. If you have "Detachable Head," killing the head (not the body) will end the rest of the parts' independence. -20%.

Pestilence

5 points per disease

This gives a creature the ability to infect others with disease without being subject to the disease itself. Each disease is a separate advantage; see pp. CII167-174 for ideas.

After contact with a monster with Pestilence, the GM should secretly roll vs. the HT of each character. Modifiers: -3 if wounded by the monster, +1 if merely touched, +2 otherwise. On a failed HT roll, the victim is infected with the disease, which progresses normally. If there was no direct contact with the monster, use the *Contagion* rules (p. B133) instead. Multiple diseases require multiple HT rolls. Immunity to Disease protects completely.

Shapeshifting

Varies

The following "quick-and-dirty" shapeshifting rules are sufficient for the monsters in this book and many other traditional weres.

Treat the alternate form as an *advantage*, with the point cost calculated as follows:

1. Create the second form as you would any other character.

2. Total everything with a positive cost to produce a "positive point total" (PPT). Total all negative values to get "negative point total" (NPT). For changes in attribute levels and existing traits, use the *difference* in the costs between the forms (e.g., a ST 11 human who has ST 15 in an animal form adds 50 points to PPT; a Wealthy human who turns into a Dead Broke beast adds -45 points to NPT).

3. Apply NPT as a percentage limitation on PPT (e.g., NPT -40 becomes a -40% limitation on PPT). The limitation cannot exceed -75%, regardless of NPT (e.g., NPT -100 would give only a -75% limitation). Moreover, the point savings due to the limitation cannot exceed 80% of NPT (e.g., NPT -50 and PPT 100 would result in a -50% limitation, normally worth -50 points, but since this would exceed 80% of -50 points, or -40 points, it is reduced to -40 points).

Special Limitation: External Trigger. Some environmental condition triggers your change, whether you want to or not. Some weres have triggers which toggle their change on and off. Others have a trigger that forces a shift only in one direction. Some weres have *two* triggers – one to change, and one to change *back*.

The value of a trigger is based on how common the trigger condition is:

Very Common (sunlight, cold water, darkness): -30%.

Common (a particular type of garden plant, a specific emotional or physical state, electrical fields in a technological setting): -20%.



Occasional (a given range of normal air temperature, a certain food, a specific mineral): -10%.

Rare (a tropical plant, a special drug, radiation): -5%.

If the trigger only works for a change in one direction, halve its value. These values assume that the were is able to change at will at other times. If the external trigger is the *only* way he can change, it is worth an additional -25% to the limitation value.

Special Limitation: Lunar Change: You are forced to assume your were-form once per night during the full moon (two to three consecutive nights each lunar month). You have no choice in the matter; you change automatically at the appropriate time. -20%.

See *GURPS Shapeshifters* for more enhancements, limitations, and variants for shapeshifters.

Spirit Form

100 points

Spirits are invisible and intangible to the physical world; as a general rule, only other spirits can sense them without the aid of magic spells or psi skills. (Dogs, horses, owls, and bees can sense particularly powerful or malevolent spirits.) Beyond this, they have a number of special powers:

Perception: Spirits can see, smell and hear normally. Their sense of touch is very limited unless they materialize (see p. 123). They can even taste objects to a limited degree, especially objects that have been offered to them in a ritual. Many spirits enjoy the smell and taste of ritually offered food and drink.

A spirit's senses go beyond the normal human range, however. All spirits have the equivalent of the Empathy advantage, and can sense strong emotions in humans by "seeing" their auras. Through the same sense, they can detect mages, as well as demons and other supernatural beings. To hide from a spirit, such beings must win a Quick Contest of their Will vs. the spirit's Sense roll.

Spirits also have the ability to hear their names whenever they are ritually invoked, regardless of distance or intervening barriers. This can include anything from a medium attempting to channel a departed one's soul, to a sorcerer's ritual of summoning, to an Archangel calling them before a tribunal for judgment.

Movement: Move is determined normally for spirits. Since they aren't bound by physical limits, they can move in any direction, in the air and through solid objects. They can instantly transport themselves into the presence of someone who is ritually invoking their name (see above). A spirit can also "hitch a ride" inside a vehicle, but this costs 1 fatigue per hour to maintain a connection to the vehicle.

Although physical barriers do not impede spirits, many magical wards and blocks will keep them out, such as Pentagram (p. M62), Repel Spirits (p. G85), Astral Block (p. G85), "Utter" spells (p. M78, G93) and similar spells

or rituals (such as consecration, exorcism, etc.) at the GM's discretion.

Communication: Spirits can project their thoughts as speech and hear thoughts directed at them. This process works almost exactly like telepathy, except that communication is not stopped by psionic Mind Shields, and neither the spirit nor the people it's communicating with can read thoughts or do anything other than "speak" to each other. Such communication costs the spirit 1 fatigue per short sentence (a few seconds' worth of speech). Evil spirits sometimes use this power to "plant" thoughts in a mortal's head, making them "hear voices." Someone with the Voices disadvantage (p. CI94) may be haunted by one or more spirits. These thoughts can't control a person's actions, but may trigger repressed anger or fear and cause people to do things they otherwise wouldn't.

Dream Travel: Spirits don't sleep or dream themselves, but they can enter the dreams of mortals. Entering or leaving a dream requires a Will roll and costs 1 fatigue. From within a person's dream, the spirit can communicate with the dreamer and even alter the elements of the dream to suit its purposes, but nothing the spirit can do in a dream will affect the dreamer physically. At worst, the spirit can create a terrifying nightmare that causes the victim to make a Fright Check upon awakening. The penalty to the Fright Check is determined by the content of the nightmare and the victim's personality (GM's call). A severe scare *could* harm the victim, and repeated nightmares wear at a victim's sanity.

Monster Design: Lurking Villains

Some monsters, regardless of their power level or invulnerability, avoid confrontation. Some are recluses, preferring privacy above all. . . although they might have a guest for dinner now and then. Others are manipulative horrors, and enjoy stalking their prey, tormenting their victims, and foiling their hunters from afar. Some may even be able to “feed” unnaturally or otherwise consummate the destruction of their targets without personal contact.

The label of “Villain” does exclude the Beast and Gentle Giant monster types. Masters are perfect for lurking behind their minions. Recluses and Strangers are appropriate types as well. Revenge and naked malevolence are good motivations for lurking horrors. They may also aspire to (or already have) Illuminated power, in an *Illuminati* game.

Monster Design: The Nemesis

The Nemesis is the most interactive of the monster designs here. A nemesis monster will go toe-to-toe with the heroes, but in the end the (surviving) characters will likely gain the upper hand and the monster will effect some impossible escape. Besides being tailor-made for a *Horror/Cliffhangers* crossover, nemesis monsters are fun for the GM to introduce in *any* horror campaign.

Attention must be given to the nemesis’ defenses. A single monster going up against a group of PCs is going to have to withstand (or nullify) a wide variety of attacks. Invulnerabilities, Spirit Form, and Altered Time Rate are a few ways to increase survivability; there are many more. The other key aspect is the escape plan. Teleportation (magical or psionic), Insubstantiality, Resurrection, Shadow Form, Flight, and Tunnel afford some exit opportunities; again, there are other options available, especially with magic or super powers.

Monster Design: Menacing Hordes

Menacing hordes of monsters will typically outnumber the PCs but have lower point totals. They are minions of more powerful monsters or of human villains (necromancers, mad scientists, and megacorp execs are likely powers behind the scenes).

A collection of unique, low-powered monsters is possible, and occasionally such groups appear in horror-themed *Supers* games. More often, the horde will be homogeneous: an army of atomic ants, a host of hairy humanoids, or scores of scarred skeletons. The GM needs only create one monster and multiply it for the appropriate number of opponents.

One or two of the horde’s horrors should be dealt with specially. They might simply have higher ST, more hit points, and better damage-dealing abilities, or they might have magical or psionic powers, invulnerability, or shapeshifting ability. Unlike the entries in this book, however, these monsters *are* meant to be met and overcome by the characters; do not go overboard with the enhancements, as their sheer numbers should remain their primary strength.

It is possible to take one of the unique monsters here and turn it into a horde. Shub-Internet or Tiamat might not be good choices, but The Mothman (p. 46) or Stitches the Patchwork Clown (p. 106) might make interesting hordes. Any social advantages should be removed. Attributes and defense should probably be reduced, but weaknesses and vulnerabilities could be left alone. Mental disadvantages that work well in individuals but poorly in large groups (Loner, Megalomania) should just be dropped.

Possession: Spirits have the ability to displace a living being’s soul, thereby taking control of his body. This is resolved as a Quick Contest of Wills, and can only be attempted once per day on any given person. If the spirit wins, he gains control over the body for 3d seconds. This costs 5 fatigue points. On a tie, the victim suffers from the equivalent of the Split Personality disadvantage (with the subject in control, not the spirit) for the same length of time.

The spirit can try to extend the possession by taking a penalty to its Will roll and spending extra fatigue. Taking possession for 3d *minutes* is done at -2 Will and costs 7 fatigue. Attempts to possess for 3d *hours* are at -4 Will and cost 10 fatigue. Possession for 3d *days* has a -8 penalty and costs 15 fatigue. A critical success on the spirit’s part or a critical failure by the victim doubles the length of the possession. A critical failure by the spirit or a critical success by the victim costs the spirit 3d fatigue (in addition to the normal cost) and renders it incapable of attempting to possess *anybody* for 3d days.

The subject’s state of mind and physical circumstances modify the possession attempt. If the subject’s soul has left his body (for example, by astral travel, a Soul Jar spell (p. M73), or through a near-death experience) the spirit’s roll is at +8. If the victim is undergoing a painful or terrifying ordeal (torture, rape, starvation, etc.), the spirit is at +6. If the subject is in an altered state of mind (from drugs, alcohol, fever, etc.), the spirit has a +4. Even a willing person gets a resistance roll (representing an instinctive reluctance to losing control), but the spirit’s roll is at +10! Each previously successful possession of a particular subject by the spirit gives that spirit +1 to its roll (maximum +3).

When a person is possessed, the spirit’s vital energy infuses his body with greater strength, speed and endurance. The possessed body’s ST is raised by 1/5 the spirit’s ST (not Fatigue), and its DX and HT are raised by 1/8 the spirit’s DX and HT, respectively.

The Poltergeist Effect: A spirit can use some of its energy to manipulate physical objects. By spending fatigue, it can move objects, throw punches and perform other physical actions. The fatigue cost is great, however, so most spirits are only capable of affecting small objects for short periods of time.

Each *action* the spirit attempts costs it fatigue. The effective ST and DX the spirit applies in the world determines the cost, and *can* exceed the spirit’s “natural” attributes. An action costs 1 fatigue per 2 ST exerted. DX costs 1 fatigue for a base level of 10 and 1 fatigue for every +2 DX. With enough fatigue, a spirit can perform a number of effects, slamming doors, writing on typewriters or computers, or even pushing or punching people. A direct attack does thrust-3 damage based on the ST of the effect.



Probability Alteration: Spirits have the power to channel their wills to affect the outcome of an event. The effects of this power depend on the intended result and the amount of fatigue the spirit spends.

The spirit must first win a Quick Contest of Wills with the subject, unless the spirit is trying to *help* the subject, in which case only an unopposed Will roll is required. A positive or negative modifier to any one roll can be applied on a success, at 2 fatigue per +/-1 (maximum +/-10, for 20 fatigue). This includes short actions, long actions, or such things as rolls on the Jobs Table. Activities that are not normally resolved by random rolls may also be affected in this way, but the GM must assess the base probability for success or failure before assessing the bonus or penalty. The chart on p. B45 can be useful here.

Use of this power requires a great deal of imagination on the part of the GM and players. Anybody who's had a bad day knows the myriad of little things that can go wrong in the course of normal life, and can draw upon those experiences for inspiration.

Materialization: Finally, spirits can assume a material or semi-material form. There are three levels of materialization, ranging from sound effects to actual solidity. Most spirits don't have enough energy to become fully solid, and only powerful spirits can maintain a materialization for any length of time. Full materialization is also dangerous for the spirit because physical attacks can hurt or destroy it while materialized. The levels of materialization are as follows:

Sounds: The spirit uses enough energy to produce disembodied sounds. Simple sounds (moans and howls) are easier than complex noises or speech. These are real sounds and can be picked up by microphones and recording devices. In fact, if the spirit wishes, the sounds can *only* be picked up by machines, and not by living creatures (producing disembodied voices on

an audio tape or over a radio frequency, for example). Producing simple sounds costs 1 fatigue per 10 seconds. Speech or complex sounds cost 1 fatigue per second, and a Will roll is required to make the right sounds or say the words clearly. A failed Will roll results in incoherent or unintelligible noise.

Visual Effects: The spirit can cause a visual manifestation of its form to appear. This form has no solidity or weight, and is translucent unless the spirit spends extra fatigue to make it appear solid. This costs 1 fatigue per 5 seconds, doubled if the spirit wants to appear solid.

Full Materialization: This effect is very costly, but it temporarily provides the spirit with a physical body. This costs 1 fatigue point for every two levels in *each* physical stat (ST, DX and HT), rounded up. Clothing appears around the subject at no additional cost, but other objects (including weapons and armor) cost 1 fatigue per pound of weight. This energy cost must be paid after each minute. If the spirit has any special powers or advantages, it may use them in material form normally. Spirits in material form are still immune to many of the concerns of mortal beings. They are unaffected by concerns such as starvation, suffocation, fatigue, disease, poison and most weather conditions, although they can be harmed by the same attacks as other physical beings, unless they have special advantages protecting them.

Multiple Forms: Spirits normally always materialize in the same form (their "normal" form). However, they can learn to materialize in forms other than human. They use the Shapeshifting skill (p. CI144) to do so. The spirit's various advantages and disadvantages do not change, and its attributes are determined normally for materialization (above). The spirit can vary its size and appearance. Spirits most often use this ability to appear as animals or strange, inhuman creatures (or to assume human form if their natural form is something other than human).



Fear, Not Power

Part of the reason that point totals are played down in this section is that power level is not as important in horror gaming as it is in other styles. A swarm of rats, a single arm crawling on its own, or even a completely abandoned house can be an appropriate “encounter” for a group of characters in a horror game.

Some of the monsters in this book are primordially powerful. All of them are over 100 points, but some not much more than that. The famous Jersey Devil (p. 44), for example, weighs in at just 109 points. It’s not his power level that scares people; it’s his mythos.

When creating original monsters, the mythos is the most important thing. And if the mythos is done well, the rest of the character should nearly write itself. What makes the monster unnatural, where (or whom) did it come from, what does it want out of its existence, and why are the people who have heard of it afraid – all of these questions should have solid answers before trying to set the creature’s ST, DX, IQ, and HT scores.

Spirit Weaknesses

Next to being unable to affect the material world without spending fatigue, the biggest limitation faced by spirits is that they have very short lifespans. Every month, a spirit must make a Will roll. A roll of 14 or higher is an automatic failure, and any missed roll reduces HT by one. If HT ever reaches 0, the spirit is destroyed.

Modifiers (these *do* affect the 14 maximum): +2 if the spirit has a compelling reason to stay in existence; +2 if it stays within a suitable place of power (generally within 50 yards), for the whole month; +1 to +5 if the spirit is being paid respect or worship.

If these cumulative bonuses add up to +3 or more, Will rolls to maintain HT fail only on a roll higher than modified Will or a 17 or 18, whichever is lower. If they total +5 or more, the spirit doesn't have to make a Will roll at all that month!

Point Cost

The package above is treated as a 100-point advantage, called Spirit Form. It can be modified by the enhancements and limitations below. Treat any total less than -75% as -75%.

Special Enhancement: Spectral Touch. The spirit can use "touch-only" abilities while insubstantial by interpenetrating with the subject. Any spirit can use Steal HT, Steal ST or the Chilling Touch version of Terror (below) this way, but this enhancement is required to use all other touch-only abilities this way (e.g., Deathtouch, the Pestilence advantage, etc.). +40%.

Special Enhancement: Unlimited Lifespan. The spirit doesn't have to make monthly Will rolls to avoid losing HT, making it effectively immortal. +30%.

Special Enhancement: Physical Form. The spirit has one physical form it can assume at will (like *Materialization* above) for a Fatigue cost of only 1 point, remaining in that form for as long as it wishes. It costs no fatigue for the spirit to return to its normal incorporeal form. The physical form has the spirit's normal Attributes and abilities, plus any advantages the spirit may have that apply to the physical world. The spirit cannot change the appearance of its physical form without materializing another (and paying the full fatigue cost) or having an appropriate advantage or spell. If the spirit's physical form is reduced to 0 HT and it fails a HT roll, it is forced back into spirit form. This enhancement can be taken multiple times for multiple physical forms. +80%.

Special Enhancement: Visible. The spirit is normally visible, at no fatigue cost. The advantages (free visual effects) and disadvantages (being visible to normal sight) cancel out. +0% if the spirit is obviously unnatural (glowing, translucent, etc.), +5% if it looks human. +5% if the spirit is only visible to living beings and not machines (cameras, etc.), -5% if the spirit is normally only visible to machines, not living beings (showing up in photographs, on film, etc. but invisible to the naked eye).

Special Limitation: The spirit can't produce the effects listed under *Materialization*. -20% for Can't Materialize, -15% for Sounds Only, and -10% for Sounds and Visual Effects Only. Only the -10% level can be combined with Visible. Cannot be combined with Physical Form.

Special Limitations: Missing Power. The spirit lacks a basic spirit ability. Each missing power is a separate limitation:

-5% if it can't hear its name being invoked, travel instantaneously to the site of a summoner, or ride in vehicles; -10% if it can't use dream travel, communicate telepathically, sense auras or tap fatigue from places of power and worshippers; -20% if it can't use the poltergeist effect, possession or probability alteration.

Spirit Invulnerability

50 points

This is an advantage available only to characters with Spirit Form with the Materialization ability (p. 123). Spirits that have it cannot be killed by damage to their physical forms; reducing them to 0 HT simply forces them back into spirit form and prevents them from assuming material form again until their lost hit points would have fully recovered. When the spirit's physical form is destroyed it automatically returns to spirit form with full normal HT and suffers no ill effects. This applies only to damage from physical sources. Damage that directly affects the mind or spirit remains.

The cost of this advantage can be reduced by taking Vulnerabilities (p. CI106). In conjunction with this advantage, the first level of Vulnerability negates the advantage with respect to that form of attack, while only additional levels do extra damage as usual.

Terror

30 points

+10 points/-1 to Fright Check

Others are struck by irrational, supernatural fear in your presence. This can take various forms: a psychic attack, an aura of dread, a face that looks like a dead loved one to everyone who views it, and so forth. Anyone who sees you must make a Fright Check immediately; a new roll is required if you reappear after an absence of at least one hour.

Modifiers: The modifiers on p. B93; +1 per appearance after the first within 24 hours. Penalties can be purchased for 10 points per -1. Multiple beings with Terror cause *one* Fright Check at the highest penalty among them, with an additional -1 for 5 creatures, -2 for 10, -3 for 20, -4 for 50, and -5 for 100 or more.

Special Limitation: Chilling Touch. You cause fear as outlined above, but only in those you touch. Spirits can take this ability, and need not materialize in order to use it. Neither PD nor DR protect against this touch. -20%.

Special Limitation: Terror can normally be turned off to let you engage in social activities. If you can't turn it off, you have Horrific Appearance (p. CI80) *instead* of Terror, and suffer a -6 reaction penalty at all times. This is a disadvantage worth -30 points.

Disadvantages

Bestial

see p. CI101

This is a challenging disadvantage to roleplay in an otherwise-intelligent being. Certainly a brilliant, bestial monster would be a challenge to *oppose* as well. More often, this advantage along with Presentient (p. CI103) combine in the snarling-beast monsters.

Callous and Low Empathy *see pp. CI86, 91*

Dealing pain and death to innocent victims on a regular basis is not good for sensitive types. Monster characters who want to avoid pangs of guilt should take at least one of these disadvantages, Low Empathy if they don't know what kind of pain they're causing or Callous if they don't care.

Dependency, Dread, Vulnerability, and Weakness *see pp. CI81, 97, 106*

The mythos surrounding a monster must include at least hints as to how it can be defeated. These four disadvantages, along with any Will-based disadvantages that can tempt the monster into a trap, are the usual suspects. There should be more than one way to skin the monstrous cat, too, so several of these should be considered.

Lecherousness *see p. B34*

B-movie monsters were forever tossing nearby blondes over their shoulders and heading for their lairs. The creature from the black lagoon, King Kong, and any number of hideous men from Mars all had this same failing, despite how revolting human females *should* have seemed to them.

Reputation *see p. B17*

Unnatural creatures killing local farm animals (and farmers!) have a tendency to attract attention. Depending on how slow a news day it is, the national media might even run a short item on the latest lake monster or missing link, even if the journalists don't believe it themselves. Almost every monster will earn a negative reputation just for its monstrosity.

Skills

Hidden Lore *see p. CI147*

This skill is more for the monster hunters than for the monsters. Teratology is the study of monsters, so in a game world where monsters exist it can be taken as a specialization of Hidden Lore. This specialization represents knowledge of the monsters *that exist in the game world*. It is not a study of mythological or literary monsters; use optional specializations of Theology or Literature for that. In a game world where cryptozoological creatures *might* exist, use Hidden Lore (Forteanism); see p. WT104 for a full description of Forteanism.

Monster Design: Unknown Mundanes

Some creatures initially thought to be monsters turn out to have a place in the natural order after all. Most of them are Beasts or Gentle Giants. To create one of these cryptozoological creatures, simply take a similar existing creature (from one of the *Bestiaries* or other sourcebook) and use its stats, but replace its description with the new creatures. Small modifications, even unnatural ones, can be made. Wings and horns can be added to a cobra, or a cockroach can be given Doesn't Breathe and Sonic Blast. Besides physical changes, the new "monster" could be more aggressive or use different tactics in combat or hunting, or it could fill an entirely different ecological niche. See p. BE91 for a complete chapter on creating new animals.

Horrorizing Creatures From Other Bestiaries

If an intriguing creature appears in *Bestiary*, *Fantasy Bestiary*, or *Space Bestiary*, or in another sourcebook such as *Aztecs* or *Japan*, the GM can turn it into a more horrific version of itself easily. Monstrous creatures tend to be more cunning than their mundane counterparts, so consider boosting IQ (and ignoring the Presentient and other mental disadvantages that would normally apply to an animal character). An Unnatural Feature or two, like fiery eyes or translucent skin, can work wonders. Special attention to matching the PCs' phobias (and the players' own qualms) should be given to enhance the horror factor. Peeling skin might not bother a group of medical students as much as rusty nails for claws would.

To create a full racial template from a *Bestiary*-style entry, see p. BE104. For a quick one-shot character, take the



attributes directly from the listing (tending toward the high end of any ranges given) and determine the creature's intellect (adding one or more of Dull, Hidebound, Incurious, Innumerate, Obdurate, Presentient, and Staid). Then build the physical form using the rules for Extra Arms, Extra Legs, Winged Flight, and Strikers. Damage Resistance and Passive Defense can be taken straight from the entry, or appropriate levels of Fur or Scales can be substituted.

Move and Dodge might work out correctly from the DX and HT given, Combat Reflexes, Enhanced Dodge, Enhanced Move, Increased Speed, and/or Reduced Move can be used to make up the difference.

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Interdisciplinary Journal of the International Society of Cryptozoology (1982-present).

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Aaahh!!! Real Monsters (1994-1998).

Buffy the Vampire Slayer (1997-present).

Hercules: The Legendary Journeys (1995-1999).

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This is not a selection of great movies about monsters – it is a selection of movies about great monsters. **GURPS Undead**, **GURPS Blood Types**, and **GURPS Atomic Horror** have other monster-specific filmographies. As much as possible, titles in those lists have been omitted here in favor of different films.

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werewolves, etc.). Went from 96 pages in its first edition to 256 in its third, before the publisher disappeared.

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