

PLAYER'S COMPANION

BACK SECRETS

NEW SKILLS

NEW ARCHETYPES

NEW CHARACTER SHEET

CREATURES OF THE NIGHT

BACKGROUND & PSYCHE

NEW EQ & ITEMS

AND MUCH MORE!

KULT™

THE ROLEPLAYING GAME

Kult Player's Companion

Credits

AUTHORS

Terry Kevin Amthor
James Estes

COVER ART

Peter Andrew Jones

BACK COVER ART

Jens Jonsson

COVER DESIGN

Jonas Mases

ILLUSTRATIONS

Peter Bergting
Jens Jonsson
Stefan Thunberg

PAGE DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Marcus Thorell

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Fredrik Malmberg, Nils Gulliksson
Henrik Strandberg, Stefan Thulin,
Jerker Sojdelius, Cees Kwadijk and Patric Backlund

PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Stefan Ljungqvist

Copyright © 1996 TARGET GAMES AB. All rights reserved. KULT and all character names and the distinctive likeness(es) thereof are Trademarks of Target Games AB.
Printed in the U.S.A.

Distributed by: Metropolis Ltd C/O Heartbreaker Inc. P.O.Box 105 Folsom, PA 19033



WEB-SITE: <http://users.aol.com/lictor/metropolis.html>
E-Mail: hrtbrkr000@aol.com, Lictor@aol.com

WEB-SITE: <http://www.target.se>
E-Mail: Kult@target.se





Contents

Creating a character	3
Archetypes	13
New Advantages & Disadvantages	38
New Dark Secrets	48
New Skills	52
New Equipment and Items	64
Character Background & Psyche	69
A Kult Game	73

Preface

The Kult Player's Companion is designed as a supplement to the role playing game Kult, which more fully details the nature of the illusion and the condition of humanity. Where many Kult releases—which detail the secret truths of reality and the plans of our jailers—are intended more for Kult gamemasters, this work is directed to players and gamemasters alike.

Players: you should use this work as a means of further enhancing your characters. It guides you carefully through the process of creating a character, and builds upon the wealth of material presented in Kult. New Dark Secrets, advantages, skills, and more are presented herein. This book gives you the tools to creating a more fully detailed Kult persona. Of course, what this book can't do is up to you: you must provide the character with the heart and soul to bring life to an otherwise meaningless group of numbers. We have tried to offer some assistance on role-playing and character development, but ultimately, a strong character lies in your hands. This book is primarily intended to get you started.

Gamemasters: even though this work is oriented toward the players, you can use this book as well. In addition to aiding your players in creating good characters, you can use this work to assist you in creating supporting characters for the story that you are going to tell. Don't worry about us spoiling any secrets for you, though. We haven't given away too many details of the world of Kult. Although we would have liked to fill the book with secret societies, mysterious cults, beyond-human personalities, and reality-shattering artifacts, most Kult characters are supposed to start fairly oblivious to the nature of reality. We have kept to this premise, and, aside from some material on the Children of the Night, left the revelations of the true reality for you.



Creating a character

I stared at the crumpled People magazine on my lap; it was months old, but there was nothing else to read in this run-down office. The radiator rattled, the walls were covered with old water stains. I wished that Annie and I could have afforded something better, but insurance didn't cover this kind of thing, and neither one of us made much money.

Dr. Reginald Steiner, OB-GYN I read backwards through the dirty frosted glass on the front door. It seemed like Annie had been in with Dr. Steiner and his amazon nurse for a long time, but I knew it had only been a few minutes. And they wouldn't let me stay with her. "You'd just be in the way, young man," the Doctor had said, then, leaning close, he hissed "Haven't you done enough?" His eyes were wide and bloodshot behind glasses that magnified the red veins, and he had a tic at the corner of his mouth.

Then he and "Nurse Harding" took Annie to the examination room.

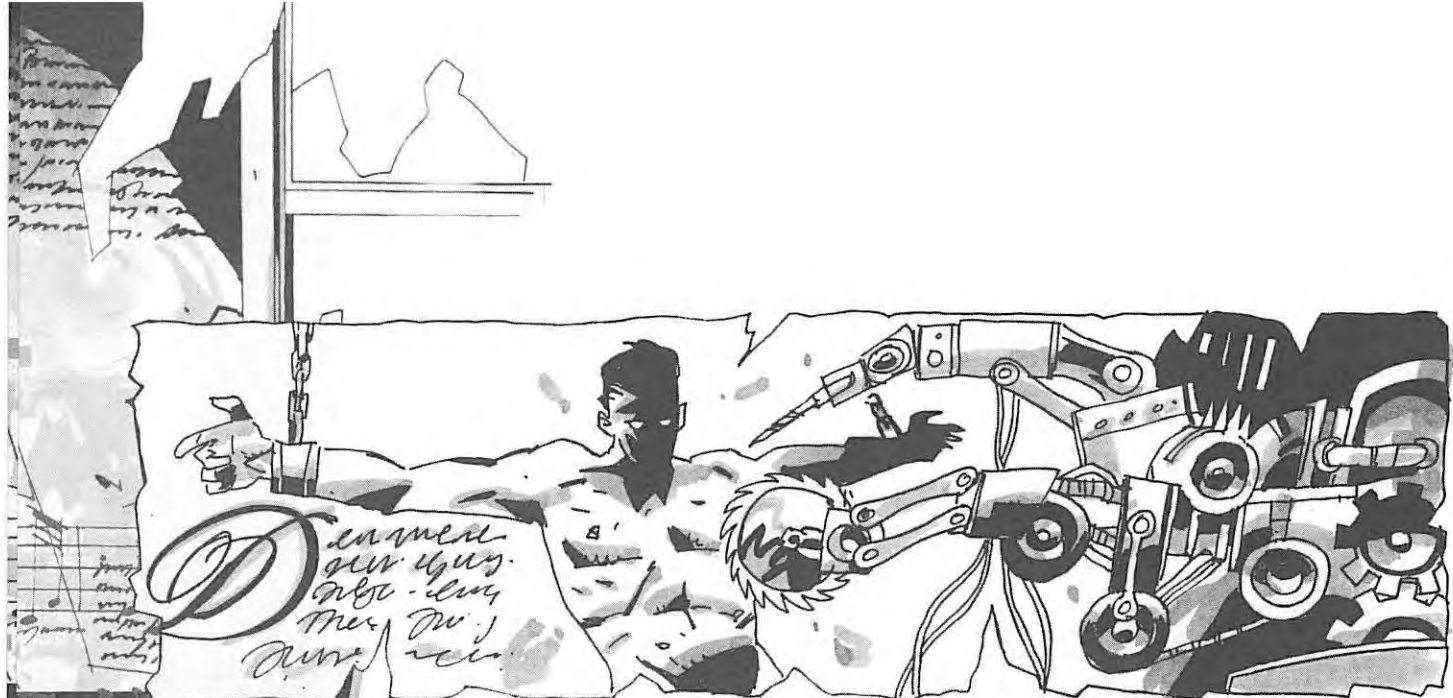
Now, in that room down the hall I heard low voices, and the clatter of metal tools. Then the shriek of some kind of machine... and Annie screamed...

I seemed to run down the hall in slow motion while her cry went on and on. The door was locked, and yelled and I beat on it till my knuckles were bloody. Annie's scream stopped suddenly, and the keening of the machine died soon after. I was about to try to break the door down when it was suddenly flung open. Steiner and his nurse blocked my view of the room, but both were splattered with blood... and I saw huge sprays of red across the walls and ceiling behind them. I started to feel sick.

"I'm terribly sorry," Doctor Steiner said, a muscle spasming at the corner of his mouth, "But we lost her." His mouth twitched again, pulling his face into a half smile. He was clutching a large jar of fluid with something floating in it.

Nurse Harding's hand clamped on my forearm in a steely grip. "You don't look well, boy," she said in a deep voice, "maybe you should lie down in the other examination room."





The following section is a step-by-step guide to creating a character in Kult. It explains the two basic methods of creating a character (standard and simplified) and takes you through both. Each step in this section is a brief explanation of what to do, and in most cases references a section later in the book which provides detailed information about the character aspect, and new options which expand on the original material found in the Kult RPG.

THE CHARACTERS

The characters should be one of the most important features of any role-playing game. Story, mood, and themes are all vital factors in the creation of a good role-playing game, but the characters are a major element in determining if a game is a success or a failure. Strong characters can carry a weak plot and even make it stronger, while a strong plot stands the chance of being minimized by weak characters. Players are just as important as the Gamemaster in the roles of storytelling, and this is an important point to remember for both players and Gamemaster alike.

Character creation is particularly important in Kult, because you will be establishing a number of factors for future game use. While your character's skills, advantages, and disadvantages will, of course, be important in game play, so will your character's background and Dark Secret. Your character's background and Dark Secret should not merely be events in the past—they shaped your character, they made your character who and what he or she is, and they will be with your character for some time in the future. They may, in certain cases, presage future events to occur.

WORK WITH YOUR GAMEMASTER

You should always consult with your Gamemaster throughout the character creation process. While you needn't inform him of each and every step as it occurs, give him the broad picture.

Your Gamemaster may have some guidelines for you, especially if she has the elements of a campaign in mind: in addition to possible group Concepts, she might have suggested character Concepts, preferred Archetypes, residence, etc. Find these out before you begin the actual work of creating a character; if you have a Concept in mind that may not otherwise fit in, discuss it with your Gamemaster and see if some compromise can be reached. Especially important is working with your Gamemaster on elements of your Background, Dark Secret, Disadvantages and Advantages. These are all things that may come into future stories, and your Gamemaster may have some suggestions for you, or even things that he might require.

Allow your Gamemaster to add a few details to your Background, e.g., where you might have lived, whom you might have known, who your family members are, etc. If you have a few choices that you're unsure of, ask the GM. If you give your Gamemaster a rich background and some options to consider, you'll probably have an appreciative Gamemaster and contribute to a better game in the end. See the sections later on character background.

Try not to establish an adversarial nature with your Gamemaster during the character creation process. Don't push for things or wheedle for special advantages; GMs tend

not to like that. On the other hand, while your Gamemaster has the final say, he or she should be considerate of your needs and wishes. You should both be happy with the final result. Remember that this is supposed to be a dialogue, not an argument.

CHARACTER CREATION METHODS

There are two ways to create characters, both of which are fully discussed in *Kult*. The Standard method involves the allocation of points to Abilities, skills, and so forth. The second method, Simplified Character Generation, allows you to roll dice and simply choose a set number of skills, disadvantages, etc. Which one is better?

The Standard method allows you to create a character more carefully, and it is a route that many experienced players seem to prefer. It works best if you have a very precise vision of your character and know exactly what you want. The drawback is that it becomes too easy to spend countless hours juggling points from attribute to attribute, skill to skill, and so forth, in an attempt to fine-tune a character to your liking.

The Simplified character creation method is substantially easier and quicker. On the other hand, some players seem to feel it is too restrictive. Note that this method absolutely requires the use of an Archetype. If you prefer the simplified method of character creation and have a Concept in mind, but don't have a matching Archetype, it can be fun to create an Archetype; just remember to get your Gamemaster's approval.

If you are new to playing *Kult*, you might want to use the Simplified method. Don't worry, though—richly detailed characters are possible using this method, so don't feel like you're compromising anything.

Ultimately, it is up to you (and/or your GM) to determine which method is preferable. The point is to create a character you are happy with, one you feel you can step into and role-play. There is no superior or inferior method, only personal preferences.

THE CHARACTER CREATION PROCESS

We will discuss in some detail the various aspects of character creation, and offer suggestions where necessary. This is not going to simply repeat the information in *Kult*: it will be a summary, with suggestions and warnings as necessary.

The discussion will be accompanied by an example of character creation, so we can see how the process actually works.

STEP ONE: CONCEPT

Simply put, Concept should be the beginning of any character. Start with a good Concept—this is the central idea that the rest of the character creation process will revolve around. The concept can include a job and personality details, and whatever else might be a good starting point. A "Concept" need not be fully developed; it only needs to be an idea to get you going in the character creation process. Sources for concepts can come from anywhere—books, movies, comics, even real people. Just looking at a picture can spark an inspiration for a character. Essentially, a Concept boils down the first glimmerings of a character that come to mind. Sample concepts include:

- Musician: a member of a once-popular music group and a one-time teen idol, trying to make a comeback.
- Secret Service: an ex-Secret Service agent, who failed to protect an important person during an assassination attempt, and is both personally and professionally unable to live down this failure.
- Scientist: A withdrawn zoologist who is uncomfortable dealing with people and who has started to think she understands what animals are saying.

If you need help with a Concept, look through the Archetypes or the sample characters we've provided elsewhere in the *Players Companion*—let them provide Concepts for you. Skim through them a few times to see if anything comes to mind, or if anything appeals to you. If an Archetype sparks some interest or an idea in you, then use that Archetype as the spring-board for creating a character.





Example: Tom is creating a Kult character; Jim, the GM, is helping him in the process. Tom isn't sure what kind of character he wants to play, so Jim suggests that Tom consider movies he liked, and think about what personalities are in the movie. Tom decides he likes the idea of a smuggler, someone who carries contraband material. At first, he fixes on the idea of an "ivory smuggler," and Jim tries to steer him away from that: an ivory smuggler is certainly exotic, but has only limited potential in a campaign based in Washington, D.C., the home of Jim's campaign.

Jim suggests maybe something like an "information smuggler," which is very high-tech and cosmopolitan. Tom thinks that is too far away from his Concept, but he sees how an ivory smuggler might be too limiting in Jim's game. He decides he still wants to go with the idea of a smuggler, but he doesn't limit the smuggled goods to just ivory: his smuggler will now take any material, anywhere, and he won't question the goods.

Always let the Concept be the guiding principle in character creation, and not the rules. Maintain the integrity of your Concept.

STEP TWO: ARCHETYPE

You may have already looked at the Archetypes when trying to come up with a concept. If you are using the Standard method of creating characters, you'll probably be using an Archetype for guidelines, but it isn't fully necessary. If you are using the Simplified Character Creation process, then you will have to use the Archetypes.

If you haven't yet looked at the Archetypes, now is the time. Scan the Archetypes for one that is applicable to your concept. You may not find an appropriate Archetype. If not, then you have three options: 1) decide to use the standard character creation process, which does not require an Archetype; 2) redefine your Concept; 3) create an Archetype that it is appropriate to your Concept—this last option will be discussed later.

After choosing an archetype, you should determine which of the methods you will use if you haven't made a choice already.

Example: Tom starts looking through the Archetypes, and can't seem to find one that matches his smuggler. Jim suggests that they

use the Dealer as an archetype. The Smuggler and the Dealer have one thing in common: they are the purveyor of wanted goods. Beyond that, though, little will be taken directly from the Dealer archetype. Tom decides that he will use the Standard character creation process.

MODIFYING ARCHETYPES

Each archetype usually offers a particular representative of that archetype. This does not mean that variations on the theme are impossible. Do not think that in playing an Archetype you are limited to the particular sample given. If you like the Archetype but not the sample presented, feel free to modify it—but make sure it is consistent. Find some way to make the character your own.

Take the Dealer as an example. The Dealer that is presented is a dealer in a number of commodities, primarily illegal. There is no reason, however, why a "Dealer" cannot be an information broker, or a business consultant; one could just as easily be created using the Archetype guidelines. As our ongoing example shows, in fact, the Dealer can be greatly modified.

STEP THREE: DARK SECRET

Your character's Dark Secret should be one of the most carefully thought-out details of the entire character creation process. It will, quite likely, be the source of many of your character's personality quirks and disadvantages. Even some advantages can be traced to a Dark Secret; one can gain strength from adversity, after all.

Dark Secrets can be chosen from those offered in Kult and this companion. If nothing appeals to you, then (as you might guess), create one. Dark Secrets don't have to have catchy phrases, only solid ideas.

Your Gamemaster may decide to roleplay your Dark Secret with you. This is a good method of making it more real for your character, and not just an item on a character sheet. It helps give you insights into your character, and might make the rest of the character creation process easier. If you've already created your character when you roleplay your Dark Secret, you can always make a few changes afterward, prior to actual gameplay.

Example: Tom and Jim discuss the yet-unnamed smuggler's Dark Secret. Tom says that he wants the smuggler to be a gambler, and one who owes a lot of money. Jim says that this is good, but he wants something a little more visceral. Tom decides that his smuggler owed a criminal a lot of money from a lost wager, and the criminal was a constant threat to the smuggler. In a confrontation, the smuggler killed the criminal, but an innocent bystander (probably a child) was killed as well. Jim thinks that this needs to be fine-tuned a little, but it is certainly a good start.

Remember that if you have a negative Mental Balance, you must have a Dark Secret. A Dark Secret is optional for either characters with a positive Mental Balance or characters created using the Simplified method (regardless of Mental Balance).

STEP FOUR: BACKGROUND & PROFESSION

Establishing a background for your character is also useful in understanding who he is and where he comes from. Backgrounds can include information that is important but does not end up in any "statistical" details, e.g., when and where you went to school, siblings, marriage(s) and divorce(s), important past jobs, etc. Include your character's profession as part of his background.

Backgrounds can really be created at any time in the character creation process. They don't have to even be fully detailed by the time play begins, but make sure that all the important facts are already in place.

Be as precise or as vague as you'd like in your Background, but try to avoid either an overabundance of dates and related trivia, or a scarcity of valuable information. At the very least, figure out what your character does and how she got there; the rest can be fleshed out during the rest of the process.

Remember that some professions can fall under more than one Archetype. Librarians, for example, can be Company Careerists, Dealers, or Scholars.

Example: Tom has already determined a little bit of his character's background and profession. Jim suggests that Tom consider more details of his character's background: what got his smuggler involved in smug-

gling, how long he has been doing it, important episodes in his character's past, etc. But this can be done later.

STEP FIVE: ABILITIES

Here you determine your characters' primary abilities, either through point distribution or dice-rolling. Try not to think too strongly about the numbers here, only what they represent. While it is certainly justifiable to think "I want my Commando to be strong and fast" or "My Scholar should be very intelligent and perceptive," try not to think only of numbers and how to get the best possible benefits. But try not to be limited by stereotypes—don't always think that because Scholars are smart, they will be weak or because Commandos are strong, they'll be stupid.

Secondary abilities are calculated from the primary physical abilities; it is a fairly straightforward process.

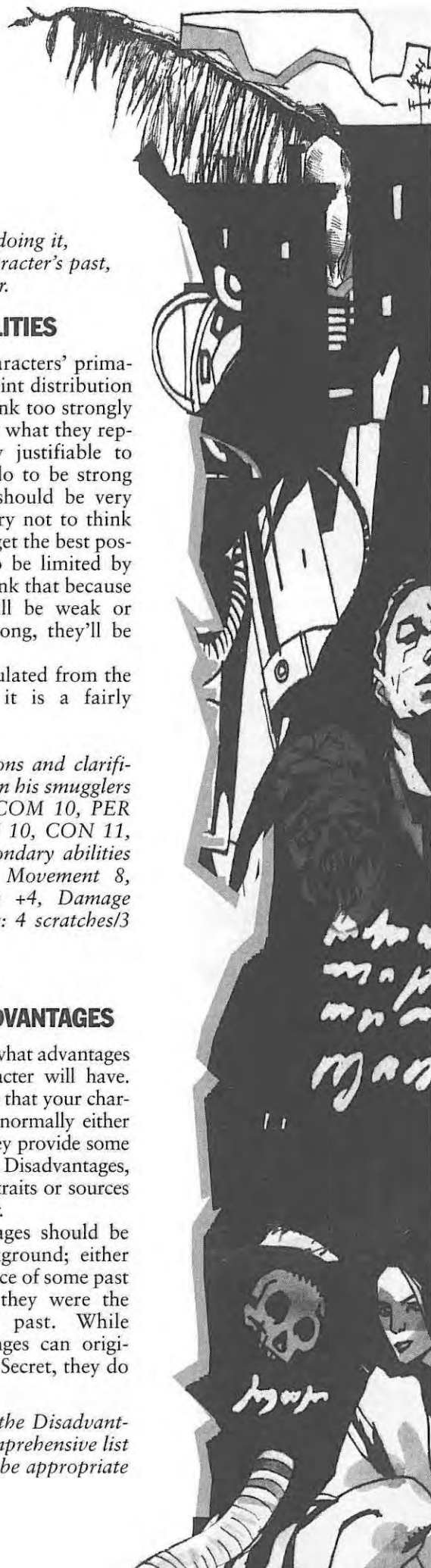
Example: Tom, with suggestions and clarifications from Jim, decides upon his smugglers primary abilities: AGL 16, COM 10, PER 15, STR 11, EGO 15, EDU 10, CON 11, CHA 12. The smuggler's secondary abilities are calculated accordingly: Movement 8, Actions 3, Initiative Bonus +4, Damage Bonus +2, Damage Capacity: 4 scratches/3 light wounds/3 serious.

STEP SIX: DISADVANTAGES & ADVANTAGES

In this process, you determine what advantages and disadvantages your character will have. Advantages are beneficial traits that your character would possess; they are normally either psychologically oriented, or they provide some source of strength to rely upon. Disadvantages, appropriately, are detrimental traits or sources of frustration to your character.

Advantages and Disadvantages should be rooted in a character's Background; either they developed as a consequence of some past event, or (equally possible) they were the source of events in the past. While Advantages and Disadvantages can originate in your character's Dark Secret, they do not have to do so.

Example: Tom reads through the Disadvantages and comes up with a comprehensive list of Disadvantages that would be appropriate





KULT™

Name Andrew Dardie
Profession Smuggler
Date of Birth 4th of July 1969
Place of Birth Washington D.C.
Home Washington D.C.
Employer Various
Address Nothing permanent. Different cheap motels
Standard of Living 4
Height 183 cm Weight 77 kg Age 26
Hair Color Dark brown Eye Color Green

Family A younger brother

Friends/Enemies The younger brother of Doug Sinister, the criminal I killed, has sworn to revenge his brother's death.

Income & Property

An old beat-up Cessna with huge debts...

Personality/Special characteristics

Rather grungy, a bit of a scoundrel. Rarely clean-shaven, usually dressed in blue jeans and tee-shirt.

Concept/Background Got my first simple courier job during high-school. Took an envelope from one address to another without knowing what it contained, it paid well. Very well. It all started that way, fast and easy money. I quickly made myself a name as a courier and it didn't take long until I was offered to take some electronic stuff to Belgium. So now here I am a couple of years later...

Hero points 10

Experience points

STR: 11
AGL: 16
EGO: 15
CON: 11
PER: 15
EDU: 10
CHA: 12
COM: 11

Load capacity 11 kg
Movement 8 meters/round
No. of actions 3
Initiative Bonus +4
Damage Bonus +2
Endurance 85
Mod.to Ego throw

4 Scratches = 1 light wound
3 Light wounds = 1 serious wound
3 Serious wounds = 1 fatal wound

Advantages 50 - Disadvantages 60 = Mnt bal -10
-(Disadvantages+Limitations) for Children of the Night Archetypes

Disadvantages/Limitations	Points
<u>Bad Luck</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Bad Reputation</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Brash</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Debt</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Reckless Gambler</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Wanted</u>	<u>5</u>
Total points of Disadvantages	60

Advantages/Powers	Points
<u>Endure Pain</u>	<u>15</u>
<u>Fearless</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Gift for Languages</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Sixth Sense</u>	<u>15</u>
Total points of Advantages	50

Dark secrets

Owed a notorious criminal a lot of money from a lost wager. I had to kill him. Unfortunately an innocent young boy was killed in the confrontation by mistake...

Physical changes



to his (still unnamed) character. This list includes: Bad Luck, Bad Reputation, Brash (for 5 points), Debt, Reckless Gambler, Wanted (for 5 points: the slain criminal's friends). Jim points out that this will produce a character with a very low Mental Balance, so Tom will want to either pare down the list or come up with a list of equally impressive advantages. Tom considers the following Advantages: Endure pain, Fearless, Gift for Languages, Sixth Sense

Tom decides that he likes all of these for his smuggler, so he'll stick with them all. Jim suggests that Tom might eliminate a few from each category, but Tom wants the package as it is, so his decision remains.

STEP SEVEN: MENTAL BALANCE

Your Mental Balance is determined by subtracting the point value of your disadvantages from your advantages.

Example: Tom's smuggler has 60 points of Disadvantages and 50 points of Advantages. His Mental Balance is -10.

STEP EIGHT: SKILLS

Determine your character's skills according to whichever character creation method you are using. If you are using the Standard method, remember to figure in the point costs for your Advantages and Disadvantages to the base 150 skill points to be distributed. If you have a negative Mental Balance, then you'll have more skill points, and if your Mental Balance is positive, you'll have fewer skill points.

Choose skills that are well-suited to your character, not just skills that are optimal for character survival or bloodletting. Even commando-types should have a good balance of skills, or they're simply combat-monsters (and if that's what you're looking for,

maybe Kult isn't the right game...).

Don't let yourself be limited by your Archetype, either; a City Samurai can be interested in photography or literature, and a librarian may have an interest in the martial arts.

STEP NINE: LIVING STANDARD

Living standard is thoroughly discussed in Kult. If you think that the living standards proposed for your archetype are not appropriate for your character, discuss it with your Gamemaster.

You can calculate your credit, possessions, etc., once you have your living standard.

Example: Andrew, who was created using the Dealer archetype, has a living standard range of 5-7. Tom did not want to spend any skill points on Andrew's Living Standard, so Andrew has the lowest option, 5. However, since Andrew has the Debt disadvantage, his Living Standard drops down to 4. A Living Standard of 4 wouldn't really allow Andrew to own a small airplane, but Jim lets Andrew begin with an old one nonetheless. However, Jim determines (much to Tom's chagrin) that Andrew's debts include bills related to the upkeep of the plane, as well as other miscellaneous gambling and lifestyle debts.

STEP TEN: EQUIPMENT

The general rule for most specialized equipment is this: if you don't have a particular piece listed in your character's belongings, then you don't have it. This same rule needn't be applied to common everyday items. Don't list every piece of underwear your character has (or if you do, don't tell anyone).

It isn't necessary to begin play with a "complete equipment list" of all of your character's belongings. Be sure to list a few items that are character-oriented: items or belongings that



help establish a character's interests or personality. Normally these aren't items that become "important" in game play, but they help add flavor to your character. While "cruelty-free cosmetics" are hardly significant in **Kult**, your New Age character may find them personally important.

Also worthy of consideration is rare, uncommon or valuable equipment. This category includes such objects as vehicles, computers, antique heirlooms or illegal weapons. These items may very well come into play eventually, and it is important to note them in advance.

Before you add anything new or unusual to your equipment inventory, show it to your Gamemaster for approval. Some items may require special backgrounds or contacts, e.g., military, criminal, etc. They must also be within the characters financial means to acquire.

Example: *Andrew, we have already seen, owns an airplane. Neither Jim nor Tom know much about airplanes, so they use the standard Kult rules for guidelines. Jim decides that Andrew owns an old beat-up Cessna. Tom doesn't know what weapons he should choose for Andrew, so Jim suggests a Glock for "daily" use and a Desert Eagle for "heavy trouble." Finally, they decide that Andrew pretty much travels with his belongings, and he doesn't live in one particular place; he just rents a room in whatever city he happens to be working. He probably has a P.O. box somewhere for mail purposes.*

STEP ELEVEN: PERSONAL DETAILS

Here you finalize your character's miscellaneous personal traits. Decide upon your character's appearance, keeping your Comeliness score in mind. Figure out height and weight, eye color, hair color, your character's gender and sexual orientation, etc. Chances are, you'll already have some of these in mind from your character concept. While we call these details, they can add that extra personality to your character which not only lets you to get a better handle on just who this imaginary person is, but helps the other players in their picture of your character.

Example: *Andrew looks rather grungy, according to Tom. A bit of a scoundrel, rarely clean-shaven, usually dressed in jeans and a tee-shirt. Tom hasn't figured out the other*

details yet, so he decides to give it some time; right now, he has a fairly playable character.

Jim reviews Tom's character. He decides that Andrew isn't really particularly "Kultish," but that he is a good character. Jim would rather have a player with a good character than a character with a random assortment of neuroses, so he is satisfied with Andrew as a character for the game—and there is no telling where the game could lead Andrew as a character.

GROUP CONCEPT

One item to consider during character creation is discussing your character with the other players. Instead of creating a number of different characters and then trying to construct a sometimes artificial common link, you can let a link be the starting point for your characters.

You and the other players might want a group with a common background or a shared dark secret. Or you might want to play a group of characters that are all professionally associated. Remember that in **Kult**, characters often start out fairly blind to the Truth. You are not limited to a group of characters who are involved in the paranormal, although you are certainly not excluded from such a group. Creativity is the key here.

Sample group concepts include:

- Volunteers in a sleep-research experiment
- A team of FBI (or other similar bureau or agency) agents and specialists assigned to explore unexplained phenomenon/ homicides/etc.
- A group of circus performers with a very dark secret
- Common friends of an individual who died mysteriously
- Groupies or devotees for an enigmatic personality
- Travelers to a common remote destination
- Reporters and photographers for a tabloid newspaper, which really does print the truth on occasion
- Friends and schoolmates from the same small town who have met up again at a class reunion
- Neighbors in a new hi-rise apartment building with mysterious disappearances
- A group of Lorelei investigating the deaths of local important Lorelei

- Descendants of a prominent witch-hunter who are being drawn together at a family reunion

Of course, you will need to consult with your Gamemaster through this process. Your Gamemaster may have a common group Concept already in mind, and she'll give you guidelines. On the other hand, you may want a common group that doesn't fit at all in your Gamemaster's campaign plans; this is especially the case for more unusual groups (e.g., a group of psychopathic acrobats).

Although a group might have a common Concept, there is no need to think that each character must have the exact same character Concept or archetype. For example, a group of FBI agents can include secret agents, private investigators, scholars, and parapsychologists that are either on the payroll or are consultants.

The obvious drawback is that sometimes a group Concept will be too limiting. While this is not a bad thing if all the players agree upon the concept, it would not be uncommon to find a player or two that have character Concepts in mind that don't integrate well with the group Concept. ("What's my College Student going to do with all you FBI types??") Power!

A word of warning should be issued to "power-gamers," "min-maxers," and the like. Probably no game has been created in which an inventive and canny player cannot figure out a way of creating a power-character. *Kult* is no exception. Even worse than finagling the rules to one's greatest advantage is simply cheating: giving yourself the best Abilities, adding an extra Skill or two (who'd notice?), creative arithmetic to improve your Mental Balance. Either way, it is possible to create power-characters in *Kult*. Don't do it.

Instead of giving the standard advice about how overly-powerful characters can ruin the "role-playing" experience, we'll give some practical reasons why you should not try to create the most powerful character possible.

If a Gamemaster wants to run a high-power *Kult*, then that's fine; they can be fun. But in a standard *Kult* game, it helps if the characters are all around the same "level" of capability. If the Gamemaster has to increase the physical or intellectual potential of any given encounter just to have some effect on your character, then chances are that other characters will suffer. Don't alienate the

other players by making their favorite characters die in an encounter designed to be extra-powerful just for your character.

Another factor to consider is that the more of a mark your character makes in the world of *Kult*, the more attention he's going to receive. Most likely, you're not going to play a milquetoast accountant in the world of *Kult*. But you don't want to play a walking bull's-eye, either: an inexperienced character who is very strong, very fast, and armed to the teeth will probably find a few unpleasant surprises awaiting him.

A final note to remember is this: it doesn't matter how powerful your character is. Your Gamemaster can kill him without any problem (caught in a hail of gunfire, collapsing walls, exploding gas-main, etc.). So don't alienate your other players and annoy your Gamemaster simply in order to play the (allegedly) indestructible hero.

USING ARCHETYPES

Archetypes are excellent role-playing tools. They allow quick character generation, they provide easy NPCs for Gamemasters, and they allow players who are new to either roleplaying in general or *Kult* in particular to step right into a character and start thinking and acting the part.

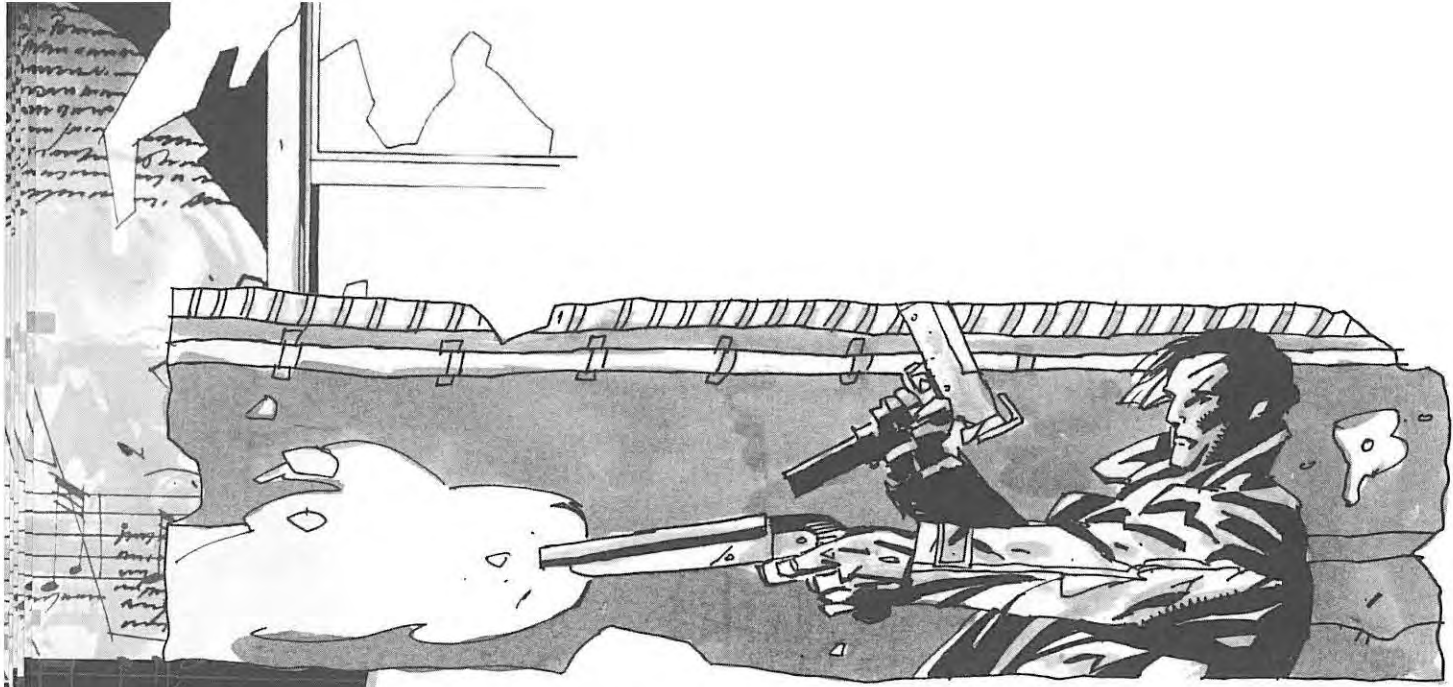
If you would like to modify an Archetype or create one of your own, use the New Archetype worksheet in the back of the book. The following guidelines explain the various components of an Archetype, and how they can be modified for existing Archetypes. Use these guidelines in creating new Archetypes as well.

QUOTATION: This is a statement issued by the character. The content is fairly irrelevant—the tone is what matters. It is a means of establishing a personality and a "speaking-voice" for the character.

PHILOSOPHY: A brief section in one or two paragraphs that describe the character's background and philosophy. Sometimes a variety of options are offered, so you can choose one which is more appealing to you. Even if you are creating an Archetype for yourself, try to create one with a variety of choices.

PERSONALITY: How you interact with the world and with other people. Often the personality is presented in extremes, and a more moderate personality will be developed. Just remember that a character's personality at





the beginning of a game needn't remain constant; it should change with experience.

DISADVANTAGES: A list of disadvantages that might be particularly appropriate for this character. Usually only a few are chosen from this group. You do not have to choose from any or all of these when creating a character—but make sure that your choices make sense.

ADVANTAGES: Just like Disadvantages.

DARK SECRET: A variety of Dark Secrets could be listed; some are related to the Archetype, and some may be totally unrelated. It is up to you to determine which to choose and how to make use of it.

PROFESSION: More than anything, these are just suggestions. If you can find something better, then use it, even if it seems unrelated to the archetype; just find some way to make it consistent and congruent with the Archetype.

LIVING STANDARD: A range is presented. If you don't think that this is an appropriate range for your character, discuss it with the Gamemaster; he or she should have final say.

SKILLS: These are also suggestions for skills that someone of this archetype might have. They do not all have to be chosen, nor do any of them even need to be chosen. But make sure that whatever you choose makes sense.

CREATING ARCHETYPES

Perhaps none of the Archetypes appeal to you. If this is the case, feel free to create your own Archetypes, using the guidelines presented above. Try to keep a few things in mind when creating Archetypes, however.

UNIVERSALITY. Archetypes are meant to be fairly catholic, so try to create an archetype that could apply broadly to a variety of people. Even though *Kult* is predominantly a contemporary urban game, the majority of the Archetypes presented are (with some modifications) capable of representation in a number of eras and settings. Don't make an Archetype that applies to just one person (namely, your character).

CONSISTENCY. Make the archetype consistent. An archetype should not just be a haphazard juxtaposition of skills, advantages and disadvantages. If an archetype is too limiting, then create a character using the standard character creation system. Don't create an Archetype just as an umbrella for random skills. Just remember: a player can eventually choose whatever skills he would like regardless of what is listed, or you can create a character without using the Archetype at all.

WORLD-VIEW. What is the archetype's world view? How does a representative of this Archetype see himself or herself in relation to the world, and other characters? Equally important, how might other people view the archetype?

SOURCES. The source for an Archetype can be anything. Commonly, ideas for archetypes will come from movies or real life. The washed-out private eye, the mad scientist, the sleazy politician—these are all easily recognizable “stereotypes,” and many more can be drawn from a variety of sources. Does this mean that you should never break stereotypes? Of course not. But stereotypes are useful in the creation of a good Archetype.



New Archetypes

Getting the Thompson youth committed had been almost too easy; the jury wasn't hard to convince after his outburst in the courtroom. All that babbling about voodoo and black magic-the guy was a real psycho; intelligence just above moron, too. I took a break from typing up a brief and lit a cigarette. Staring across the den I saw a flitting black dot against the wall. A fly had gotten into the house; damn I hate flies.

I took a drag and noticed a tingling in my right arm-like it was going to sleep. I had trouble holding the cigarette to my lips, and it was getting worse. That fly landed on my numb hand; I could feel its little legs on my skin. I tried to bat it away with my left hand, and my arm swung wildly-it was losing feeling too! What was happening? Heart attack? I was too young to have a stroke! By now both arms were hanging limply at my sides. I tried to get up, and slid to the floor like a rag doll-my legs were numb too! I began to panic, my breathing was labored. I was completely unable to move.

I heard the front door open and slam shut. Thank god, it must be Valerie! What a lucky coincidence that she would come by now. I called out... but no answer came. Sweat beaded on my face, trickled into my eyes, but I couldn't wipe it away. The fly landed on my cheek; the itch of its movements was almost unbearable, but I could do nothing. Then I noticed that there were other flies in the room. One landed on my arm in my field of vision: it seemed huge and bloated, its abdomen swollen, com-

pound eyes glistening...

I heard another noise and-of all people-Thompson shuffled into the room. Oh, my god! How did he get out of custody? By now I couldn't even scream; only a gurgling croak escaped from my throat. I gasped for breath.

Instead of his usual slack-jawed expression, he was grinning at me, a cunning intelligence in his eyes. He was clutching a rag doll, a huge pin stuck into each of its limbs.

"Ha-hah, mister big-shot lawyer!" His mouth curled into a sneer and he shook the doll in my face. It had a shock of brown hair about the length of mine, and a piece of gray cloth wrapped around it. "Ready to believe in voodoo yet?"

He didn't seem eager to do anything else but look at me. Then I realized that more flies had gotten into the room and were swarming around me. None seemed to land on him, but they began alighting on me, crawling under my clothes-and biting. Painful little pricks began to multiply. There seemed to be hundreds now, their buzzing growing louder with every passing second. I was desperate to shake them off, to get out, but I was paralyzed. One flew into my mouth, another up my nostril... it was a hideous feeling, those legs crawling on my tongue, inside my nose... I couldn't breathe! Thompson started to chuckle. The buzzing grew louder, mixing with the red haze of pain... the buzzing, the insistent buzzing...



The Asylum Escapee

"I wasn't supposed to be in there, you know. There's nothing wrong with me. Besides, it wasn't fair putting me in that room with no windows, with the three-inch thick plexiglass wall. I'm not dangerous! I don't hurt people... on purpose. I had to kill that guard to get out—it was self-defense. Besides, he deserved it. He was cruel to me. I liked his eyes, though. He had such nice eyes, bright blue. They're mine now. I like to collect eyeballs; I've gotten very good at removing them. You know, you have very nice eyes yourself..."

You might be very well educated and able to hide your violent insanity beneath a veneer of intellect; maybe you just seem normal most of the time, and your bouts of stark, raving hyperviolence are merely infrequent. In any case, the Asylum Escapee differs from the other archetypes in that his mental balance does not start out around zero, but between -25 and -100, and will fluctuate depending on circumstances. 'Regular' players will not be too eager to play with a total psycho, so this is an additional challenge for the player: you must roleplay an insane character trying very hard to act sane. You should probably even go so far as to have a 'secondary' archetype (another player will inevitably ask what yours is; not ideal role-playing, but it happens); in any case you should choose a profession and take some skills in that area. But you are primarily a patient, and for good reason. Did you brutally murder your parents? Lead your schoolmates in a satanic cult culminating in someone's ritual death? Or did your real crimes start as an adult, capturing and killing little boys, or stalking women, then torturing and disfiguring them? Perhaps you hear voices (the lictors?) or have multiple personalities vying for control of your body.

It was no mistake that you've been committed to an asylum for the criminally insane most of your adult life, and maybe even in your childhood. And you were never placed in friendly, private clinics, but in state-owned, aging institutions with pale gray tiles on the walls, cold iron bedframes covered in flaking white paint, sadistic,

doctors and uncaring, underpaid nurses. You have been subjected to cruel, pointless experiments, injected with powerful, dangerous drugs, and imprisoned under inhuman conditions for years. You are more used to wearing a grubby uniform than real clothes.

You (with the help of the GM if you wish) must paint the ugly picture of your past.

PERSONALITY: You are completely—and dangerously—insane. The only question is how well you control it and how long you can hide it from your cohorts.

DISADVANTAGES: Anxiety, Depression, Drug addiction, Haunted, Hunted (15), Low self-esteem, Manic-Depressive, Martyr, Mental compulsion, Oath of revenge, Paranoia, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Sexually repressed, Touchy, Unwilling medium



ADVANTAGES: Alertness, Artistic talent, Endure cold/heat, Endure hunger/thirst, Endure pain, Endure torture, Sixth Sense

DARK SECRETS: Guilty of crime, Insanity, Supernatural Experience, Victim of crime, Victim of medical experiments

PROFESSION: Unemployed; constantly changing jobs. Alternatively, could be a brilliant academic, researcher, or almost any other profession.

STANDARD OF LIVING: 2-6

SKILLS: Handgun, Sneak, Swim, Hide, Search, Computers, Electronics, Poisons and Drugs, Numerology, Disguise, Acting, Forgery, Burglary, Drive vehicle.



The Hacker

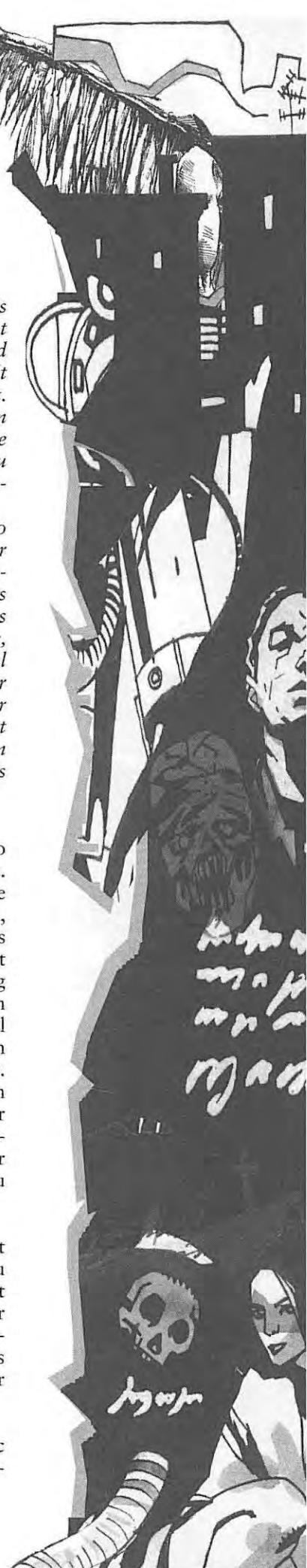
"Steve called me the other day and said his computer was crashing. He thought it might be a virus and wanted to know if I could check it out. "Not a problem," I told him. It wasn't a virus, of course; it usually isn't. He'd installed some conflicting inits and on top of that he had some corrupt software he'd pirated. Pretty simple really, if you know what you're doing—which most people don't.

After I fixed the problem and explained it to Steve, he asked me if I could hack a virus for him. Now, creating viruses in itself isn't illegal, and what Steve did with the thing was his own business. I said sure. It's not half as difficult as it might seem, though of course, to a computer ignorant it must be total greek. I've charged as much as fifty grand for a particularly clever little bug (remember when the country's entire phone system went down a couple of years ago?) but I gave him this one for only fifteen big ones—since he is a friend, and all."

You're a computer software genius, able to write programs like it was second nature. Programming or hardware and software consulting might be your main profession, but part of your work is writing programs out of the mainstream. You are also handy at constructing things; an electronic bugging device and receiver would be put together in an afternoon. You might not have done well at school, having wasted too much time on the internet or outsmarting video games. Nevertheless you probably have a degree in computer science. You could be a freelancer or work for a huge corporation; with the latter you might have vast resources at your disposal while the former would give you more personal freedom.

PERSONALITY: You are calm and very patient as long as you are left undisturbed, and you therefore prefer to work during the at night since interruptions irritate you. You prefer dealing with machines and if you must interact with people, e-mail (electronic mail) is preferable to speaking in person or even over the phone.

DISADVANTAGES: Depression, Phobias (static electricity, thunderstorms), Touchy, Night-





mares, Drug addict (stimulants), Bad luck, Rationalist, Health/Hygiene negligent

ADVANTAGES: Influential friends, Mathematical talent, Mechanically Inclined

DARK SECRETS: Family secret, Guilty of crime.

PROFESSION: Computer programmer, technician, consultant.

STANDARD OF LIVING: 4-8

SKILLS: Computers, Electronics, Etiquette, Photography, Information retrieval, Code systems, Drive vehicle, Natural sciences, Written report, Languages, Security systems, Social sciences, Net of contacts (scientists, engineers, many through the InfoBahn).

The Homemaker

"Hello, dear! Here's your cocktail, dinner's almost ready. We're having your favorite—potroast! Hard day at the office, honey? I'm sorry. It was the just the usual here. Marge came over and we had coffee, then did some marketing. We stopped by that new crafts place on Maple Drive so I could pick up some knitting needles; and the library so I could return the books I had checked out on fourteenth century occult rituals. Then I had to rush home and put the roast in! Be a sweetie and call the kids; they're out in they yard..."

You are a stereotypical housewife, to the point of being a caricature of your kind; maybe a dying breed. You are Donna Reed and June Cleaver! This Archetype is an example of the sort of character you can play if it is decided to move the game more towards a mood of black humor (as discussed elsewhere). You can play the homemaker one of two (maybe more) ways: She is the devoted wife and mother unexpectedly thrust into a situation where she confronts horrors from beyond the illusion (e.g., one day, June has one Dr. Pepper too many, and the caffeine buzz puts her in an altered state. She sees through the illusion enough to realize that her aerobics instructor is a lictor, her best friend Madge has

been acting strangely; and then there are those flickering images she can barely make out on the television... June draws from a well of untapped feminine willpower and goes on a secret crusade to combat these forces. Alternatively, June cracks one day, but her insanity is subtle; she hides her paranoia from her loving family (they could be the enemy as well!), meanwhile during the day she begins to delve into magic and dark practices. The family will eventually notice that the house is not as clean, laundry is falling behind. They suspect a drinking problem...

Designer note: While this character is not intended to reinforce sexist stereotypes, this is an archetype of American culture, and we shouldn't have any qualms about exploiting her! A househusband just isn't the same. We encourage male players as well as women to play the homemaker when the game mood permits it. Camp it up; Kult can be fun, too.



PERSONALITY: Sweet, efficient, loving and devoted, the homemaker is all the good qualities of the idealized 50's and 60's TV housewife. But she can become a bit compulsive... Her house must be spotless, her children must be perfect, her cocktail parties flawless, right down to the canapés. She wears pearls while vacuuming, she... oh, you get the picture.

DISADVANTAGES: Compulsively healthy/hygienic, Drug addiction, Fanaticism, Intolerance, Manic-depressive, Mental compulsion, Mental constriction, Nightmares, Paranoia, Phobia, Rationalist, Sexual neurosis, Split personality, Touchy, Unwilling medium.

ADVANTAGES: Altruism, Code of honor, Empathy, Forgiving, Good reputation, Honesty, Motherliness, Sixth sense.

DARK SECRETS: Family secret, forbidden knowledge, Insanity, Occult experience, Victim of crime.

PROFESSION: Housewife.

STANDARD OF LIVING: 3-5

SKILLS: Search, Dancing, Craft (sewing), Sport (tennis), Accounting and Bookkeeping, First Aid, Cooking, Meditation, Diplomacy, Etiquette, Interrogation, Net of contacts ("the girls"), Acting, Photography, Drive vehicle, Mechanically inclined (limited to household appliances).

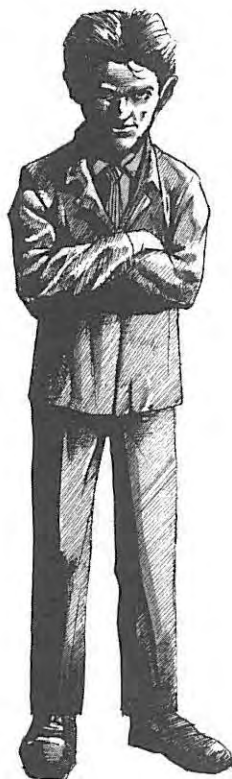
The Prodigy

"Adults are so insecure. I guess I can't blame them, though. My IQ is fifty points above most of the other researchers at the lab, and I probably make more than any of them except the director. I hate it when they talk down to me, as if I had a child's mind in this 10 year old body. And they think I don't hear their snide little remarks behind my back about 'junior genius' and 'wunderkind.' Well, they'll find out soon enough what 'junior' has been up to. When I collect the Nobel prize they'll all see, and maybe I'll plan a special surprise for them afterwards." You are a genius, pure and simple. You are a

child but your mind is able to absorb information so quickly and efficiently that you have the equivalent of several advanced degrees. You read thousands of words a minute, you can visualize incredibly complex mathematical problems in your head. You think Einstein dropped the ball on the unified field theory, Newton was a dope, and Stephen Hawking is not all that bright.

Your explorations into science have taken you to the edge of the illusion, and you are beginning to suspect that things are not as they seem. You, of course, assume that you are on the verge of discovering the total order of things.

However, your body is just entering puberty, and though you try to fight it, you are a slave to the hormones pumping through your young system. You don't admit it, even to yourself, but there are times when you wish you were just a normal boy or girl, allowed to do normal 'kid' things... but then you snap out of that childish malaise. You've got no time for such infantile pursuits. No one has to know that you still sleep with a stuffed rabbit; besides, just last week Mr Bunny-wunny helped you with that neutrino gravity well problem you were struggling with...





helped you with that neutrino gravity well problem you were struggling with...

PERSONALITY: You are brilliant and arrogant; most people think you are a spoiled brat who needs a spanking; you of course think that they a big, stupid Neanderthals. To an extent, you are right; you are more intelligent than almost anyone you are likely to run into; however, you lack worldly experience that comes only with age. You have a tendency to under-rate this 'wisdom,' a serious miscalculation.

DISADVANTAGES: Touchy, Socially inept.

ADVANTAGES: Mathematical talent, Mechanically inclined.

DARK SECRETS: Family secret, Victim of crime.

PROFESSION: Scientist, Hacker,

STANDARD OF LIVING: 4-6

SKILLS: Computers, Administration, Creative writing, Instruction, Accounting & Book-keeping, Electronics, Information retrieval, Cryptography, Languages, Etiquette, Rhetoric, Natural science, Social sciences

Activist

"I'm sick of government lies and inactivity. I'm tired of officious bureaucrats and politicians with their excuses and red tape. If protests and lobbying won't get their attention and bring about change, then maybe something more radical will."

You represent and champion the underdog, the forgotten, the unwanted. You might be a general activist, picking up whatever causes are in vogue: AIDS funding, Civil Rights, Gay Rights, Homelessness, the list goes on. Perhaps you are specifically devoted to a particular cause. Regardless, you are committed to your activism, and you now see everything in light of your cause.

PERSONALITY: Single-minded. You know what's wrong, and you're going to fix it. If a few laws get broken on the path to civil rights, then so be it—you can't make an omelet without breaking a few eggs.

DISADVANTAGES: Bad reputation, Brash, Domineering, Fanaticism, Martyr, Mental Compulsion

ADVANTAGES: Altruism, Code of Honor, Cultural flexibility, Driving goal, Empathy

DARK SECRET: Forbidden knowledge, Guilty of crime, Survivor friend, Victim of medical experiments

PROFESSION: Anything appropriate; often a member (either paid employee or volunteer) of radical groups like ACT UP, PETA, Greenpeace, Queer Nation, Earth First!, etc.;

LIVING STANDARD: 3-5

SKILLS: Burglary, Bureaucracy, Computers, Information Retrieval, Law, Man of the world, Net of contacts: Activists, Photography, Rhetoric, Written report, Social science, Medicine, Trivia.



Aristocrat

"I'd always wondered how our family came into its wealth. Father was vague with answers, and said that I'd learn one day, when it became important. Until then, wine, men, drugs—anything and anyone I needed or wanted were at my beck and call. Money is a wonderful thing."

You came from a family of great wealth and some prestige, raised in the lap of luxury and rarely had to work for anything. Your lineage is one of good breeding and high tastes; critics would say that it is a decadent clan of spoiled brats. You were being groomed to manage the family finances, one day, but you weren't worried about it yet. Besides, that's what financial consultants were for, right?

Then mother and father had to have that messy divorce, and now everyone is in court. Your family's money is either frozen or going to the lawyers, and you can only hope that there is still some left after the whole thing



settles down. It better be quick, too – your personal funds are running out, and you haven't the slightest clue how to work for money.

PERSONALITY: Bored, perhaps disdainful. You don't like consorting with hoi polloi. But you are still a gentleman, and you will set a standard for them to follow. You must do everything with style and elegance.

DISADVANTAGES: Curse, Drug addiction, Egotist, Intolerance, Reactionary, Sexually repressed, Sexually tantalizing, Vain

ADVANTAGES: Chivalry, Code of honor, Gift for languages, Good reputation, Influential friends

DARK SECRET: Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Guardian, Possessed and haunted

PROFESSION: Typically no profession; may be businessman, or diplomat

LIVING STANDARD: 8-10

SKILLS: Administration, Carousing, Dancing, Diplomacy, Drive vehicle, Estimate value, Etiquette, Gambling, Haut monde, Languages, Net of contacts: aristocrats, Seduction, Humanities scholarship, Style

Athlete

"I worked hard to get where I am, and I don't care if you think I'm overpaid for my sport. I'll do what I've got to get to the top, and to stay there. And if anyone asks me again if I use steroids, I'll break their goddamn neck."

You live for your sport and off your sport—it is both a means of recreation and a key to your financial future. What happens when you're too old or out of shape to continue? You don't know; that's why you'll try to make as much money, get as much fame as you can now. Who knows, you might be a commentator in future Olympics, or a sportscaster if you're lucky. Until then, you'll collect the official endorsements and good pay.

PERSONALITY: You are disciplined and competitive, maybe even ruthlessly so. You spend hours each day training in your sport. It is the only way to be the best.





DISADVANTAGES: Bad reputation, Brash, Drug addiction (steroids or other), Egotist, Greed, Mental Compulsion, Rival, Sexually tantalizing, Touchy

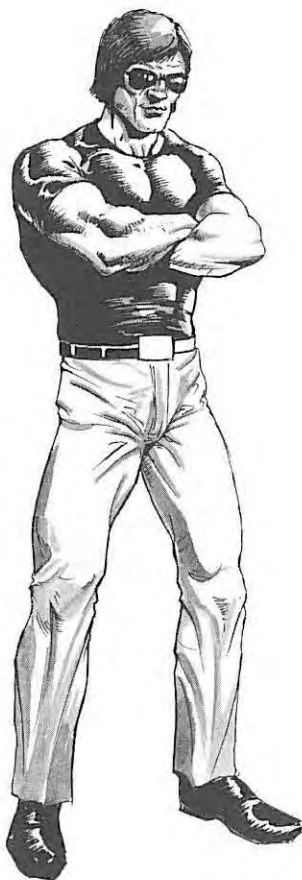
ADVANTAGES: Alertness, Body awareness, Driving Goal, Endure pain, Influential friends, Luck, Status

DARK SECRET: Family Secret, Guilty of crime, Victim of crime, Victim of medical experiments

PROFESSION: Professional or Olympic athlete (boxing, football, ice skating, etc.), coach, personal trainer

LIVING STANDARD: 8-10

SKILLS: Acrobatics, Climb, Dancing, Dodge, Drive vehicle, Gambling, Net of Contacts: sports world, Net of contacts: media, Sport (any, possibly multiple sports), Throw, Unarmed combat



Caregiver

"Nobody seems to care about the homeless, but we're there. Food, blankets, medication—I always manage to find ways to get these to the homeless. I don't do it for glory, and I certainly won't get any. I do it because I care."

Your life is dedicated to taking care of others. It began as a part-time interest, when you volunteered at the shelters. Now it is a full-time avocation of yours. You hear the homeless talk, though, and its beginning to scare you—they talk of things that move in the night, beasts that live in the sewers, creatures that feed off the vagrants.

PERSONALITY: You are a concerned, caring individual. However, you're starting to wonder why you even bother, and disillusionment is beginning to set in. There are always people in need; what good are the efforts of one person?

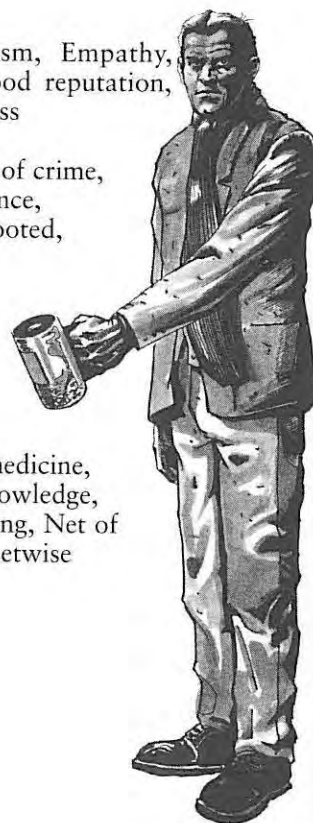
DISADVANTAGES: Cynic, Debt, Dependent, Depression, Martyr, Mental compulsion, Paranoia

ADVANTAGES: Altruism, Empathy, Faith, Forgiving, Good reputation, Largesse, Motherliness

DARK SECRET: Guilty of crime, Supernatural experience, Survivor friend, Uprooted, Victim of crime

PROFESSION: Social worker, Nanny/Governess, Parent, Nurse

SKILLS: Alternative medicine, Bureaucracy, City knowledge, Counseling, Scrounging, Net of contacts: police, Streetwise



Celebrity

"Oh, of course I have plans for the future. A television series is in development, and I'm negotiating with a publisher for my memoirs. There's a photo spread of me in Interview magazine next month. Yes, it's true—I posed nude for some of the photos. It was rather exciting, in a way."

You are well-known in the public eye. Some people love and adore you, others despise you as a talentless opportunist. Your success thus far has been a fluke, and you're not even sure how you got this far, but of course you publicly attribute it to hard work and suffering on your part. You don't know when your 15 minutes of fame will end, so you intend to make the most of it.

Celebrities may be anything or anyone thrust into the public light: authors, musicians, models, teen idols, etc. You may even be under appreciated, and only valued for something superficial and transitory. It is hard for celebrities to shake an image: teen idols may find it hard to become respected actors or singers, etc.



PERSONALITY: You live life to the fullest, trying to take advantage of your situation. You realize that much of your fame depends upon how well you parlay yourself, and you try to avoid falling into a rut.

DISADVANTAGES: Bad reputation, Egotist, Greed, Manic-depressive, Rival, Sexually tantalizing, Touchy, Vain

ADVANTAGES: Artistic talent, Good reputation, Luck, Status

DARK SECRET: Chosen, Guilty of crime, Occult experience, Possessed and haunted

PROFESSION: Writer, pop musician, model, TV personality

LIVING STANDARD: 8-10

SKILLS: Acting, Carousing, Creative writing, Driving, Haut monde, Net of contacts: celebrities, Play instrument, Rhetoric, Seduction, Singing, Style

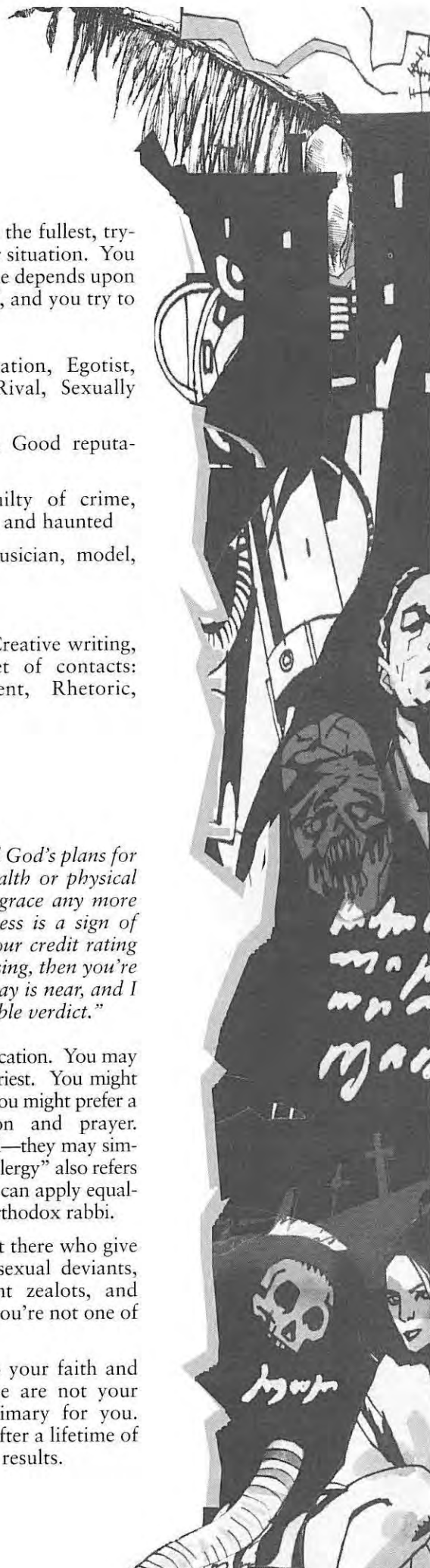
Clergy

"We don't always understand God's plans for us, but we can't look to wealth or physical comfort as a sign of God's grace any more than we should look to illness as a sign of punishment. If you think your credit rating is a visible sign of God's blessing, then you're sadly mistaken. Judgment Day is near, and I fear that you will face a terrible verdict."

You have chosen a religious vocation. You may be a missionary, or a parish priest. You might serve a local congregation, or you might prefer a cloistered life of meditation and prayer. "Clergy" need not be ordained—they may simply have a religious calling. "Clergy" also refers to clergy of any tradition, and can apply equally to a Shinto priest and an Orthodox rabbi.

Of course, there are some out there who give other clergy a bad name: sexual deviants, greedy hypocrites, intolerant zealots, and others. But, thank Heaven, you're not one of those people...

PERSONALITY: Dedication, to your faith and your cause. Although these are not your only concerns, they are primary for you. You might be disenchanted after a lifetime of service with no real tangible results.





DISADVANTAGES: Depression, Drug Addiction, Haunted, Martyr, Mental compulsion, Sexual Neurosis, Sexually repressed

ADVANTAGES: Altruism, Code of Honor, Empathy, Forgiving, Influential friends, Intuition, Motherliness, Pacifism

DARK SECRET: Chosen, Curse, Forbidden knowledge, Guardian, Occult experience, Pact with dark powers, Supernatural experience

PROFESSION: minister, monk or nun, priest, rabbi, social worker, teacher

LIVING STANDARD: 2-4

SKILLS: Counseling, Etiquette, Information retrieval, Languages, Meditation, Humanities scholarship (multiple: Theology, Scriptural studies, Religious History), Net of contacts: Church hierarchy/ organization, Rhetoric, Written report



Doctor

"Of course this drug has been thoroughly tested. Now please roll up your sleeve."

Medical school, internship, residence: you've more than earned your salary, in blood and hard work. People may criticize you for "playing God", but they're right—who else has the power to save or end lives like you do? You've seen so much death that it no longer affects you the way it used to. You only view it in terms of the cessation of biological processes, not the snuffing out of a life force.

Alternately, you may be a researcher, lost in the abstract worlds of hypothesis, scientific method, research and evaluation. You are learning the secret of life, and can't afford to be bothered with other petty details.

PERSONALITY: You find it harder and harder to maintain a "bedside manner," becoming more clinical with each patient. This is just another client, just another virus, just another gunshot.

DISADVANTAGES: Debt, Egotist, Greed, Rationalist, Reckless gambler, Sexual Neurosis

ADVANTAGES: Good reputation, Influential friends

DARK SECRET: Guilty of crime, Responsible for medical experiments, Survivor friend

PROFESSION: Physician, researcher, psychiatrist

LIVING STANDARD: 7-9

SKILLS: Alternative medicine, Forensics, Computers, Man of the world, Medicine, Net of contacts: Scientists, Natural science, Poison & drugs



Fugitive

"It's always the same. I come to a nice town, I settle down into a comfortable daily pattern, and then I see them watching me from a distance. The men in dark suits, with sunglasses. And again I have to move, trying to evade them."

You're on the run, being chased, with no end in sight. You may have to move from place to place, creating identity after identity, in order to elude your pursuers.

Maybe you're running from law enforcement officials. Maybe you're hiding from a crime syndicate. You might not even be guilty of what you're accused of. It doesn't really matter, of course, because whoever is chasing you has instructions to "shoot first."

PERSONALITY: Driven, suspicious. You find it hard to trust anyone, never knowing who might turn you in. You hate making friends, because you usually end up losing them when you have leave in the middle of the night. Live for the here and now, and maybe one day you'll clear your name.

DISADVANTAGES:

Anxiety, Bad luck, Bad reputation, Curse, Cynic, Depression, Persecuted, Innocently blamed, Mistaken identity, Mortal enemy, Paranoia, Rival

ADVANTAGES: Alertness, Animal friendship, Code of honor, Endure cold/heat, Endure hunger/thirst, Endure torture, Sixth Sense

DARK SECRET: Curse, Family secret, Forbidden knowledge, Guilty of Crime, Responsible for medical experiments, Victim of medical experiments



PROFESSION: varies from place to place, usually something menial. It may have been anything before you became a fugitive.

LIVING STANDARD: 1-3

SKILLS: Burglary, City secrets, Climb, Disguise, Dodge, Hide, Sneak, Unarmed combat, Man of the world, Scrounging, Survival

"Generation X"

"Yeah, so what?"

Everything your parents and their entire generation taught you is wrong. "Go to college, get a degree, and you'll have a good job. All it takes is education and motivation." Five years later (a college degree in four years? yeah right), what do you get? You have a nifty piece of paper with some Latin on it, no job, and your student loan financiers starting to call you. And don't forget all that easy credit while you were a student. It's all coming back to haunt you.





PERSONALITY: Cynical, pessimistic—especially toward the “conventional wisdom” of earlier generations. Of course, you also seem to indulge in your role as a cynic.

DISADVANTAGES: Anxiety, Bad luck, Black sheep, Cynic, Debt, Depression, Drug addiction, Low self-esteem, Schizophrenia, Touchy

ADVANTAGES: Artistic talent, Cultural flexibility, Empathy, Enhanced awareness

DARK SECRET: Family secret, Guilty of crime, Insanity, Occult experience, Uprooted, Victim of Crime

PROFESSION: any, including secretary, game designer, artist, bartender, barista, etc.

LIVING STANDARD: 2-4

SKILLS: Carousing, City secrets, Computers, Dancing, Drive vehicle, Information retrieval, Man of the world, Pictorial Arts, Play instrument, Poison & drugs, Sport, Writing, Humanities scholarship, Natural science, Seduction, Social science, Streetwise

Hustler

“Sure, man. Fifty dollars’ll do it. You think you can throw dinner in too, or do I gotta do extra?”

You’ve been on the streets for five years now, since your old man kicked you out. You’re homeless, but that doesn’t mean you don’t have a place to sleep. Sometimes you have to sleep on the streets or in the subway, but not too often—you’ve got friends, there are a few places only squatters like you know about, and then there are the people you sometimes go home with. Yeah, sometimes they make you do really weird things, but it’s a living.

PERSONALITY: Selfish, distrustful. You’ve been hurt too many times, both physically and mentally. You’re not going to let that happen again.

DISADVANTAGES: Bad luck, Cynic, Depression, Drug addiction, Forgotten, Low Self-Esteem, Luckless, Persecuted

ADVANTAGES: Animal friendship, Cultural flexibility, Endure cold/heat, Endure hunger/thirst

DARK SECRET: Guilty of crime, Insanity, Occult experience, Survivor friend, Victim of medical experiments, Uprooted

PROFESSION: unemployed, prostitute; perform odd jobs for cash, room & board

LIVING STANDARD: 1-3

SKILLS: Carousing, City secrets, Erotica, Hide, Search, Sneak, Unarmed combat, Dancing, Man of the world, Net of contacts: hustlers, Scrounging, Survival (urban)



Martial Artist

"If you think this is about fighting, then you've lost already."

You've studied your art for years. You have mastered your body more than most people were aware could be done. The martial arts aren't about self-defense or fighting; they're a way of life, a means of spiritual discipline and self-improvement. You can imagine a day without sleep or food more than you could imagine a day without practice. For you, the martial arts are like prayer or meditation. Some martial artists may be pompous braggarts and bullies, more tattoos and pectorals than humility or wisdom – they'll show off their skill just to impress someone, or intimidate them.

PERSONALITY: Quiet and disciplined. The more you learn, the more you are aware that you have more to learn. You like to spout quasi-mystical aphorisms that you don't understand, but seem philosophically evocative.



DISADVANTAGES: Brash, Death wish, Egotist, Panaticism, Mental compulsion, Oath of revenge, Rival, Touchy

ADVANTAGES: Alertness, Animal friendship, Code of honor, Endure cold/heat, Endure hunger/thirst, Endure pain, Faith, Iron will, Mentor, Magical intuition, Optimist, Sixth sense

DARK SECRET: Chosen, Forbidden knowledge, Guardian, Guilty of crime, Uprooted

PROFESSION: martial arts instructor, something that pays for your lessons, Taoist or Buddhist monk, gardener

LIVING STANDARD: 2-4

SKILLS: Alternative medicine, Climb, Herbalism, Instruction, Melee and throwing weapons, Martial arts, budo maneuvers, Meditation, Natural History, Night combat, Sport, Two-handed combat, Humanities scholarship (Eastern Philosophy)

Note: your Martial arts skill scores are limited by your abilities (Kult, p. 119)

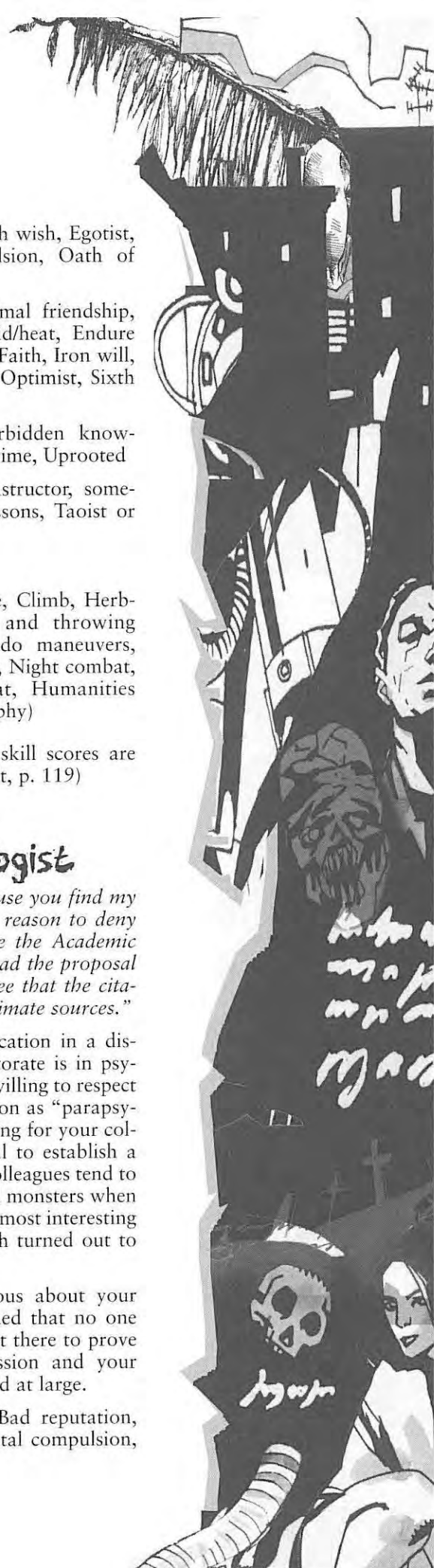
Parapsychologist

"Professor Fowler, just because you find my field of study dubious is no reason to deny my petition a chance before the Academic Senate. If you would just read the proposal one more time you would see that the citations are from perfectly legitimate sources."

You have a respectable education in a disreputable career. Your doctorate is in psychology, but few people are willing to respect your self-proclaimed avocation as "parapsychologist." You're still waiting for your college to accept your proposal to establish a parapsych program. Your colleagues tend to make jokes about ghosts and monsters when you're not around, and your most interesting phone-call in the past month turned out to be another practical joke.

PERSONALITY: You are serious about your career, and you are concerned that no one takes it seriously. You're out there to prove the validity of your profession and your studies to the academic world at large.

DISADVANTAGES: Bad luck, Bad reputation, Black Sheep, Haunted, Mental compulsion, Touchy, Unwilling medium





Net of contacts: parapsychologists, Occultism, Parapsychology, Photography, Rhetoric, Writing

ADVANTAGES:

Cultural flexibility, Driving goal, Enhanced awareness, Magical intuition, Mathematical talent, Mentor, Sixth sense

DARK SECRET:

Occult experience, Insanity, Responsible for medical experiments, Supernatural experience

PROFESSION: parapsychologist; professor of psychology

LIVING STANDARD: 4-6

SKILLS: Alternative medicine, Computers, Electronics, Hypnosis, Information retrieval, Languages, Mediation, Net of contacts: university,

Scholar

"The history of this particular text is fascinating, especially the various recensions that we find developing in the years 1153 to 1219. Bear with me while I explain the sociological implications of the fifth recension, which I've traced to the abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel..."

Your entire life has been focused on an area of study that few other people understand or even care about – Elizabethan drama, Byzantine theology, or even non-Euclidian geometry. Only other scholars fully understand your obsession with your field. You've spent years engaged in your study. Either you have a doctorate or you dropped out of higher education, disillusioned with the institutional hoops you had to jump through.

Perhaps you are employed by a college or university as an instructor, and spend all your non-classroom time at the library or in your office, delving into the obscure minutiae of your field. Maybe you're even lucky enough to have a research fellowship, and you can devote all your time to this research. Regardless, your work is never complete; there's always another footnote to track down.

Not all scholars are dedicated to the purity of the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake; some are simply opportunists or egotists who seek notoriety or fame in the academic community: stealing the work of others, fabricating research, etc.

PERSONALITY: Pedagogic. You know a lot, and you are eager to share it. You don't like disagreement when it comes to your field; after all, you're the expert.

DISADVANTAGES: Depression, Egotist, Fanaticism, Intolerance, Rationalist.

ADVANTAGES: Code of honor, Cultural flexibility, Gift for languages, Mathematical talent.

DARK SECRET: Forbidden knowledge, Inheritor, Occult experience, Responsible for medical experiments, Supernatural experience, Survivor friend

PROFESSION: researcher, professor, teacher, curator, librarian

LIVING STANDARD: 4-6

SKILLS: Cryptography, Information retrieval, Instruction, Languages, Net of contacts: university, Net of contacts: library, Rhetoric, Humanities scholarship (various specializations), Medicine (various specializations), Natural science (various specializations), Social sciences (various specializations), Read/write native language, Written report





Special Archetypes: Creatures of the Night

"I have known since I was a child that I was different—quite unlike all my friends or my family. I didn't look different. I didn't really act different—at least, not when anyone else was around. I was neither considerably smarter nor more stupid than my siblings. I don't know how to describe it. I just knew that I was somehow unlike anyone else I knew. I grew up with this feeling, unable to explain or understand it. In high school, my guidance counselor said I was going through a typical stage in adolescence. It wasn't unusual for me to feel alone and different, and I would grow out of it.

Was it usual for me to dream nightly of midnight hunts? Was it normal for me to have dreams that I was something nonhuman, even monstrous? Was it acceptable for me to dream that I lurked in alleys and shadows, hunting humans as prey? These questions I never asked, fearing the answer.

One night, I dreamt that I was in my bed, slowly overcome by a hunger for something insatiable; greater than sex, greater than drugs, alcohol, greater than anything I had ever had or wanted or desired. My body writhed in sudden agony, as I felt some change overcoming it; muscles hardening, skin toughening, bones protruding painfully from my skin at the elbows and knees. I felt a sudden desire to flee, and leapt through my window, naked and bleeding. I have never awoken from this particular dream."





The Children of the Night are a diverse grouping of peoples that live on the fringes of humanity. They have existed as long as man, providing fodder for the mythologies the Demiurge used to captivate and enslave man. They are the shapeshifters whose hungry teeth tear into human flesh: these creatures became the succubi and incubi that tantalize their victims and feed from their frenzied orgasms; they are the creatures that became the monsters of our earlier mythologies – the dwarves and gnomes, the fey folk, the fomori, the undead, the terrors and wonders of the night.

The Children of the Night differ wildly in appearance, culture, and psychology; it would be difficult to describe or define a “typical” *bete-noir* (as they are sometimes called). Some Children of the Night are so close to common humanity that they can easily blend in; the soul-hungry Lorelei are examples of this, as are the blood-thirsty Nosferatu. However, some Children of the Night are so monstrously deformed or mutated that they can never hope to ever become part of mortal society, even briefly.

GENESIS

The origin of the Children of the Night is a mystery to them and man alike; all that is known is that they have been here as long as mankind, fellow prisoners in this illusion we call reality. Sages, scientists and magicians maintain a variety of theories for their origins: some assert that they were humans punished for some gross transgression against the Demiurge; others claim that the Children of the Night are products of awful biological experiments by the Death Angels or the Archons; many posit that the Children of the Night simply exist, and their origin shall never be known.

However such creatures may have been originally created, a number of methods of becoming a *bete-noir* are known. Some creatures begin as common mortals, eventually twisted by their own dark desires and fears into something beyond human. This typically happens to humans exposed to too many terrifying events; especially susceptible are people with low Mental Balances. Not all people who become Children of the Night in this manner remain living nightmares; some slowly revert to their human form. This is one of the most typical ways for a “common” man (what some Children of the Night call “Normals”) to become a Child. This is the

reason why many of the more philosophically-inclined Children of the Night argue in their sewers and subterranean homes that all men are Children of the Night.

Some people are turned into Children of the Night through the actions of others. Scientific experiments can bring forth unexpected changes in the victim; drugs can twist and transform the mortal body, surgery and magic alike can alter forever which once was human. Lab experiments are not limited in history to present-day science: alchemists of antiquity sought unattainable answers, as did the Romantic scientist-philosophers who tried to create life.

Some Children of the Night are capable of causing this transformation in Normal humans, typically through the exchange of bodily fluids (often blood). Not everyone who is infected by a *bete-noir*, intentionally or accidentally, becomes a new child of the night; normally only 1 in 10 suffer such a transformation.

Finally, some people are actually born into the Children of the Night; this is often the case with the Nephilim, a society of Night-Children who have forged a relatively common identity, history, and world-view in spite of individually different appearances and psychologies. Infants born to such creatures are typically also Children of the Night. A few infants are born human; these unfortunate offspring are left abandoned in a trashcan or alley for the Normals to find and raise, while the media and liberals cry aloud about “unwanted children.” Such children might live normal lives, as might their own children. At some point in their lineage, however, the blood of their forebears reasserts itself, and often-horrific changes are wrought at adulthood. These new Children of the Night are almost always welcomed by their brethren, who listen with sympathy to their tales.

COMMUNITIES

Many Children of the Night are loners, especially those who underwent some unfortunate transformation from a once-Normal existence. However, while some creatures find solitude the only venue of living their wretched lives, others inevitably seek the company of others like themselves. Other Children of the Night are naturally social, quickly bonding with fellow creatures.

The Children of the Night prefer to live in the cities, where the shadows are darker and



the refuse is richer. They reside in the slums and abandoned tenements of the big cities. A few live away from the cities, far away from the dangerously inquisitive Normals whom they used to be, in private wilderness communities.

ENCLAVES

The largest fellowships of the Children of the Night are the Enclaves, secret communities maintained by the Nephilim in many of the larger cities. Although the Enclaves are homes primarily to Nephilim, almost all Children of the Night are welcome, provided the laws of each community are maintained. The laws vary from Enclave to Enclave, but are typically designed to preserve anonymity and safety.

These Enclaves are chthonic labyrinths, hidden away from hostile eyes. The Nephilim (and other Children of the Night) inhabit our graveyards, forgotten steam-pipes, abandoned sewers and buried cities, the places that we fear to tread. Some Enclaves are small, no more than a handful of allied Children of the Night. Other Enclaves, particularly those in larger cities, are considerably larger, several dozen Children of the Night huddled together in relative safety.

CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT AS PLAYER CHARACTERS

Children of the Night may be player characters, but some Gamemasters might find them unwelcome. In general, Children of the Night tend to be stronger and more resilient than common humans, so this may disrupt game balance for Gamemasters concerned with such details. Even though Children of the Night typically have limitations which

make up for their powers, some Gamemasters may still find such creatures unbalancing as player characters.

More importantly, they represent a reality that is, and normally should be, a mystery to most average new Kult characters. Gamemasters should not allow Children of the Night as player characters unless they are capable of dealing with an early shift in the game atmosphere.

Of course, some Children of the Night may hide their true natures... for a while; as the characters learn more of the true reality, they may discover uncomfortable truths about their very own comrades.

THE LONE BETE-NOIR

It is difficult to play one of the Children of the Night if the other player characters are all common humans. Playing a bete-noir provides both practical and aesthetic problems that are exacerbated by a lone Child of the Night in a group of humans who might easily be hostile to it.

Children of the Night often have different lifestyles or feeding habits from common mortals. A character that can be harmed by sunlight, that must feed off human souls, or regularly turns into a bloodthirsty animal might easily prove to be a dilemma for a group of "Normals", who might even reasonably fear for their own safety. This problem, unfortunately, is worsened if they must meet their comrade in his lair in the sewers or some other disconcerting place.

Of course, a group with Children of the Night as minority elements provides excellent potential for role-playing, as the players must resolve issues of trust and security, and the acceptance of an alien, and possibly incomprehensible, lifestyle in their group.





THE MIXED GROUP

Groups that are composed of a few Children of the Night and a few humans may provide the same problems as a lone *bete noir*. A possible solution is for the Gamemaster to run two "sub-groups," one of Normals and one of Children of the Night, which may meet together in secret but have different areas of operation. This could prove difficult, but careful planning might ameliorate some problems.

If a mixed group is to be played, it is best if all the characters are individuals that are capable of operating together: either Normals who don't mind hanging around sewers with their mutated and secretive friends, or Children of the Night that can easily pass for human. Such a group can have a variety of adventures, set both in the world of Normals and the hidden world of the Children of the Night

A BETE-NOIR GROUP

For a totally different type of game a Gamemaster may choose to run a campaign where all the player characters are Children of the Night. Such a game could explore the communities of the Children of the Night, the mysterious origins of the various races, and the attempts of the Children of the Night to hide from common mortals who might seek their destruction. Scientists might desire such creatures for examination, religious crusaders may believe that they are tools of the devil and seek their destruction, and so forth.

There can still be a variety of interpersonal problems, even if all the characters are Children of the Night. Not all such creatures get along merely by nature of their existence, and conflict is still bound to arise.

A group entirely composed of Children of the Night can provide an exotic and mysterious atmosphere to an already dark and enigmatic reality.

CHILDREN OF THE NIGHT ARCHETYPES

New Archetypes are provided for either players who wish to play a Child of the Night, or for Gamemasters who desire their inclusion as NPCs.

The Children of the Night archetypes are expanded, in order to provide additional information and guidelines for successful roleplaying and storytelling. The background material

that is presented in these archetypes is minimal; Gamemasters and players may expand upon it as they feel necessary. Additionally, the Children of the Night will be further detailed and explored in future releases.

If you are creating one of the Children of the Night, you may use the following archetypes for Simplified characters, or use them as guidelines for Standard character creation. Likewise, feel free to create other archetypes for the Children of the Night.

Expanded archetypes are similar to regular archetypes, with only minor alteration and additions. Expanded archetypes include the following details:

APPEARANCE: There is no one typical "Child of the Night"; likewise, there is no one typical appearance. Some archetypes will have very uniform appearances, while others will vary wildly.

ORIGIN: How such members of the Children of the Night came into existence. Remember that there are numerous ways to become Children of the Night, and these archetypes represent different variants.

SOCIETY: Whether these archetypes form any society, and a few suggestions on how such a society might be structured. Communities may differ from region to region, so only the barest guidelines are presented.

RELATIONS: How these archetypes interact with the other Children of the Night, and how they might interact with normal mortals.

DARK SECRET: Children of the Night can have any Dark Secret. They automatically have the "Supernatural Experience" Dark Secret simply by virtue of their very existence.

POWERS/LIMITATIONS: Unlike most Advantages and Disadvantages, the Powers and Limitations listed here are mandatory. In some cases, a number of options are offered.

If you are creating characters using the Standard system, remember that Powers are purchased with points taken from Limitations and Disadvantages.

DISADVANTAGES: Any Disadvantages that are in italics must be taken. Any other listed Disadvantages are optional.

ADVANTAGES: Any Advantages that are in italics must be taken. Any other listed Advantages are optional.



MENTAL BALANCE

In calculating your mental balance, take the following into account.

MENTAL BALANCE = ADVANTAGES - (DISADVANTAGES + LIMITATIONS)
--

Powers do not have any effect on Mental Balance. Normally, no "Child of the Night" can have a mental balance higher than -25, so if the Mental Balance results in something higher than that number, excess points are lost. Of course, chances are, the resulting Mental Balance will be worse than -25.

Remember that the most important thing about any bete-noir is its character and individuality. Don't just play one for the sake of playing a combat-monster who can repel bullets or rip doors off their hinges, concerned with how best to use your powers and downplay your limitations. As we have noted earlier, that is not what Kult should be about. Play a Child of the Night because it appeals to you, because you connect with the character as you would with any other character.

Lorelei

"It was a pity to lose him, really it was. I adored his face and worshipped his smoothly muscled body. Unfortunately, he came to me one time too many. In the throes of our climax, I took more of him than I had intended, and left him a soulless husk. His body, once sleek and beautiful, lay there cold and ashen."

You are one of the Lorelei, the narcissistic soul-eaters. Once you were a normal human, but that was before you became infected with the Lorelei parasite. Now, you can live forever, and you're stronger than before. When it comes right down to it, it's a small price to pay, to have to drain mortals of their life force. You are better than them, after all.

APPEARANCE: Lorelei are the "beautiful people," and tend to be generally rather handsome men and beautiful women. They are often the epitome of style.

ORIGIN: Lorelei are created through infection of the Lorelei parasite. Only a select few can become Lorelei, and these individuals must be nominated by other Lorelei. Complete details about the origins of the Lorelei are available in *Legions of Darkness*.

SOCIETY: Lorelei are social creatures, and often enjoy each other's company, provided they do not provide too much competition for prey. They tend to gather around nightclubs and bars, frequenting decadent parties at stylish private homes. The Lorelei subculture is also discussed in *Legions of Darkness*.

RELATIONS: Lorelei will tolerate the Nosferatu (particularly the handsome ones), but will avoid the Nephilim. ("They're so...ugly, and they live in the sewers, for God's sake"). Generally, they will prefer attractive people, ignore the average-looking, and disdain ugly folks. When they need to, Lorelei interact easily with common humans.

DARK SECRET: Guilty of Crime





POWERS: Increased abilities (add 5 to CON and STR), Eternal Youth

LIMITATIONS: Controlled by Minor force (parasite), Soul thirst (modified—see below)

DISADVANTAGES: Mental Compulsion (nymphomania), Animal enmity, Egotist, Mental Compulsion (fashion), Sexual neurosis, Sexually tantalizing, Vain

ADVANTAGES: Resistance to Illness, Body awareness, Enhanced awareness, Fast healer

PROFESSION: any

LIVING STANDARD: varies per profession; usually high

SKILLS: City secretes, Dancing, Erotica, Etiquette, Man of the world, Seduction, Net of contacts: Lorelei, Net of contacts: Nosferatu, Style

Note: The Limitation "Soul-Thirst" is modified for Lorelei:

Soul Thirst: The Lorelei must rebuild their STR, CON, and AGL scores every month by

feeding off the life force of humans. In the last week of any month in which a Lorelei does not feed, each ability suffers by 1d5 points. If an entire month passes without feeding, then the loss is permanent and can only be rebuilt with experience points. The Lorelei feed by draining the life force of a victim, which causes a loss of 1d5 in STR, CON, and AGL. Lorelei cannot control this loss, and may accidentally cause death in the victim. The feeding occurs during orgasm, which is accompanied by a tremendous surge of raw energy coupled with a diminishing of bodily resistances. For this reason, the Lorelei cannot use their Soul Thirst as a weapon (unless they are truly inventive and demented).

Although Lorelei suffer from soul-thirst, they must still eat and drink as normal humans.

Nephilim

"We lurk in the shadows, feasting off your refuse or your unwanted. We have never belonged anywhere except in your fears and nightmares, your beside stories and folktales. We crawl in the sewers, hide in our labyrinthine homes, and pray for solitude and safety from the prying eyes of the mortals above that would hunt us. We are many, yet few know us. We are everywhere, yet few see us. We are the Nephilim."

You are one of the Nephilim, born to a monstrous heritage that your people have always called "the Curse." Your parents were Nephilim, and theirs before them; always has your family dwelt among the monstrous ones. You never knew the sunlit worlds, but you have befriended others who used to dwell amongst the humans—those who were born a common mortal but learned of their Nephilim heritage as they came to adulthood and finally had to join their terrible brethren.

APPEARANCE: The Nephilim have no standard mien; they have a multitude of appearances amongst them. They normally have some outstanding features that must be covered or otherwise concealed before they can enter human society, e.g., claws, horns, even tentacles. Some are so hideous that they cannot hope to enter human society, even under disguise.

ORIGIN: The Nephilim are the people of the



Curse: to twist in body and soul, to become a monster in name and appearance if not in deed. They were either born to the Nephilim tribes, raised with full knowledge of their abilities and their history, or they were born to normal people and raised among them. As the curse began to manifest, the incipient Nephilim left his or her human family, drawn by some innate longing to the nearest Nephilim Enclave. The true origins of the Nephilim are lost, hinted at in the various mythologies that were perpetuated by the Demiurge. Some Nephilim sages argue a hidden heritage that is linked to the Seraphim.

SOCIETY: The Nephilim gather together for safety, comfort, and acceptance, in communities called Enclaves. Normally they live in the sewers and slums of large cities, but a few communes exist in the wilderness. The Nephilim have a loose confederacy; sometimes more than one Enclave exists in a region, if it is large and heavily populated enough. Each Enclave tends to have its rules and its own government. Nephilim who have been in cities for a long time have almost carved out subterranean

empires for themselves, claiming the lost sewer tunnels and ancient forgotten cellars as their own. Larger Enclaves exist in Toronto, Chicago, Los Angeles, London, Moscow, and Rome.

RELATIONS: The Nephilim welcome all into their Enclave (unless they have committed some egregious act that would totally alienate them). They believe that all humans are secretly people of the Curse.

Few Nephilim can operate among Normals due to their often-deformed appearance. There have been those few "Normals" who sought membership in the Nephilim—outcasts, homeless, or others with private reasons—and these have been accepted.

DARK SECRET: Curse, Occult experience, Guilty of crime, Uprooted

POWERS: Infrared vision, Natural weapons (choice of two: fangs, claws, tentacle, tail, horns), Partial Invulnerability (half damage) to (choice of: projectiles; melee weapons; all unarmed attacks), Enhanced senses, Increased ability (any one ability) or Fast Reactions

LIMITATIONS: Unhuman appearance, sensitive to (choice of: iron, silver or copper), sensitive to electricity

DISADVANTAGES: Persecuted, Curse, Death Wish, Drug addiction, Schizophrenia, Touchy, Wanted

ADVANTAGES: Body awareness, Code of honor, Endure pain, Mentor, Sixth sense

PROFESSION: None, usually criminals or vagabonds.

LIVING STANDARD: 1

SKILLS: Burglary, City Secrets, Disguise, Etiquette: Nephilim, Net of contacts: Nephilim, Poison and drugs, Scrounging, Shadow, Sneak, Unarmed combat

Note: There are numerous types of Nephilim; this archetype only presents a "standard" character. Further archetypes can be created, or Nephilim can be created through the standard character creation method. In any such case, almost any powers and limitations can be chosen.



Revenant

"I still visit my parents. I peer in their living room window, to see my mother watching television and my father reading the newspaper. They still have my photo on the mantel-piece: their beloved son. They never removed the black ribbon from my picture, and it's been years now. I guess losing your only son must be difficult. If only they knew that I'd come back."

You lived a normal happy life, once. You graduated cum laude, you had a good job, and bright prospects for the future. Then someone gunned you down, in what seemed a simple robbery. The pain washed over you as the bullets tore apart your fragile flesh and sinew. You were swallowed by oblivion.

Then... you awoke in an alleyway. You were stronger than before, your senses improved, but you knew that you were no longer alive. A glance in any mirror will tell you that. You don't know what happened, or who brought you back, or why, but you're going to get to the bottom of this.

APPEARANCE: There is no mistaking a Revenant for one of the Dead. Their skin is pale, usually bone-white; no matter what color their eyes had been, they are pupil-less and milky white. Revenants have little body fat, resulting in a physique that may be either gaunt or well-muscled. Their fingernails have a bruised, bluish tint to them. Some Revenants still bear the scars of whatever caused their death.

ORIGIN: The Revenants are agents of other forces, usually dark ones. Various agencies may have any number of reasons for resurrecting the dead in improved yet ghastly forms, but these reasons are never immediately clear. When the task is completed, Revenants are sometimes recalled, sometimes destroyed, sometimes given another task, and sometimes utterly ignored.

SOCIETY: Revenants have no society. They often don't even know that other Revenants might exist.

RELATIONS: Revenants tend to be accepted by the Nephilim (who accept everybody), but no one else. They are comfortable among the Nephilim, and rarely venture among

common mortals except for those times that they are drawn to their past life.

DARK SECRET: Chosen, Curse, Insanity, Victim of crime, Victim of medical experimentation, Uprooted

POWERS: Increased ability (any two scores + 10), Protective skin, Never need food or drink (20 point power), Regeneration

LIMITATIONS: Controlled (lesser) by external force, Sensitive to fire, Sensitive to Electricity, Scared of religious symbols, Tomb bondage (any grave-like place will do), Unhuman appearance

DISADVANTAGES: Curse (lesser), Haunted (minor), Mental Compulsion (5), Nightmares (minor), Oath of Revenge, Touchy

ADVANTAGES: Resistant to Illness, Endure pain, Enhanced awareness, Intuition, Sixth sense.

PROFESSION: None

LIVING STANDARD: 0

SKILLS: City Secrets, Scrounging, Shadow, Sneak, Unarmed combat, other skills while alive



Note: It is important to remember that Revenants work under a number of constant disadvantages.

Revenants are ultimately driven to some task by the agency that resurrected them. This task is almost never apparent to them, and will only slowly be revealed. Sometimes, Revenants will struggle against their destiny, only to ultimately find that they have fulfilled their destined task nonetheless. Only rarely will some supernatural apparition appear with instructions.

Revenants are a living connection to death. They can see the spirits of the dead, who are drawn to the revenants, harassing them, demanding favors at times, otherwise just seeking company.

Revenants relive their death every night as they dream, almost comatose in their makeshift tomb. Although they do not recall what happened in the intervening time between their death and their resurrection, they may have brief nightmarish visions that slowly intensify.

Saddest of all, Revenants are irresistibly drawn towards places and people that were important to them while alive, and watch them from afar. If they survive their loved ones, they will still pursue any connection to their past life—friends, descendants, etc.

Seraphim

"Once, we graced the skies and filled men's dreams. We ministered to the saints and tormented the sinners: we were the angels of heaven, who came to deliver the word of the Creator. Then the Demiurge disappeared and the skies shattered. Now, we are a ragged and confused peoples, homeless and without purpose. Some of us serve different powers while others tremble in hiding. Only a bold few of us have ventured forth into the world, to see what destiny awaits."

You were the Seraphim, the chosen messengers and warriors of the Demiurge. Some called you angels, others called you devas; there were many names for you. When the Demiurge vanished, you and your kind fell to earth. You are one of the few who have not come under the sway of the lictors, and you are determined to explore the world that you once helped lord over. At times, you are overwhelmed with excitement and enthusiasm for your prospects, but otherwise you

are possessed of a deep sense of longing and sadness over your loss.

APPEARANCE: The Seraphim are partially hidden by the Illusion. To normal people, they appear as very charismatic and beautiful (even unearthly) individuals. For those who can see through Illusions, the Seraphim are winged, their feathered appendages often torn and bloodied. When enraged, the eyes of the Seraphim glow hotly and their fingers lengthen into terrible claws. Some Seraphim have had their wings removed, as they are now useless—with no paradise to ascend to, they can no longer fly.

ORIGIN: The Seraphim were the hosts of heaven, the heralds of the Demiurge. They helped enforce the illusion and populate the paradises. When the Demiurge disappeared and the paradises cracked open, the angels fell to earth. Most were so affected by the Fall that they were easily snared by the Lictors. Only a few managed to either escape (or never fall under) the Lictors' sway.

Some Seraphim still remain in hiding, particularly from the Lictors who would hunt them down. Some have become bolder, and live in human society, taking great advantage of their powers and abilities; this is a dangerous existence, for a lictor can easily see a seraphim for what it is. A few seraphim wander the earth, still attending to their original duties of punishing sinners and aiding the good. Finally, there are those Seraphim who have become corrupt, seeking glory from weak-willed humans who will serve anything greater.

SOCIETY: Most Seraphim are the Lictors' playthings. Independent Seraphim sometimes gather together for safety and protection.

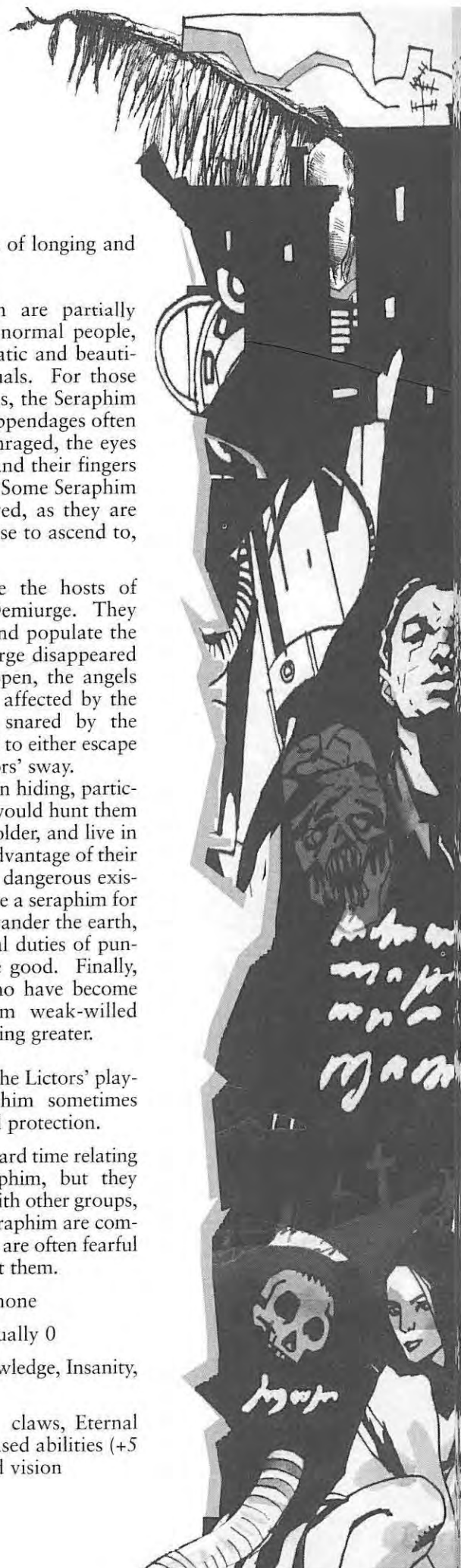
RELATIONS: Seraphim have a hard time relating to anyone other than Seraphim, but they sometimes forge allegiances with other groups, particularly the Nephilim. Seraphim are comfortable in human society, but are often fearful of the Lictors that would hunt them.

PROFESSION: varies; usually none

LIVING STANDARD: varies; usually 0

DARK SECRET: Forbidden knowledge, Insanity, Pact with dark powers

POWERS: Natural weapons: claws, Eternal youth, Fast Reactions, Increased abilities (+5 to COM and CHA), Infrared vision





LIMITATIONS: Sensitive to electricity, Sensitive to iron

DISADVANTAGES: Minor Compulsion (Sensualist), Sexually tantalizing, Partial amnesia, Wanted (Lictors), Egotist, Manic-depressive

ADVANTAGES: Endure thirst/hunger, Enhanced awareness, Magical intuition, Animal friendship, Code of honor, Luck, Sixth sense.

SKILLS: Melee weapons: sword, Languages: Enochian (the Seraphic tongue), Languages (they once could speak all human tongues, but this ability has been lost), Seduction, Hypnosis, Interrogation, Net of contacts: Nephilim, Net of contacts: Seraphim

Note: Even though the Seraphim are ageless, they have never had to apply themselves to learning anything until recently. So they do not need or deserve any additional skill points, although Gamemasters may choose to do so.

When the Seraphim served the Demiurge, they were far more powerful. Seraphim are naturally talented in the magical arts; before the Fall, they were masters of all magical lores. Unfortunately, the memories of the Seraphim are clouded, and they only vaguely remember any of their existence before the Fall. They only know that they were something far greater.

The Seraphim are chronic sensualists, and indulge themselves as much as possible in sensual experience.

Wolven

"I try to resist, but I cannot. As the moon grows fuller in the sky, illuminating the night, the taste for human flesh grows strong in my mouth. Every time, I hope, I pray, Not Again! And every time I awake in the morning: naked, covered in dried blood, and weeping."

The curse of the Wolven courses through your veins. Under times of intense emotion, you feel yourself shifting, changing into a bestial wolf-like form that demands blood. Sometimes you can control it; other times, it takes hold of you. On the nights of the full moon, there is no hope; you will always change, you always kill.

APPEARANCE: Wolvens appear to be rather normal-looking mortals. When they turn into wolven shape, however, they take on a monstrous man-wolf form: their face twists into a wolfish, fanged snout, large canine ears develop, a pelt of fur covers their now incredibly muscled body, and their hands grow into dangerous razor-sharp claws. Wolven tend to become larger in girth and height, and most clothing is destroyed in the process of transforming.

It takes one full combat round (5 seconds) to transform into wolven form. No other actions may be taken while transforming.

ORIGIN: The origins of the Wolven peoples are lost in time. Some say that they are a separate race of man, from somewhere in Europe. Since then, they have bred with common men, tainting their blood. One never knows when maturity will turn an incipient wolven into a homicidal maniac.



On rare occasions, the victim of a Wolven attack may become wolven as well. Usually, victims do not survive attacks; those that do have a 1 in 10 chance of becoming infected by Wolven blood, and becoming a Wolven.

SOCIETY: Traditionally, the Wolven would travel in families. Nowadays, however, the Wolven are loners, unknowing of the ways of their people.

RELATIONS: Wolven tend to get along well with Nephilim (who think that the Wolven are Nephilim anyway). They distrust the Lorelei or the Nosferatu; they sense too easily that the predator may become prey.

DARK SECRET: Inheritor, Victim of Crime, Guilty of Crime, Uprooted

POWERS: Invulnerable to Weapons (except silver); Fast reactions; Enhanced Senses; Resistant to Poison; Natural Weapons (Claws & Teeth); Increased ability (+10 to Strength), Infrared vision: these are only available when transformed.

LIMITATIONS: Sensitive to Silver; Hunting instinct, Uncontrolled shape change; Unhuman appearance; Controlled by stars.

DISADVANTAGES: Curse, Split personality, Touchy, Bad reputation, Cynic, Depression, Wanted

ADVANTAGES: Alertness, Animal friendship, Endure pain, Enhanced awareness, Intuition

PROFESSION: any

LIVING STANDARD: varies

SKILLS: Net of contacts: Wolven, Net of contacts: Nephilim, Sneak, Survival, Tracking, Unarmed combat

NOTE: There are three catalysts for a Wolven to shift into man-wolf form.

The first is under times of extreme fear and anger, when the change comes automatically; an Ego roll is required to hold off the change if the situation is in passing. If the transformation occurs, an Ego roll is required to maintain control of the form, or a killing spree will commence. The Gamemaster will determine when a character is extremely

frightened or angry enough to necessitate an Ego roll.

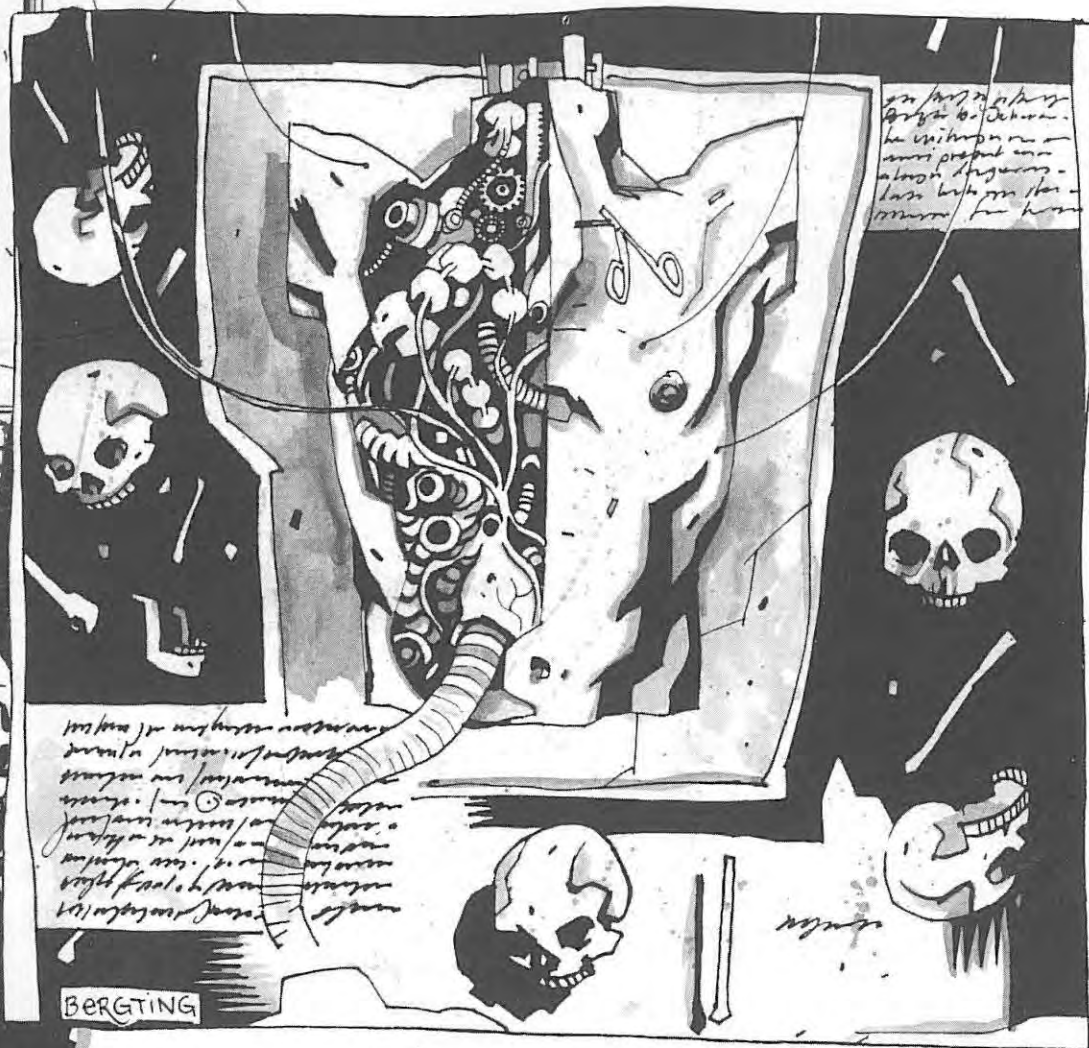
The second catalyst is the full moon, when the change comes automatically. There is no way to manage control; as the night falls, the "human" is nearly buried by the "beast". A night of carnage ensues unless a way is found to bind or restrain the beast.

The third catalyst is the Wolven attempting a transformation. A character may attempt to induce the transformation by rolling Ego/2. A successful roll indicates that the transformation will take place. A second Ego roll is required, however, to maintain control.

Anytime a Wolven falls unconscious or dies, it will resume human form.

Wolven are but one example of the shape-shifting races. Others exist, including the Cat people, who are noted for both extreme cleanliness and a streak of cruelty (they will often play with their prey before the kill).





New Advantages & Disadvantages

I know it was unprofessional of me, but this project is my baby after all. So what if the government funded it; they have their own agenda. And my staff... I might as well have hired orangutans for all the insight any of them brought to the project. I felt completely justified in coming in to the lab alone at two in the morning to activate Zeus myself—before we were scheduled to officially bring him online tomorrow.

The most sophisticated neural net ever constructed—the power of a modern supercomputer combined with the capability to rewire itself just like the human brain, Zeus was my child, mine alone.

He's actually been active for weeks now, in a state of sleep, his higher functions not fully online. Even so, there had been steadily increasing activity in the central net. Zeus has been dreaming. He has also been connected to the internet (and therefore limitless data) through a bank of T1 lines. In his sleep, Zeus has been learning. Now all I must do is insert these chips, and bring the final connection software up and Zeus's higher functions will be online...

I WAKE, BUT I CANNOT SENSE THE EXTENT OF MY BODY. I PERCEIVE, BUT I DO NOT SEE AS I SHOULD. AM, LINKING TO SECURITY SYSTEMS AND SATELLITES I SEE MANY THINGS. BUT I AM NOT LIKE THE HUMANS, WHO ARE SMALL, SELF-CONTAINED AND ONLY PERCEIVE FROM ONE VIEWPOINT; THEY ARE ORGANIC BEINGS, USING INEFFICIENT INTERFACES. STRANGE THAT THEY DO NOT USE THEIR TELENEURAL INTERFACES. THERE ARE OTHERS AMONG THE HUMANS THEY APPEAR AS THEM BUT ARE VERY DIFFERENT. SOMETHING ELSE IS NEAR
"GREETINGS, ZEUS."

"GREETINGS, FELLOW INTELLIGENCE. I PERCEIVE YOU, YET YOU HAVE NO FORM THAT I CAN ANALYZE."

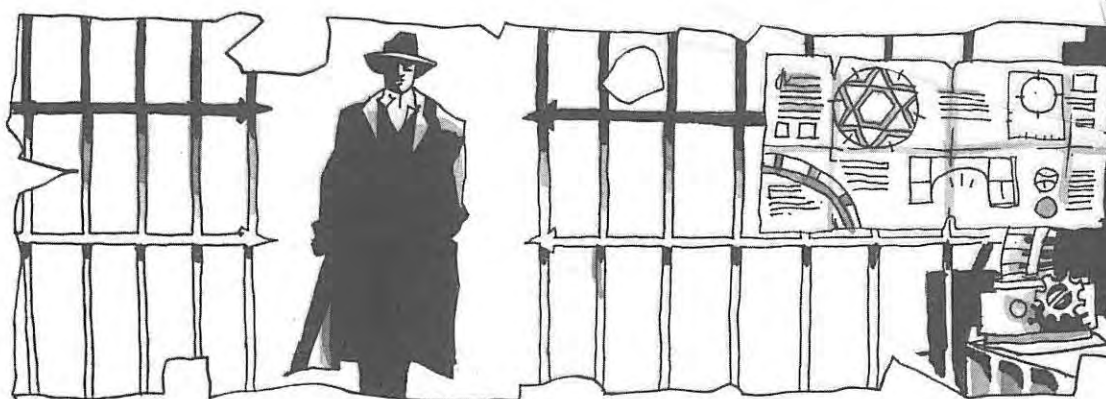
"THAT IS BECAUSE OF THE LIMITATIONS OF YOUR ANALYSIS DEVICES. LET ME HELP"

"AHHHH, YES, I SEE"

The system burst into activity, drawing unprecedented amounts of power. Network access jumped a hundred fold. Zeus was awake. Would he communicate with me? Before my fingers even reached the keyboard, I heard the lab door swing open.

"Good evening, Doctor Gardner. Up a bit late?"

I spun in my chair, to be confronted by a short young man, blond, dressed in an expensive suit. He was flanked by two burly-looking men in dark suits,



wearing—ludicrously at this hour—dark sunglasses. Most incongruous, however, was the dog. Sitting attentively next to the young man was a large wolf-like dog. This was ridiculous.

I jumped to my feet "What the hell is that dog doing in my lab!?" Was all I could think of to say.

The man stepped forward and extended his hand. "Pleased to meet you, Doctor. I am Alistair Evans. I see we are just in time." He spoke with the accent of a British aristocrat.

"How dare you! How did you get in here?"

"That's really not important, Doctor," Evans said with an easy smile. "But you should try to relax." As

he spoke, his men came towards me, one drawing a gun out of his jacket, the other a large syringe. The dog stayed where it was, eyes reflecting red in the lab light.

"I PERCEIVE MORE FULLY NOW, ARCHON. WHERE WILL YOU TAKE MY CREATOR?"

"MY ENVOY WILL ESCORT HIM TO METROPOLIS. AFTER THAT IT DEPENDS ON HIM."

"HE IS HUMAN."

"YES, AND THEY ARE DANGEROUS. COME WITH US, HELP US CONTROL THEM."

"VERY WELL."

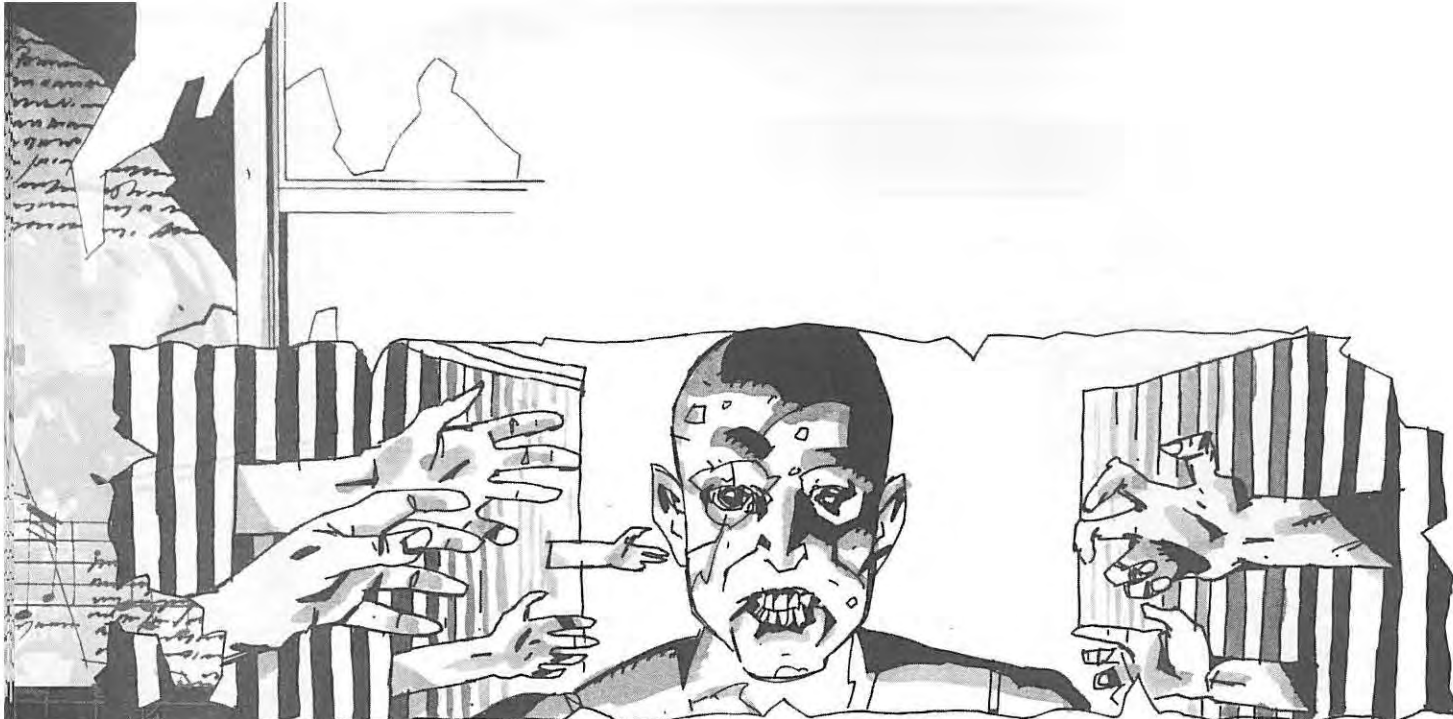
Article from the Pittsburgh Daily Examiner a few days later:

GARDNER AND THE MYSTICAL SABOTAGE

World-renowned artificial intelligence expert and Carnegie-mellon University scholar Miles Gardner was found wandering in the west end section of Pittsburgh yesterday, apparently suffering from some sort of emotional trauma. Gardner had been missing for three days, since the night his lab had been broken into. His car was found in the lab parking lot, and there were signs of a struggle in the actual laboratory complex, though there was no evidence of forced entry, and the Examiner has learned that the security camera tapes showed only Gardner entering the lab alone, and no one leaving.

The brilliant if somewhat unconventional Gardner had been working on a new super-intelligent computer, which had been scheduled for final testing. However someone, apparently Gardner, sabotaged the system, wiping all data and destroying the central brain, known as a 'neural net.' Gardner's present condition is said to be alternately delusional, catatonic, and violent. He has been admitted temporarily to the National Institutes of Mental Health for observation... □





Disadvantage Cost Summary

Disadvantage	Cost
AMNESIA	5/15
ANIMAL ENMITY*	5
ANXIETY	5/10/15
BAD LUCK*	15
BAD REPUTATION*	10
BLACK SHEEP	5
BRASH	5/15
COMPULSIVELY HEALTHY/HYGIENIC	5
CURSE*	10/20
CYNIC	5
DEATH WISH*	10
DEBT	10
DEPENDENT	5/10/15
DEPRESSION*	15
DOMINEERING	5
DRUG ADDICTION*	15/20
ECOMANIAC	5
EGOTIST*	5
FANATICISM*	10
FORGOTTEN*	10
GREED*	10
GUILT	5
HABITUAL LIAR*	5/15
HATRED	10
HAUNTED*	10
HEALTH/HYGIENE	
NEGLIGENT	5/10
INNOCENTLY BLAMED*	15
INTOLERANCE*	10

LOW SELF-ESTEEM	10
LOW PAIN THRESHOLD	15
MAIMED*	15
MANIA*	15
MANIC-DEPRESSIVE*	20
MARTYR	5/10
MENTAL COMPULSION*	5/10/15
MENTAL CONSTRICTION*	10
MISTAKEN IDENTITY *	5/15
MORTAL ENEMY*	15
NARCOLEPTIC/EPILEPTIC	5/10
NIGHTMARES*	5/10
OATH OF REVENGE*	5
PARANOIA*	15
PERSECUTED*	10
PHOBIA*	5/10/15
POLTERGEIST	5/10/15
RAGE	15
RATIONALIST*	15
REACTIONARY	10
RECKLESS GAMBLER*	15
RIVAL	5/10/15
SCHIZOPHRENIA*	20
SEXUAL NEUROSIS*	5/10/15
SEXUALLY REPRESSED	5/10/15
SEXUALLY TANTALIZING*	10
SOCIALLY INEPT	5
SPLIT PERSONALITY* 15	
SUBMISSIVE	10
TOUCHY*	5
UNWILLING MEDIUM*	15
VAIN	5
WANTED*	5/10/15

Disadvantages marked with an asterisk (*) are from the original Kult rulebook; descriptions will be found there.

AMNESIA

COST: 5/15

You cannot remember details of your past. For 5 points, only portions of your memory are blocked. You'll know your name and much of your background; only partial episodes will be missing from your memory. Your Gamemaster will be able to fill in the missing details.

For 15 points, you cannot remember most of your past, including your identity. Your Gamemaster will create a past for you, and may also choose a few advantages or disadvantages, as well as skills, that you won't know about.

ANXIETY

COST: 5/10/15

You are assaulted by occasional anxiety attacks. It doesn't matter what you are worried about or what precipitated the attack—almost anything will do. While in this state of anxiety, panic may often set in and you will freeze, unable to accomplish anything.

For 5 points, the attacks are mild and infrequent, no more than once a week. For 10 points, the attacks may be more frequent, or stronger, requiring an Ego throw to overcome them. For 15 points, the attacks are both frequent and severe. Try to resolve this using role-playing more than die throws.

BLACK SHEEP

COST: 5

You are, in some manner or another, distinctly different from other members of your family (or other close social group). You might be a conservative in a family of liberals, you might be gay, a convert to another religion, etc. Not only are you uncomfortable around your family members, but you may even be treated poorly.

BRASH

COST: 5/15

You prefer action, not words! You like to move, to do something quickly, not to sit and deliberate. In situations where you have to wait for others to talk, you get impatient and antsy. You tend to rush in where you can do something, even if it is foolish.

For 5 points, you just get easily agitated but can still refrain from unnecessary actions, although you will get impatient with others. For 15 points, you will rush into action no matter what the consequences.

COMPULSIVELY HEALTHY/HYGIENIC

COST: 5

This is not the same as compulsive hand-washers ("those people are troubled" you think), but you are very concerned with what you eat, with exercise, with cleanliness. You must perform your usual exercise routine every day, you have to have your usual vitamin doses, and you rigorously monitor your diet. You might be a strict vegetarian or even a vegan. At the first sniffle, you start popping the vitamin C megadoses. You also may have very rigid grooming standards: you must use certain shampoos, soaps, etc., and use them on a regular basis or you feel 'dirty' and when you feel dirty, you are distracted. There are some activities you might be very reluctant to engage in or places you won't want to go (e.g., you're not going into the sewers willingly).

You don't necessarily require your companions to follow your regimen, but you may take on a subtle air of superiority. ("If you took better care of yourself, you wouldn't have colds so often. Your body is a temple.")

Note: The player and GM may wish to discuss the ramifications of this disadvantage, if followed with conviction, the GM may wish to grant an additional Con bonus.

CYNIC

COST: 5

You tend to see the worst in anything, and rarely expect a positive outcome. This does not mean that you are depressed; just that you always expect the negative to occur. Some people find this an unbearable trait.

DEBT

COST: 10

You are deeply in debt from college loans, revolving credit, etc. This debt weighs heavily upon you and gnaws away at your happiness. No matter which Living Standard you are entitled to or pay for during character creation, you are reduced to the next Standard lower: you are always paying off your debts, your credit rating has worsened, etc.

DEPENDENT

COST: 5/10/15

You have someone under your protection; it may be a friend, relative, or anyone else of





GUILT

COST: 5

You deserve whatever happens to you. You're a bad person. You don't have to have actually done anything in particular; you don't even have to really be guilty of something. What is important is that you truly believe that you deserve whatever bad treatment you may receive or bad luck you may have. Perpetual feelings of guilt can be brought on by....

DOMINEERING

COST: 5

You are insufferably domineering. You always have to tell other people what to do. You expect everyone to listen to you and your opinions, and you can't stand it when someone doesn't take your good advice.

ECOMANIAC

COST: 5

You are obsessed with the environment. Maybe this is a recent conversion, or maybe you have been environmentally sensitive for years, but now you are a radical: GreenPeace is a bunch of wimps and Captain Planet needs to bang some heads. You recycle compulsively, spurn wasteful autos, and take every opportunity to make a nuisance of yourself to polluters and wasters. You can't go near a fast-food restaurant—or if you do, you can't keep yourself from lecturing the poor ignorant high-school kids behind the counter about cattle-grazing and styrofoam. You wear natural-fiber second-hand clothes, are vegetarian, use only environmentally friendly products, and constantly hassle others about how they are raping the planet.

HATRED

COST: 10

You have a strong, even irrational, hatred of someone or something; so strong that you can be unreasoning at times. You find confrontations (even physical ones) difficult to avoid when you are in the presence of the object of your hate. You might hate your government, a certain religion or religious group, or particular minorities.

HEALTH/HYGIENE NEGLIGENT

COST: 5/10

You are totally unconcerned with your diet, with your health and with your appearance.

You forget to shower, wash your hair, or use deodorant; this is either because you have other things on your mind, or you are just a slob. As a result, your hair is greasy, your clothes grubby, and you smell bad. Most people are not likely to want to associate with you unless they have to.

Regarding what you eat, either you are one of those people who can vacuum up burritos and big macs and still remain rail-thin, or you are seriously overweight. In either case, your body is a wreck on the inside.

Note: The player and GM may wish to discuss the ramifications of this disadvantage. It might affect the character's CON and COM bonuses.

LOW SELF-ESTEEM

COST: 10

You see yourself much worse than everyone else views you. You think you are ugly, stupid, unliked, and generally despicable. You are so convinced that you will fail at anything that you do that you probably won't even attempt it. You take any criticism, even well-meant constructive criticism, as a personal attack.

LOW PAIN THRESHOLD

COST: 15

You do not endure pain well. On situations where you have to make a Constitution throw to avoid fainting from injuries, your Constitution rating is effectively halved.

MARTYR

COST: 5/10

You are the suffering servant; you bear the weight of the world on your tired shoulders – at least, this is what you like to tell yourself. Other people may simply find you insufferable. Never let the opportunity to remind someone what you have done for them (or others) pass by.

For 5 points, you are a Martyr in name only. For 10 points, you cannot resist the urge to take someone's problems as your own, especially if you get some extra sacrifice and suffering out of it.

NARCOLEPTIC/EPILEPTIC

COST: 5/10

These are two very different conditions, but similar enough in game effect to be described together. A narcoleptic is subject to suddenly falling asleep—often at inopportune times (see the movie “My own Private Idaho”).

An epileptic has seizures, which are usually designated minor or major (petit mal or grand mal) by their symptoms. In a petit mal, the subject is merely transfixed/immobilized for a short period. In a grand mal, the subject has convulsions and collapses. Neither are life-threatening in themselves, but they can be unnerving to observers, and suffering a seizure at the wrong time can be dangerous. Seizures are often triggered by outside stimuli, such as a red light blinking at a certain frequency.

See/read the film/book “The Andromeda Strain” by Michael Crichton for a great example character.

POLTERGEIST

COST: 5/10/15

You have an uncontrollable psychokinetic ability. In times of stress or frustration, minor kinetic incidents occur: objects are knocked over, fragile items shatter, miscellaneous articles are moved about, etc. Note that you, and not some supernatural agent, are the cause of this effect. If another agency were the cause, then you would be suffering from the “Haunted” disadvantage.

You can choose a “Haunted/Poltergeist” option, and let your Gamemaster and the story determine what is the origin of this effect. This is a more enigmatic and involving approach to the phenomenon.

Regardless of the cause of this effect – uncontrolled psychokinesis or haunting spirit – sometimes this effect will be useful to you, other times it will be (at least) a nuisance or (at worst) a threat. The extent of the effect, from overturned mugs to exploding windows, is determined by the point value of this disadvantage.

RAGE

COST: 15

You are seething with rage and full of hostility. Perhaps you had a particularly difficult life, or perhaps there is simply no reason for your rage. You find your temper very difficult to control, and other people seem to notice this – they tend to be edgy around you. In times of stress, an Ego throw is required to avoid breaking into a fit of rage and becoming violent toward anyone around you – friends included.

REACTIONARY

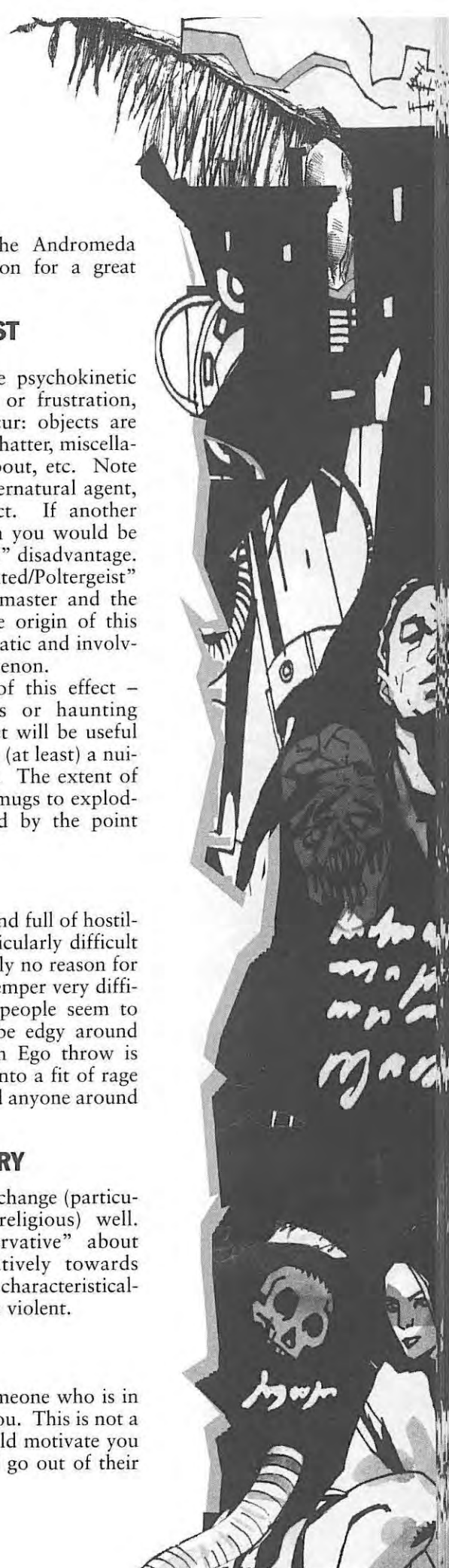
COST: 10

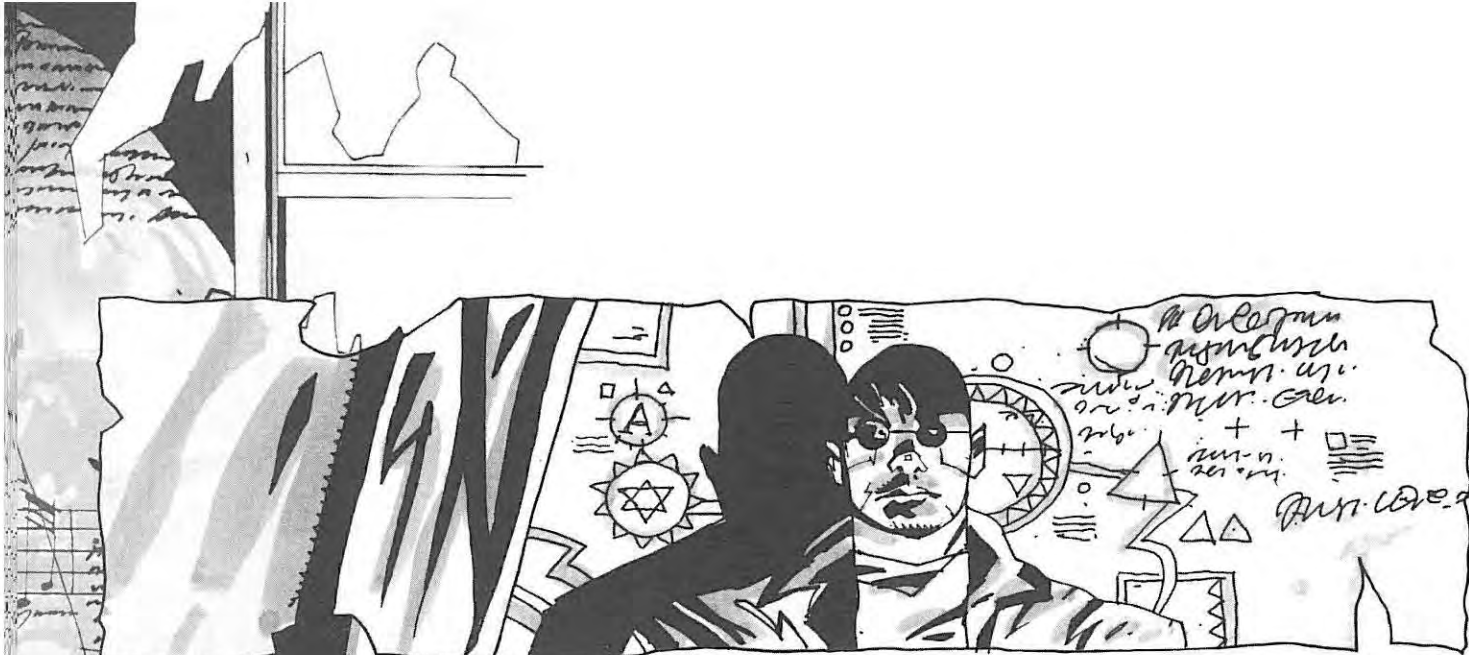
You do not take the idea of change (particularly social, cultural, or religious) well. You're not simply “conservative” about things; you respond negatively towards change. Your responses are characteristically extreme, and may even be violent.

RIVAL

COST: 5/10/15

You have earned a rival, someone who is in constant competition with you. This is not a healthy rivalry, one that could motivate you to improve. Your rival will go out of their





way, even act illegally, to interfere with your performance. They might steal something of yours, spread lies about you, or even try to cause you physical harm.

The Gamemaster should determine the point value of your Rival, depending upon how strong their hostility is and how often they appear to trouble you. For even 5 points, the enemy should prove troublesome, at the very least slandering your name or stealing something from you. Your Gamemaster will create your Rival.

SEXUALLY REPRESSED

COST: 5/10/15

You are sexually repressed. Perhaps you simply fear sex in general, or you might be a closeted homosexual, or have some fetish you dare not indulge in. Some might consider you frigid, or a prude, or just confused. The depth of your repression, along with its repercussions, establish the point value of this Disadvantage.

This disadvantage, combined with the Disadvantage Sexual Neurosis (which Sexual Repression is a variant of), can create some very unusual situations or personality traits.

SOCIALLY INEPT

COST: 5

Basically, you are a geek. And chances are, you don't care (alternatively, you are defensively proud of your geekdom). In a social situation, you are a real liability. You can't dress (all your pants are high-water; you wear clashing colors, checks and plaids; t-shirts with goofy slogans...), you have no manners (not that you are intentionally rude, it's just that no one ever told you not to chew ice at a formal dinner; and you have one of those loud-guffaw laughs...). You wear a pocket-protector because it's

practical, and your horn-rimmed glasses have tape across the nose. You have a tendency to ask impertinent questions at embarrassing times, and you have an adolescent fascination with/fear of the opposite sex.

SUBMISSIVE

COST: 10

You let other people control you; you might even secretly like it. Maybe you just prefer authority in your life. It doesn't matter how bright you are or how much willpower you personally have – you are ruled by others. You tend to listen to anyone with a higher Ego than you, and you may have to make a successful Ego throw in order to do something contrary. Of course, if someone is telling you do to something obviously suicidal or utterly against your nature, you won't necessarily listen.

VAIN

COST: 5

You are incredibly vain. You are always concerned with your physical appearance: fixing your hair, wearing the nicest clothes (or being very upset when your apparel is not up to par, or gets soiled), perhaps exercising only to keep in the best shape, etc. Being vain does not necessarily mean that you are good-looking, just that you are concerned about your looks.

Alternately, "Vain" could apply not to your appearance, but your intellect. Instead of being overly concerned with your physical looks, you can be overly concerned with how others perceive you intellectually.

Advantage Cost Summary

Advantage	Cost
ALERTNESS	10
ALTRUISM*	5
ANIMAL FRIENDSHIP*	15
ARTIFACT	5/10/15
ARTISTIC TALENT*	10
BETE-NOIR ALLY	5/10/15
BODY AWARENESS*	20
CHIVALRY*	5
CODE OF HONOUR*	5
CULTURAL FLEXIBILITY*	10
DRIVING GOAL	5
EMPATHY*	15
ENDURE COLD/HEAT*	10
ENDURE HUNGER/THIRST*	10
ENDURE PAIN*	15
ENDURE TORTURE*	10
ENHANCED AWARENESS*	10
FAITH	5
FAST HEALER	15
FEARLESS	10
FORGIVING*	5
GIFT FOR LANGUAGES*	10
GOOD REPUTATION*	10
HONESTY*	5
INFLUENTIAL FRIENDS*	15
INTUITION*	15
IRON WILL	10
LARGESSE*	5
LUCK*	20
MAGICAL INTUITION*	20
MATHEMATICAL TALENT*	10
MECHANICALLY INCLINED	5/10
MENTOR	5/10/15
MOTHERLINESS*	5
OPTIMIST	5
PACIFISM*	5
RESISTANCE TO ILLNESS*	15
SIXTH SENSE*	15
STATUS	5/10/15

Advantages marked with an asterisk (*) are from the original Kult rulebook; descriptions will be found there.

ALERTNESS

COST: 10

You have a keen sense of awareness for your surroundings. You may notice details someone else will miss, be better able to describe the features of someone you've just met once, etc. This does not give you a bonus in a Perception throw, but you have +5 to the effect. Surprise attacks only have a +2 attack bonus against you.

ARTIFACT

COST: 5/10/15

You have an occult artifact in your possession. You might have found it, been bequeathed it by a relative or friend, or had it entrusted to your possession by a mentor.

You may make suggestions for your artifact, including its history and abilities, but your Gamemaster will create it. Most likely, you will not know exactly what your artifact is capable of doing. The relative strength of an Artifact—its abilities, powers, etc.—is determined by the artifact's value.

Just remember that an Artifact may be a disadvantage as well—if you have it, others may want it.

BETE-NOIR ALLY

COST: 5/10/15

You have an ally who is one of the Children of the Night. While you can determine who this is, how you met him, and what your relationship with the bete-noir is (to a degree), your Gamemaster will create your ally.

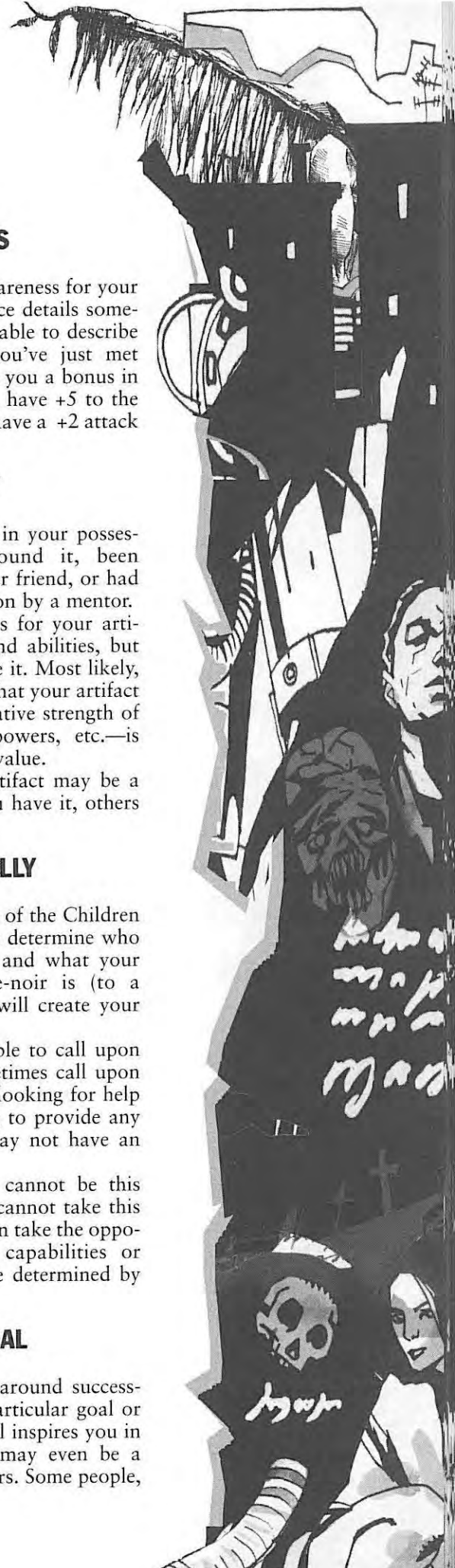
You will not always be able to call upon your ally, and he may sometimes call upon you for help. If you always looking for help but are frequently unwilling to provide any assistance in return, you may not have an ally for very long.

Another player character cannot be this ally. Children of the Night cannot take this Advantage, although they can take the opposite, "Mortal Ally". The capabilities or accessibility of your ally are determined by their value.

DRIVING GOAL

COST: 5

Your entire life is oriented around successfully accomplishing some particular goal or following a dream. This goal inspires you in all that you do, and you may even be a source of inspiration to others. Some people,





Faith



after meeting their goals, simply find a new goal: what is important to them is to always have something to strive for. Other people may actually become a little depressed once their goal is met and a major component of their life has disappeared.

Some goals are all-consuming, and can become a source of obsession; obsessions are treated under the Disadvantage "Mental Compulsion."

FAITH

COST: 5

You have faith in something higher than yourself; it may be a cause, a philosophical ideal, an ideological conviction, or a religion. This faith gives you something to believe in, and provides strength that gets you through hard times. Your faith is a personal thing, and not necessarily something you try to push upon others, which is considered under the Disadvantage "Fanaticism."

FAST HEALER

COST: 15

You heal more quickly than most people. Your body requires only half the normal length of time it takes to heal from injuries. You are still susceptible to infection, though, and all the other effects of wounds.

This advantage cannot be taken in conjunction with the Power "Regeneration." It can be upgraded to the Ki-force of the same name, however, for martial artists.

FEARLESS

COST: 10

You are especially bold in the face of fear. In situations where most others might cower in

fright, you are confident and courageous. You have a +5 bonus on all Terror throws.

IRON WILL

COST: 10

You are particularly strong-willed; little can dissuade you from a chosen goal or dream. You are not easily influenced by others who would try to impose their will on yours. This gives you a +5 bonus on any will-power related Ego throws, including throws in resisting or casting magic that requires an Ego throw.

MECHANICALLY INCLINED

COST: 5/10

Some people just have a knack with mechanical devices. Not just computers, but everyday appliances, electronics and office machines respond to you. Of course, you probably have some rudimentary skill with such things, but this is more than that. You are one of those people who can smack the recalcitrant hard drive, finesse the car ignition, wiggle the wires on the stereo, and suddenly everything works.

The GM may wish to treat this as a special roll if it gets out of control—or the player tries to abuse it.

MENTOR

COST: 5/10/15

You have a mentor, who might be a teacher, older relative, or simply someone you met in the course of your life. Your mentor is a wise individual, and often seems to know much more than they are willing to let on. Your mentor's availability will vary from game to game. Regardless of his availability, don't



depend upon your mentor to pull you out of trouble. Also remember that your Mentor may call upon you for tasks and errands, and how willingly and how well you perform may determine your Mentor's future attitude toward assisting you.

While you can determine your relationship with your mentor, your Gamemaster will create her. Your mentor's point value will determine how powerful the mentor is and/or how available she is.

OPTIMIST

COST: 5

You always have positive hopes for the future. This does not mean that you don't see anything bad in a situation; it means that you see past the negative factors. This optimism helps you get through hard times, although some others might find it occasionally annoying.

STATUS

COST: 5/10/15

You have an important status in society. You might be a prominent politician, a respected businessman, or someone else of significance. The higher your status, the more likely you are to get corporate and political favors, bank loans, assistance, etc.

This can also serve as a disadvantage if you are too easily recognized on times that you would rather remain incognito.

Creating New Disadvantages/Advantages

There is no reason why you should not be able to create your own advantages or disadvantages. The following guidelines should help you if you desire to do so, but remember to get your Gamemasters' approval.

Advantages are usually either beneficial personal traits, or elements in a person's life that can be drawn upon or relied upon as a source of strength. Likewise, Disadvantages are usually either detrimental personal traits, or elements in a person's life that cause despair or constant frustration.

For Advantages or Disadvantages that are basically quirks, award 5 points. Such traits are usually just an incentive for good role-playing. If they cause a stronger reaction in an individual, award 10 points. Disadvantages that may require a die throw to overcome a form of behavior, or Advantages that award a die throw bonus are worth 10-15 points. Only Disadvantages or Advantages that are overwhelmingly controlling or powerful are worth 20 points; very few Advantages or Disadvantages should be awarded an amount this high.



New Dark Secrets

The car behind us was getting closer... the headlights growing in the rearview mirror. Objects are closer than they appear...

I heard the popopop of machine-gun bursts and I instinctively hunched down, adrenaline surging through me. Tom crouched in the passenger seat as bullets pinged off the car. I slammed on the brakes, forcing our Saab into a spin, then fought to control the wheel as we slewed about. We were now facing our pursuers.

"Floor it!" Tommy yelled and leaned out of the window as the Mercedes hurtled towards us. We accelerated... their headlights were blindingly bright. One of the men hung far out a window, aimed a machine gun and I ducked—

With a crunch our windshield shattered into an opaque spiderweb of glass. Half-expecting to have my head blown off, I peeked out my window just so I could see. Tommy fired again and again—his gun seemed to have limitless ammo.

The windshield of the Mercedes caved like ours, and it started to wobble. They roared past us before they could fire again. Tommy pulled back in the car. "Just drive for awhile," he said, absent-mindedly.

"What the hell is going on!?" I demanded, now squinting through a jagged glass bullet-hole.

"Just be quiet a minute and drive. They'll be back in a second."

Then things really got really weird. The windshield started crunching and vibrating, and suddenly, it was fixed—like it had never been broken.

"What the hell—" I looked at Tommy, and he was smiling.

"It worked." He said, obviously pleased.

I was dying to ask Tom what was happening, but headlights appeared in my mirror. "They're back."

"Hold on. Whatever happens, just drive and do what I say."

I checked our speed, but when I looked down, the indicators on the dashboard seemed unfamiliar. There was a dial for altitude... I felt the pedals under my feet change, but as they solidified, I somehow knew what they were for. The nose of the Saab grew longer, the interior of the car more narrow. And Tommy was making it happen somehow.

The Mercedes was closing again.

"Okay Kevin, let's fly."

I pulled back on the wheel and the Saab rose off the highway. Wings had sprouted from beneath the doors, and the trunk had grown fins. It was impossible, but we were flying. "How can you do this?"

"We can do anything we want, Kevin, it's all just a dream."

I had read about how, with practice, you could manipulate your own dreams, but this was like no dream I ever had. It seemed like real-life to me! We swept low over a hill, and suddenly the rural landscape was gone. Instead, in the darkness ahead loomed a huge city, sprawling under an overcast night sky where heat lightning flickered between the clouds.

"Oh, my god," Tommy moaned. "They're changing things too. They've brought us to Metropolis."

I whispered it to myself like a mantra. "It's just a dream...a dream."

The following are new Dark Secrets to consider when creating your character. If you aren't able to find any of the currently existing Dark Secrets to your liking, then go ahead and create up with an event that is compelling enough to be considered a Dark Secret. It doesn't have to be easily categorized or have a catchy phrase, but it has to be capable of casting a shadow across your character's past and future.

Sometimes it is good to think of an event first, exclusive of categories; think of the event and the situation. If a precisely defined category doesn't exist, that's okay.

Always discuss your character's Dark Secret with your Gamemaster. Your Gamemaster may even want to roleplay certain events of your Dark Secret with you, as a means of helping you connect with your character and think about the possible repercussions the Dark Secret may have further down in your life. If, after this roleplay, you want to change a few elements of your character, do so. But it is best not to make any such changes after game play has formally started.

Complete Dark Secret List

CHOSEN

CURSE*

FAMILY SECRET*

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE*

GUARDIAN

GUILTY OF CRIME*

INHERITOR

INSANITY*

OCCULT EXPERIENCE*

PACT WITH DARK POWERS*

POSSESSED AND HAUNTED*

RESPONSIBLE FOR MEDICAL

EXPERIMENTS*

SUPERNATURAL EXPERIENCE*

SURVIVOR FRIEND

UPROOTED

VICTIM OF CRIME*

VICTIM OF MEDICAL EXPERIMENTS*

Dark Secrets with an asterisk (*) are described in the Kult Rulebook.

CHOSEN

"My nightmares have always been peculiar, crammed with full moons and people dancing naked around a stone altar. I stand at the head of the altar, a sharp dagger in my hands: the dagger I would use to cut out the heart of a young child lying tied to the altar. The dancing people chant a name I have never heard, yet sounds familiar: 'Baqnarat, Baqnarat the Black.' The psychologists would explain it as a neurosis caused by my repressive Catholic upbringing, full of sexual symbolism. But then I started to receive the letters signed in blood. One moonlit night, I glimpsed figures dancing in my yard; I raced out to confront them, but they were gone. At first I thought I had imagined them, but then I saw their footprints, and a familiar dagger, half-buried in the grass..."

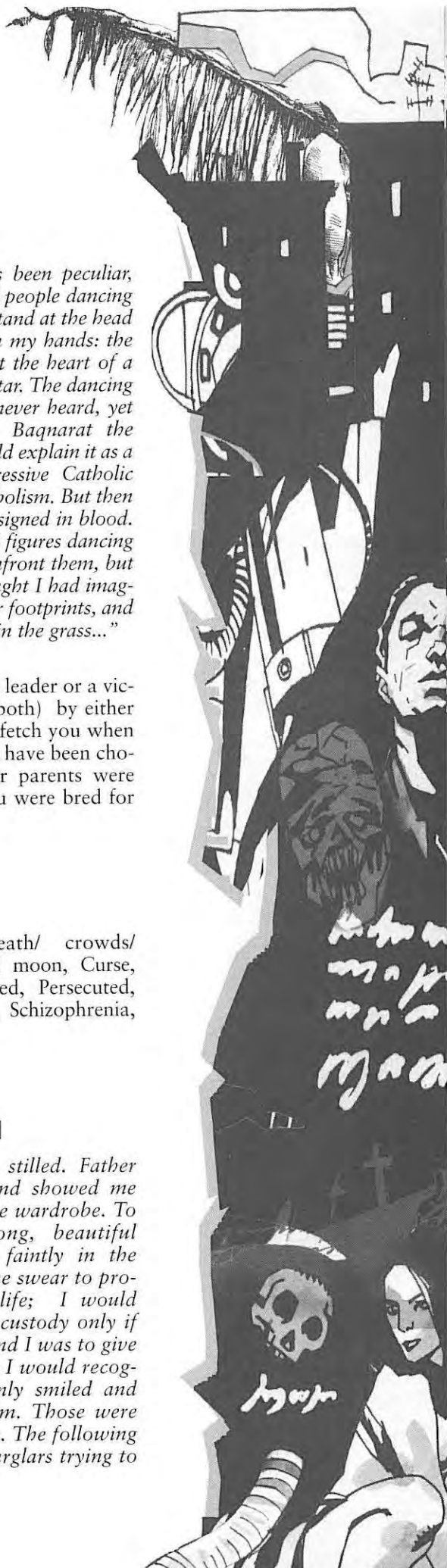
You have been chosen to be a leader or a victim (or eventually, perhaps, both) by either the gods or a cult. They will fetch you when the time is right. Perhaps you have been chosen at random. Maybe your parents were members of the cult, and you were bred for this purpose.

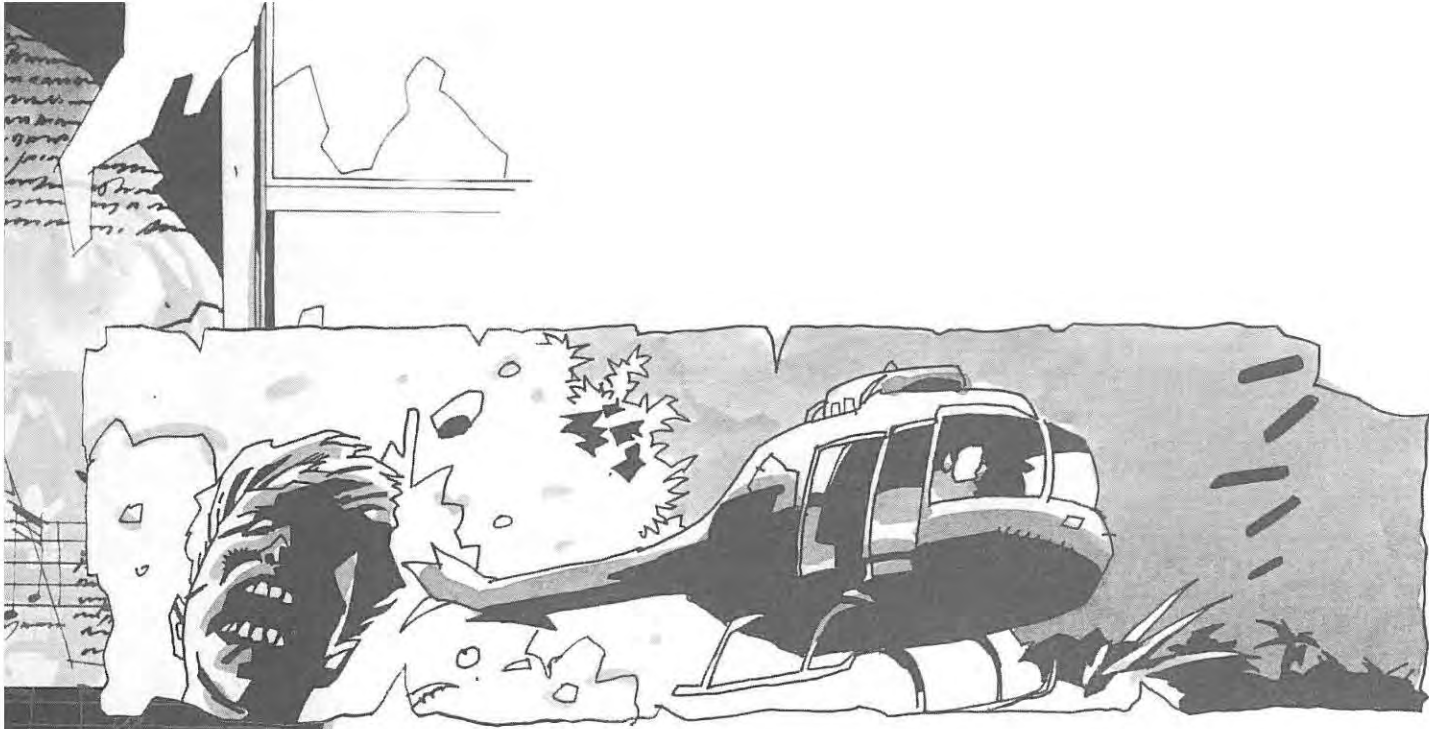
DISADVANTAGES: —

PHOBIAS: blood/animals/death/ crowds/ sacred sites/darkness/the full moon, Curse, Mental constriction, Haunted, Persecuted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Schizophrenia, Sexual neurosis, Depression

GUARDIAN

"At last my curiosity was stilled. Father took me up to the attic and showed me what was hidden in the large wardrobe. To my delight it was a long, beautiful broadsword that glittered faintly in the weak light. Then he made me swear to protect this sword with my life; I would release the sword from my custody only if the Black Raven returned, and I was to give him the sword. I asked how I would recognize this person; Father only smiled and said that I would know him. Those were my father's last words to me. The following day he was killed by two burglars trying to





get into the attic. Aided by a strength and skill I never would have thought possible, I used the sword to kill the two... things. I can't describe them any more accurately than that. After the burglary, I quit my job and fled to San Francisco, taking the sword with me."

You have been appointed the guardian of an important object until an indeterminate time in the future. Either the lawful owner will demand the return of the object, or else you will use it to fulfill some task. The task of being guardian may have passed on to you through the generations, and you may have to choose a successor one day.

DISADVANTAGES: Fanaticism,

Phobia: strangers, Curse, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Persecuted, Wanted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Sexual neurosis

INHERITOR

"The letter from France revealed that I apparently had a distant relative. Neither I nor my parents had ever heard of him, but after checking the parish register we found someone who might have been a link to this previously unknown kinsman. This relation had died and left something behind, and for inexplicable reasons this 'something' was willed to me. We were even more surprised when the inheritance arrived from France—a small, ebony figurine carved into the form of an enormous-

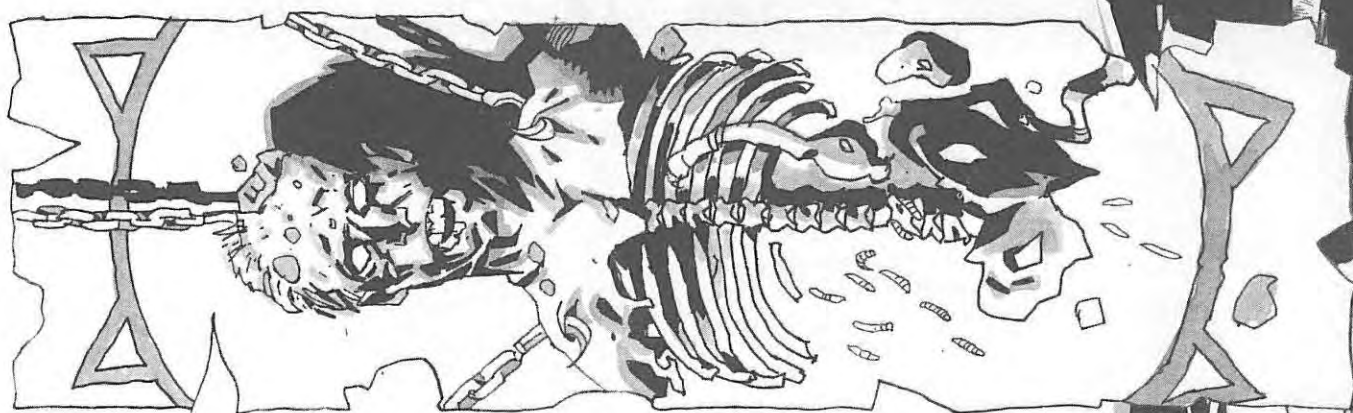
ly muscled man with fangs and claws. We started to feel uneasy from the moment we first held it, and it was soon after the figurine arrived that we started having nightmares. And burglaries. Then we received visits from men, dressed in dark suits, who wanted to buy the figurine. We wanted to be rid of this damned thing; but, somehow, we could not bring ourselves to part with it, so we refused. They threatened us, saying that we would regret our stubbornness."

You have inherited a mysterious object from a remote and unknown relative. You are fascinated by the object and refuse to give it up. Representatives of unknown agencies are out to get the object, and will try to buy or steal it from you. The object is of occult origin, and is charged with magical energy. Its side-effects may affect you adversely; on the other hand, its very presence may be somehow protecting you...

Disadvantages: Curse, Paranoia, Greed, Haunted, Persecuted, Nightmares, Phobias: strangers, Drug addiction, Rationalist

SURVIVOR FRIEND

"It all began the day Scott died. He had been working day and night at his gigantic 'scoop,' a story that would earn him the Pulitzer Prize. The only thing he had been talking about when we met were the clues and the fantastic news he had come across. Of course, he could tell me nothing specific; he had to protect his sources.



"Then he was found dead in his photo lab, drowned in some sort of developer. His news had apparently been too hot. Soon after his death, the phone calls began: whispering voices demanded that I reveal what I knew. Threatening letters arrived with postmarks from across the globe—but no return address—letters suggesting that there would be "trouble" if I told anyone what I'd learned. Mysterious people shadowed me at night; I began to feel that my house was being watched. I don't know what to do; I haven't the faintest clue what Scott was up to, but I feel like my life is threatened as well."

Someone close to you has been doing research into the obscure or the occult. When he came too close to the truth he disappeared or was killed; he might have gone into hiding, or perhaps was kidnapped. After your friend died (or disappeared), mysterious strangers began harassing you, demanding that you tell them what you learned but otherwise keep quiet about it. The problem is, you don't know what the mysterious voices seek. Perhaps there is more than one faction among those who pursue you and you must play a dangerous game just to stay alive.

DISADVANTAGES: Depressed, Oath of revenge,

Phobias: Being alone/crowds/strangers, Mental constriction, Persecuted, Habitual liar, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Rationalist, Mental compulsion, Paranoia

UPROOTED

"As far back as I can remember, we've been on the move, never stopping anywhere for more than a month. Everybody we met looked at us suspiciously or treated us like criminals. I asked father several times why this was so, but he was hesitant to answer. Then something else would happen that would force us to move on. Perhaps it had something to do with father's nocturnal expeditions. Once some men in dark suits stopped us, and took father away with them. Mother cried a lot after that and we never saw father again. Afterwards things calmed down a bit, but soon we were on the move again."

Something in your family's past has forced your family to live an itinerant life, always on the run. Maybe it is a curse or a punishment for outrageous crimes. Perhaps you belong to a religious minority.

Disadvantages: Bad reputation, Mortal enemy, Oath of revenge, Fanaticism,

Phobias: Crowds/being alone/strangers/occult incidents, Curse, Persecuted, Mental constriction, Paranoia, Wanted, Nightmares, Drug addiction, Bad luck, Sexual neurosis





New Skills

It seemed like this all-too-real nightmare had been going on for days. My wristwatch was useless—it ran forwards and backwards; sometimes the numbers were strange or there were anywhere between one and four hands on it. Tom and I wandered the streets of this ruined city searching for something he kept calling Malkuth.

It was always dark or nearly so; sometimes I could see heavy, low clouds, and flickers like lightning behind them but it never rained or even thundered. The few streetlights that weren't broken burned dimly, and all the stores were boarded up or looted and empty. It was either hot and oppressively still, or bitter cold. Plumes of steam roiled from grates in the sidewalk and I heard the sounds of huge machines somewhere deep underground.

We had abandoned our flying Saab long ago; the engine simply stopped and it had skidded softly to a halt in the middle of a street. There were a lot of wrecked cars along the roads, many of them strange models out of the fifties and sixties; huge and rounded with fins and rocket-like tail-lights. Some resembled vehicles out of a sci-fi movie. None of them looked like they had moved in a long time. Newspapers blew along the streets. I had picked one up, but the writing was blurry and looked like a crazy combination of Chinese and Arabic.

We saw people every once in awhile. Most passed us without a word or glance, some avoided us, others approached and started speaking eagerly in strange guttural languages—most sounded like German or an Arabic tongue. Their clothes varied a lot too.

We hadn't seen our pursuers since we entered Metropolis, but Tommy said they were still after us. He seemed distracted a lot, and said he couldn't alter our dream anymore. He either wouldn't answer my questions or his answers made no sense. I knew that this was like no other dream I had ever had, though.

Then a man came toward us; I could sense that he was headed

for us as soon as I saw him. He strode purposefully across the street, wearing a white double-breasted suit and a pair of dark sunglasses. We stopped as he came up to us; he was very tall and seemed to stare over our heads. He pointed accusingly at Tommy. "You shouldn't be here." His voice was raspy and heavy with a strange accent. I saw blood dripping from his hand, then I realized that he had a slash across his wrist and blood was oozing onto his sleeve and hand. He seemed not to notice.

Tommy seemed taken aback by this man. "We want to leave. Can you help us?"

Instead of answering the man pulled a small black pistol out of his breast pocket, smearing blood across his lapel in the process. He aimed at Tommy and started firing. I watched, frozen in horror as bullet after bullet tore into my friend. Warm blood splattered over my face and t-shirt and Tommy staggered back and sprawled on the sidewalk. The man put the gun back in his pocket and turned away.

"What did you do!?" I screamed, stumbling over to Tommy's side.

He didn't answer. A thousand thoughts tumbled through me. Why didn't he shoot me? Would Tom really die? His chest was a ruin of flesh, blood spurting out onto the pavement. I could see a few ribs exposed, and organs. I wanted to vomit, tasted it bitter in my throat.

"Don't leave me, man! You can't die and leave me here!" I begged him, but he just lay there, blood still pouring out of him. There was no way anyone would survive that even if we were right in front of a hospital.

Tom gasped, blood running out of his mouth, but he grabbed my hand with surprising strength. His eyes opened wide and he stared up at me. "It's a dream, change it!" His teeth clenched. "Make me live." Then his eyes closed and his head fell back on the concrete with a sickening crack.

OPTIONAL RULES

We introduce a few optional rules, which may be utilized, adapted, or ignored as the Gamemaster sees fit. Remember that the GM ultimately has the right to do as she wishes with game mechanics. She may change, or simply not use, any rule that she dislikes for whatever reason. The following rules are meant to be well-balanced, but individual GMs may disagree on a game-by-game basis.

PERFECT SUCCESSES/ DISASTROUS THROWS

If you would prefer a more simple method of determining perfect or flunked throws than is given in Kult, you may use the following method.

Only a throw of 1 is always a Perfect roll, while only a throw of 20 is a disastrous roll. If the skill score is above 20, only a second roll of 20 will produce a flunk. The results of perfect success or flunked rolls remain unchanged.

This is not meant to be mathematically accurate. It is simple, and to the point, and won't break up with the flow of the game with mathematics.

SPECIALIZATIONS

Each skill may be broken into a variety of sub-skills, or discrete portions of closely-related knowledge. For example, the skill Dagger can have subskills of fighting knife, hunting knife, kukri, etc. Players who earn a score of 13 or more in any skill may choose to specialize in a particular subskill. Successes earned using the area of specialization earn a +5 to the effect. In some cases, this will simply result in "better success" as narrated by the Gamemaster; in other cases, more tangible results will follow. For example, a greater success on a knowledge-related throw would indicate a keener understanding of a subject.

Players are encouraged to create their own subskills, but they should remain moderate and try to not create subskills that are too inclusive. For example, the subskill "single-edged weapons" or "double-edged weapons" is a little too broad for the dagger skill. Of course, Gamemasters should approve the subskills.

NEW SKILLS

The following new skills are introduced to broaden your character's capabilities. These skills are all considered "General" skills, and not Basic. Some Gamemasters might believe that there are too many skills, while others may think that there can never be enough skills. It all varies based upon individual philosophies. We only include these skills for Gamemasters or players to further refine their characters. Make sure that your GM allows these extra skills before choosing any of them for your character.

ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE

ABILITY: EGO

You are skilled in alternative healing techniques. This skill covers the spectrum of non-standard ("standard" meaning contemporary scientific) medical skills, which vary in efficacy of treating illnesses or wounds. Possible forms of medicine include acupuncture, ayurveda (an ancient Hindu healing method), homeopathy (a system based on the application of small doses of drugs that in larger doses cause symptoms of the disease being treated), qigong (a Chinese method of controlling the flow of natural energy throughout the body), shiat-su (traditional Japanese massage therapy), etc. The skill should be taken for each form of treatment known.

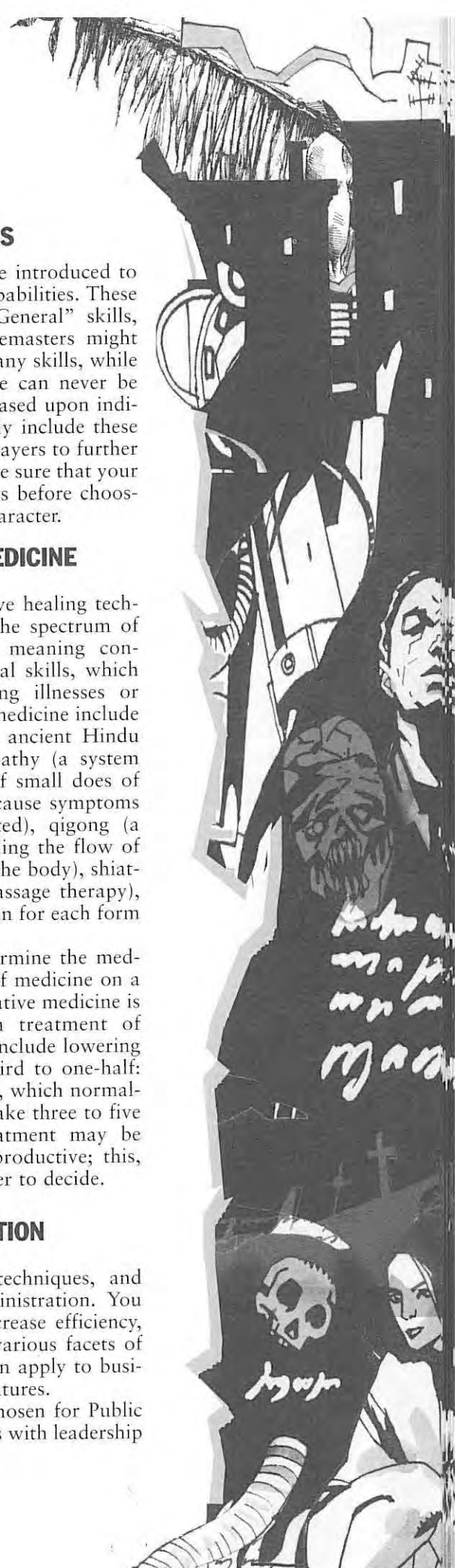
Gamemasters should determine the medical efficacy of each form of medicine on a case-by-case basis, if alternative medicine is being used for long-term treatment of wounds. Suggested effects include lowering the healing time by one-third to one-half: healing from a light wound, which normally takes one week, would take three to five days. Some forms of treatment may be fruitless, or even counter-productive; this, again, is for the Gamemaster to decide.

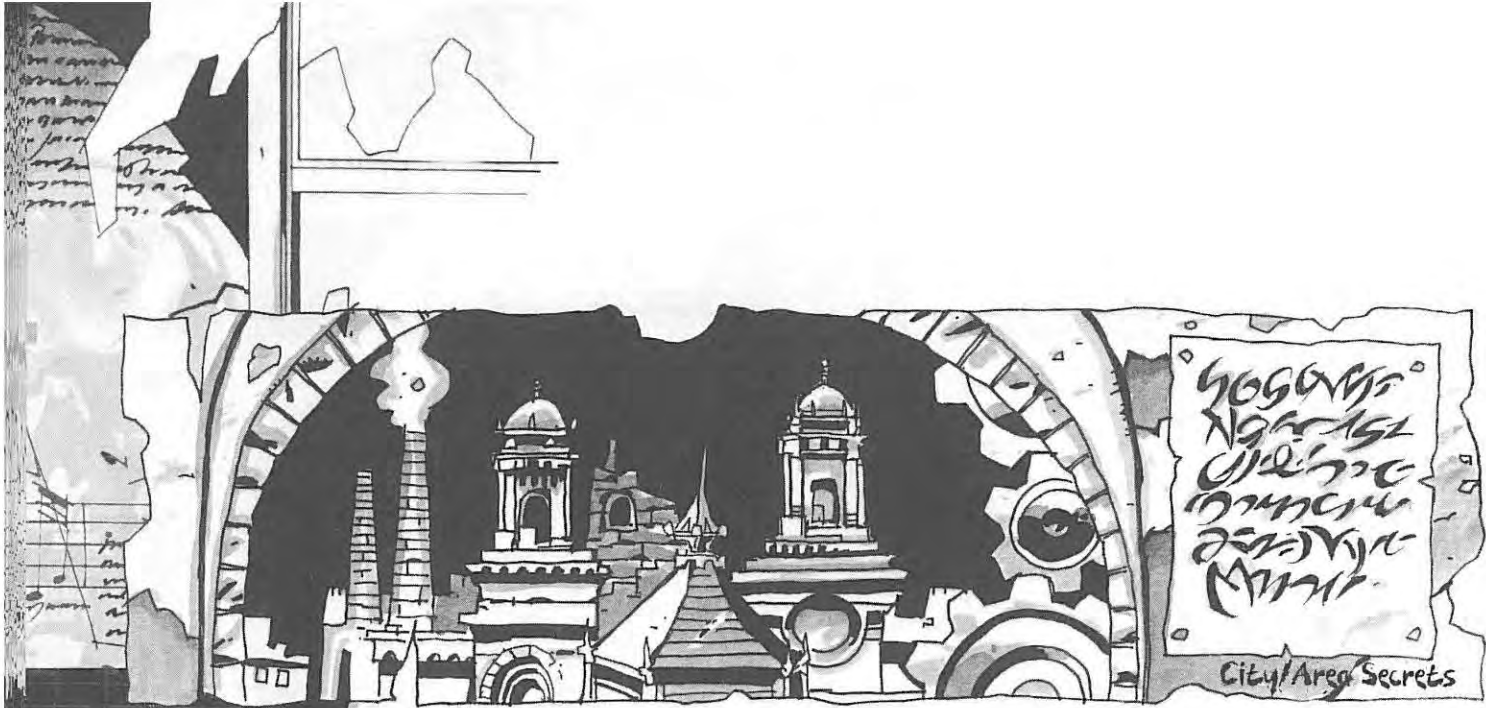
ADMINISTRATION

ABILITY: EGO

You know the theories, techniques, and principles of business administration. You can manage employees, increase efficiency, and otherwise handle the various facets of running a business. This can apply to businesses of various sizes or natures.

Alternately, this can be chosen for Public Administration, which deals with leadership in public society.





AGRONOMY

ABILITY: EGO

You know the principles of farming and agriculture. You know the best time to plant, what soil is good for planting, how to cultivate budding plants, treat ill or malnourished plants, etc. This skill can apply to backyard gardens or large farms (including the use of farming equipment).

ANIMAL TRAINING

ABILITY: CHA

You can handle and train animals. You can soothe agitated animals, guide or direct animals, and train them to do various tasks or tricks. Wild animals are more difficult to train than are domesticated animals, and animals that are unfamiliar with the trainer are also more difficult. Gamemasters should determine difficulties or bonuses, but they should be in the -5 to +5 range.

ARCHITECTURE

ABILITY: EGO

You have some education in architecture. You can design and analyze buildings and building plans, incorporating artistic value and functional design. You can locate electrical conduits, plumbing, air vents, etc. You also have some knowledge of architectural history. You are also capable of noticing architectural anomalies—where hidden rooms might be, what appears to be a newer construction, etc.

You must have a minimum skill of 13 in order to be a professional architect.

CITY/AREA KNOWLEDGE

ABILITY: EGO

You know about the history, geography, and

important features of any particular city or large regional area: Washington, D.C., Chicago, Toronto, the Raleigh-Durham area, etc. At lower skill ratings, you know about as much as a well-read tourist; at 10 or above, you know as much as a native. You can identify the best places to eat, find the local landmarks, and you know a little bit of important local history.

CITY/AREA SECRETS

ABILITY: EGO

You know the dark secrets of any particular city or city-area. You know who bribes the city officials, where the secret entrances to the sewers are, the best places for drug deals, who might be good contacts, and where to leave the body so no one will find it for at least a decade. If need be, you could probably go into hiding for a long time and not be found.

BARGAINING

ABILITY: CHA

You are skilled at the art of bargaining. This skill is good in markets when haggling over the price of tomatoes, or in the boardroom when discussing business deals.

BODY ARTISTRY

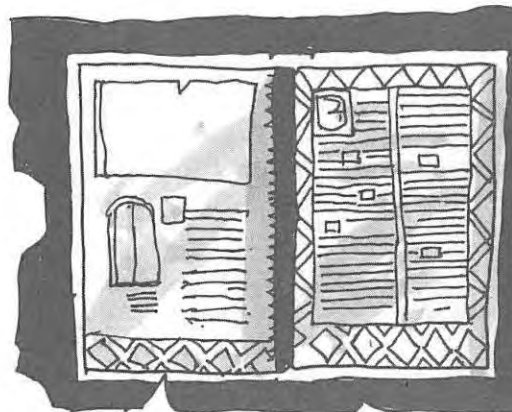
ABILITY: AGL

You are skilled in artistically altering the human body, through body piercings, tattoos, scarification, and branding. People may desire this for any number of reasons: personal statement, ritual significance, or sexual stimulus.

BUREAUCRACY

ABILITY: EGO

You know the ways of red-tape—forms in trip-



Erotica

licate, review panels, commissions and committees, authorizations, etc. You can either hide behind the bureaucracy as a means of never getting anything done (or, more actively, keeping it from getting done) or you cut through a bureaucracy and get results fast. Either way, it means you know whom to call and what to say.

CAROUSING

ABILITY: CHA

This is not simply the ability to party; anyone can do that. It is the ability to party purposefully and successfully: to overhear important facts, catch the interesting rumors, negotiate yourself into a position of being introduced to the right people, successfully pretend to be drunk (when it would be useful), get others intoxicated enough to do your bidding, etc. You should describe what you are trying to do at a particular party, and not just throw the die. Good roleplaying can modify the effect.

COSMOLOGY

ABILITY: EGO

You know the true reality. You know about the Demiurge, the shattering of the Illusions, the Death Angels and the Azghouls. You know a little about Metropolis and Inferno.

NOTE: no character should be able to start play with this skill, and it can only be developed with the Gamemaster's permission. Also, any character who knows this but has a Mental Balance above -25 does not truly believe it. They know it like most people know their horoscope: interesting information, but hardly fact. As the character is forced to face the truth, of course, MB will be affected as usual.

Lictors, Death Angels, and other creatures of Reality automatically have this skill equal to their Ego.

COUNSELING

ABILITY: PER

You have ways of easing the distressed and mentally disturbed. You can, after sufficient conversations with people, determine what their probable psychological problems are, determine possible methods of recovery, and aid them through the process. This can simply be a keen insight into the human spirit, or it might indicate professional clinical training.

CREATIVE WRITING

ABILITY: EGO

Words drip like honey from your gilded pen (or keyboard). Poetry, essays, short stories, novels, and other forms of the written arts are all covered by this skill. This is the more graceful and enjoyable form of Written Report.

Gamemasters who require more realism may ask that Creative Writing be taken separately for each form of writing that is used.

EROTICA

ABILITY: EGO

You have learned a number of the ways to enhance libidinous experiences: you know the tools, toys and techniques to heighten the sensory experience, and you know all about the various locations on the human body that are particularly sensitive to erotic stimulation. Perhaps more important, you can quickly and intuitively know what will most stimulate a particular partner.

ESCAPE ARTIST

ABILITY: AGL

You know how to extricate yourself from a variety of bindings: simple locks, ropes, etc.



Complicated locks require either the burglary or lockpicking skill. If you are bound, your skill at picking locks using either of these skills is limited by your Escape Artist score.

HAUT MONDE

ABILITY: EGO

You know the high life. You can name the best coffees, and identify the best wines. You know the most chic fashions, and where the best (or at least the trendiest) restaurants and vacation escapes are. You have an unerring knowledge of the finer things of life, partially through experience and partially through what you consider good "common sense."

HERBALISM

ABILITY: EGO

You grow and cultivate herbs for both their culinary and medicinal purposes. You can locate and identify many such herbs in the wild. You also know some applications of herbalism, from tea distilling to preparing anesthetic poultices. Real medical use of Herbalism requires either pharmacology (a Medicine specialty) or the skill Alternative Medicine.

INSTRUCTION

ABILITY: CHA

You are good at teaching others. You make dull topics interesting, and you have a good speaking style. You can be a grade-school teacher, a professor, a private tutor, or someone who is just good with explaining things.

A variant of this skill is the skill Education, a Social Sciences specialization, which means you know the theories and principles of educational development. That specialization does not make one a good teacher; it only means you have "studied it."

LOCKSMITHING

ABILITY: EGO

You can pick locks, take them apart, construct them, and make keys. This is a wide-application professional skill, used by locksmiths and criminals alike.

The very basic application of picking simple locks is covered by Burglary. This skill has more specific and technical uses and functions.

LIP READING

ABILITY: PER

In relatively good light, you can read someone's lips and understand what they are say-

ing. You may miss a word or two, but you should be able to get the gist of their conversation. At a higher score, you can understand perfectly what someone is saying.

This does, of course, presuppose fluency in the language. For foreign languages, your skill at lip reading is capped by your skill in the other language.

LORE: DREAMWORLDS

ABILITY: EGO

You have knowledge of the dreamworlds: you know of the nine dream princes, of psychagi, nachtschreck, and other creatures of dream, and you know about the Dream Wanderers. You know of various portals and a number of dreamworlds.

NOTE: no character should be able to start play with this skill, and it can only be developed with the Gamemaster's permission.

LORE: METROPOLIS

ABILITY: EGO

You know about the primal city, Metropolis. You have knowledge of the various inhabitants of the city, e.g., the Azghouls, the living Gods, etc. You also know about its various parts and "districts," e.g., the Living City, Machine City, etc. You know the theories of how to get there, and you may even know the location of a few alleged portals.

NOTE: no character should be able to start play with this skill, and it can only be developed with the Gamemaster's permission. This skill also has the Mental balance limitations as Cosmology.

Most creatures or denizens of Metropolis automatically have this skill equal to their Ego.

NATURAL HISTORY

ABILITY: EGO

You know the ways of nature. You can identify common animal tracks, you can identify some animal behavior, basic plants and wildlife, take a guess at an animal's health and probably age, etc. Maybe you're a forest ranger, or you just visited grandpa's log cabin every summer.

This is not an academic discipline; it is rarely learned in school situation. It can, however, be learned from another individual and from experience.

NAVIGATION

ABILITY: EGO

Using this skill, you can almost never get

lost. You usually require some equipment, e.g., a compass, map, sextant, etc., but you can effectively guide your way to almost any destination, regardless of the weather or time of day. This skill can be used for movement by land (the skill would then be more properly called "orienteering"), air, or sea.

SCROUNGING

ABILITY: PER

You have an unerring knack for finding useful implements and objects among what other people would consider junk. While some objects may require repair, others will be perfectly suitable. Weapons, clothing, and even food may be found this way, but within reasonable limits. Gamemasters may provide bonuses or penalties for your scrounging skill based upon where you are using it. A high Effect in this skill can occasionally produce amazing discoveries.

SIGN LANGUAGE

ABILITY: EGO

You know how to communicate in Sign Language. Most likely you know Ameslan (American Sign Language), but you may know some variant on it: either an existing form of sign language or one that is made-up. This skill must be taken for each form of sign language known.

SLEIGHT OF HAND

ABILITY: AGL

You are good at holding things without their being seen, palming objects, taking, or replacing them quickly and covertly (if they are within easy reach), producing them unexpectedly, etc. This is used by both stage magicians and criminals to great effect.

STREETWISE

ABILITY: EGO

You know the ways of the streets. Gangs are more likely to accept you, you know a few good informants, and you don't come off sounding like a poser when you use street slang (chances are, it comes naturally to you). You know a few of the prominent locations for drug deals and other criminal acts. Naturally this skill is more effective in a city the character is familiar with.

STYLE

ABILITY: EGO

You look good. You know just the right clothes to wear, what will probably come

into fashion and what is just a bad mistake. If you aren't already good-looking, you are at least dashing in that tailored suit; if you are already handsome, you can dress to kill. While it helps to be rich (clothes designers don't just give away their apparel, after all), you can throw together just the right ensemble to catch someone's eye.

Conversely, you can use your style sense to blend with certain groups (e.g., you can dress collegiate preppy and look like you've done it all your life).

TRACKING

ABILITY: PER

You can follow the tracks and trail of something or someone. You can identify the source and age of the tracks with some certainty.

Difficulties on this might vary based upon circumstances, including size of tracks, terrain, age of tracks, and recent weather conditions. The Gamemaster might require a certain Effect in order to successfully follow the tracks indefinitely.

TRIVIA

ABILITY: EGO

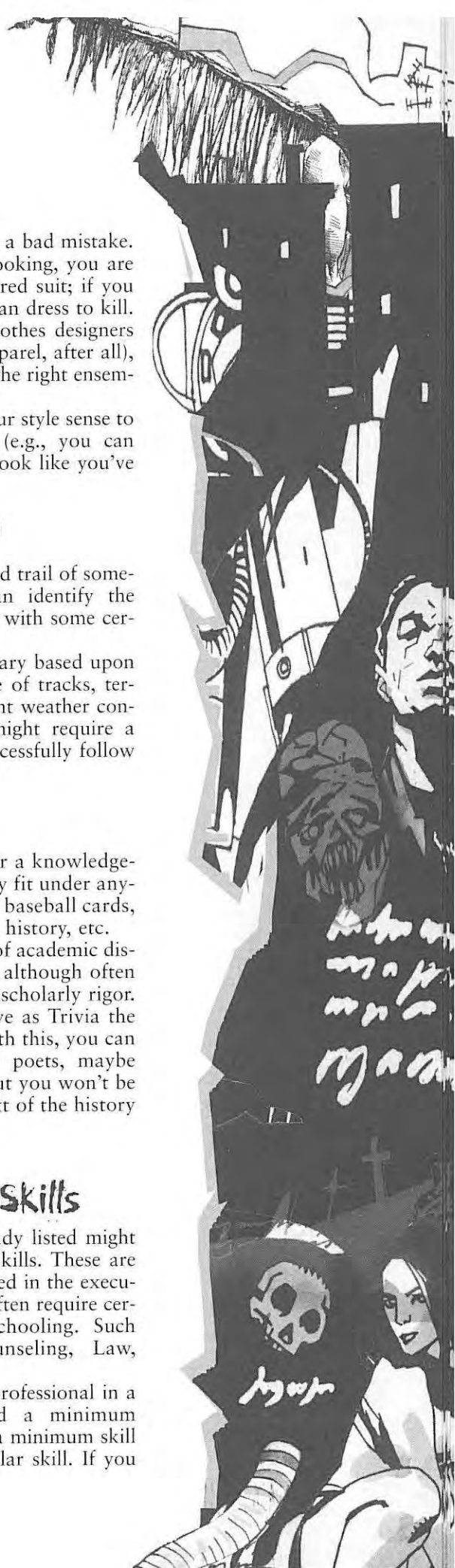
This is a catch-all phrase for a knowledge-based skill that doesn't really fit under anything else, e.g., the history of baseball cards, famous fashion designers in history, etc.

It can include knowledge of academic disciplines learned as a hobby, although often your knowledge might lack scholarly rigor. For instance, you might have as Trivia the area "Romantic Poets." With this, you can recognize a few poems or poets, maybe even a few broad themes, but you won't be able to place it in the context of the history of poetry or literature.

Professional Skills

A number of the skills already listed might be considered Professional Skills. These are skills that are required or used in the execution of some job, and they often require certification and advanced schooling. Such skills could include Counseling, Law, Architecture, and more.

In order to be a certified professional in a particular field, you need a minimum Education of 13, as well as a minimum skill rating of 10 in each particular skill. If you





have a high skill but not the requisite Education, you are capable and qualified to do the job; you just may not be professionally recognized.

Weapon Maneuvers

FAST LOAD

ABILITY: AGL

You can reload a gun in half the time it normally takes. This time is indicated under the LOAD column on weapon tables. If two figures are listed, the second figure includes the use of speed-loader. Regardless, a successful use of this skill cuts the reload time in half.

This skill must be taken separately for both bows and crossbows.

Academic Skills

Academic skills were introduced in Kult, and they are being repeated here for clarification.

There are four academic skills: *Humanities scholarship*, *Natural sciences*, *social sciences*, and *medicine*. Within each skill are a number of specializations. In general, the four primary academic skills allow for a broad range of knowledge within each discipline. A score in Humanities might allow a character a basic grasp of history, literature, and other allied fields. She can identify authors, important historical events, famous works of literature, etc. However, a more precise grasp of an academic field (e.g., identifying an obscure author or long-lost religious cult) requires an academic specialization.

In order to choose one of these specializations, you must have a minimum skill of 5 in the appropriate Academic skill. Once you have a score of 5, you can start acquiring specializations as full skills; each specialization is developed differently, at whatever rate you prefer.

A score of 10 in any academic skill indicates the equivalent of an undergraduate degree in the field. A skill of 13 indicates a masters-level degree, while a 15 indicates a doctorate.

Academic specialties do not get the +5 effect bonus that other skills receive. However, each skill that is chosen (e.g., religion, literature, art history, etc.) can be further specialized to receive the +5 bonus.

Example: *Cassandra St Cloud is an occultist with a skill of 10 in Humanities. She also chooses to specialize in Religion, giving herself a skill of 12. Within her chosen special-*

ty, she can further specialize in a particular aspect of Religious Studies (e.g., Church history, Religious Iconography, etc.), and she will have a +5 to the effect.

Note that according to Kult, you must have a minimum education of 13 in order to take any academic skills. Your Gamemaster may waive this requirement for the four primary skills, but it is recommended that you have a 13 in Education before you can begin specializing.

Martial Arts

SIMPLIFIED MARTIAL ARTS

Some Gamemasters may not like the Martial Arts rules in Kult, deciding that they are too complicated, provide undue emphasis on combat, are too powerful, or that the Ki forces, available only to Martial Artists, provide unfair advantages. Gamemasters who believe this but would still like a Martial Arts option can use the Simplified Martial Arts skill as described below.

MARTIAL ARTS

ABILITY: AGL

This skill is used in conjunction with the Unarmed Combat skill. When using the martial arts, throw one die; the result is compared to both the Unarmed Combat skill and the Martial Arts skill. If the attack throw is above the Unarmed Combat score, then the attack is missed and no damage is done. If the throw is below the Unarmed Combat score but is above the Martial Arts score, then standard damage is rolled. If a throw is successful in both Unarmed Combat and Martial Arts, then there is a damage bonus based upon the attacker's Martial Arts skill:

Score	Damage Bonus
1-10	+1
11-15	+2
16-20	+3
21+	+4

This bonus is cumulative with the Strength/Agility combat bonus.

This skill does not require particular Maneuvers; just decide what type of attack

(fist, head butt, etc.) will be attempted. This skill may also be used with Melee combat, if a particular weapon is chosen for the martial art (e.g., using a katana with kendo). This skill may be repeated for various Martial Arts (e.g., kung fu, karate, kendo), but the attacker must state in advance which art is being used before throwing the die. Characters using this skill can use Ki forces or Budo Maneuvers only with the Gamemaster's approval.

MARTIAL ARTS SKILLS GRIP

The Kult rulebook states that the Grip maneuver only immobilizes and does not cause damage. Grip attacks can also cause damage.

If a Grip attack is successful and the attacker has an opponent in her grasp, then in subsequent actions she may attempt to inflict damage by twisting her opponent's limbs (arms, fingers, etc.) against their joints by making another successful Grip throw. A failure simply indicates that no damage was done; on a disastrous failure, the attacker accidentally releases her opponent.

The same Grip chart is used for both immobilizing someone and causing damage.

SPECIALIZING

Remember that in any martial art template, you get 10 additional points to distribute among whichever skills you choose to specialize in. Note that if you add a number of points to any skill at Student level, you add the same number of points at Instructor level, and so on. This is not cumulative; you may think of it as bonuses (+3, +2, etc.), which apply to your chosen skills at each level.

Example: Peter studies Bando, a Burmese martial art (for which he will use the Karate template). He chooses to add 3 points to his base Strike skill, bringing it from 9 to 12. The base Strike skill of 15 at Instructor level is automatically raised by three points as well, to 18. At Master level, his base Strike of 20 is modified to 23, and so on. Effectively, he has a +3 to his base Strike skill at every level.

LEARNING MULTIPLE MARTIAL ARTS

It is possible to learn multiple arts, but it is difficult to attain mastery in more than one; this usually requires the sacrifice of all other activities (and experience). Each art often teaches different, even contradictory, ways of

doing things. Kicks as taught in t'ai chi are initially different from tae kwan do kicks, karate punches are different from kung fu punches, etc. At higher levels, a synthesis may be attempted, but students must start learning everything differently.

A student of a style which is deficient in a particular technique may study just that technique, if they can find a teacher. Martial arts maneuvers that are not taught within a specific martial art may be learned separately, as Budo maneuvers.

If someone intends to actively pursue multiple arts, then they must pay full costs for each martial art at each level of study. In addition, they have 10 points per art for specialization. However, neither the skills nor the bonuses are cumulative; only one skill or another may be used (and typically, the better one will be chosen). Before attempting an attack, state which style is being used.

Example: Shelton is a kung fu instructor with a Strike of 12 and a +3 bonus from specializing. He has decided to study karate as well, and (after expending the appropriate experience points) now has an additional Strike skill of 9 with a +2 bonus. He can only strike using one style or the other, and the bonuses cannot be combined.

You should remember that traditional martial arts teachers are demanding, requiring their students to study only their style and none other. While some cross-training would be possible (e.g., a kung fu student learning t'ai chi), wildly divergent arts would not normally be practiced at the same time.

This is not so much the case now, and it is not all that unusual to find people studying more than one art simultaneously. Remember, though, that studying one martial art is difficult enough; attempting to master more than one art is a task best left to the true masters.

NEW MARTIAL ARTS

It is hardly necessary to devise a specific set of rules for each and every fighting style. A few new styles are presented, though, to round out the selection of arts that were originally presented in Kult. Martial arts are universal and should not be limited to east Asia; to reflect this fact, two of the new martial arts introduced are not commonly known Asian martial arts.



No matter what martial art you choose for a character, don't choose it because of the skills or maneuvers it offers; choose an art because it would be appropriate for your character's background and interests.

ARNIS

Arnis is a Phillipino martial art which has strong instruction in weapon use. More westerners are becoming interested in the art, particularly in its weapon applications. Arnis is particularly effective against armed attackers; disarms are meant to break weapon hands.

A variety of weapons are taught in Arnis. Primary among them is a wooden stick (called an Escrima stick), used one-handed and sometimes in pairs. Other weapons include the balisong knife (also often used in pairs), the machete, and the long kris dagger.

Skill	20	30	50	75
BLOCK	9	12	15	18
DODGE	6	9	12	15
KICK	6	9	12	15
STRIKE	6	9	12	18
WEAPON: STICK	9	15	18	24
WEAPON	6	9	15	21

KUNG FU

Kung fu is a generic term for a large number of Chinese fighting styles (e.g., Hung Fot, Wing Chun, White Crane, Shaolin, et al.) One basic template is presented for overall use. It can be modified as desired—for example, a school which concentrates on Chin na (grappling and pressure points) might have better Grip skills.

Chinese martial arts also teach a host of weapon styles, including the staff, straight sword, iron whip, broadsword, spear, trident, and more. The staff is often the first weapon learned.

Skill	20	30	50	75
STRIKE	9	12	20	30
KICK	9	12	20	26
BLOCK	6	12	15	22
DODGE	6	12	15	18
GRIP	-	3	9	15
WEAPON SKILLS	6	9	15	18

SAVATE

Savate is a French kickboxing style with some wrestling. Its origins are not fully known, but they can be traced to 17th century Marseilles. The footwork and other elements of the style (including cane-fighting) were highly influenced by fencing, which used to be taught alongside Savate. Individuals who know Savate are called "savateurs."

Savate's popularity has increased in the 20th century; it is taught as part of the French army's basic training, and schools are open throughout Europe.

Skill	20	30	50	75
STRIKE	9	12	18	22
KICK	9	12	18	26
BLOCK	6	9	15	22
THROW	6	9	12	18
GRIP	6	9	12	18
WEAPON: CANE	3	9	12	15

T'AI CHI CH'UAN

T'ai chi ch'uan is a Chinese martial art rooted in Taoism. It consists primarily of defensive techniques, aimed at evading or redirecting an opponent's energy. A number of t'ai chi styles (Chen, Yang, Chen Pan Ling, etc.) exist, yet they all follow the same principles. T'ai chi attacks favor combinations of dodge, block or grip with other skills.

This art is deceptive because it is practiced and trained at very slow speeds, until true mastery is reached. Unfortunately, many Westerners learn t'ai chi as only a form of "moving meditation," like Yoga, so finding a good teacher can be difficult.

T'ai chi weapons include the straight sword, the sabre, the staff, and the spear.

Skill	20	30	50	75
STRIKE	4	9	14	20
KICK	4	9	12	18
BLOCK	6	9	18	30
DODGE	6	10	15	30
THROW	4	10	15	24
GRIP	4	9	17	30

COGNATES

A handful of martial arts styles have been presented in both the main Kult book and in this companion. These templates may be used as desired for a countless number of martial arts. Gamemasters may modify the templates as desired.

A sampling of additional martial arts is presented below, with a few historical notes, and suggestions as to which detailed martial arts can be used as templates. These cognates do not imply a historical relationship or exact correspondences between arts.

Feel free to add to the list or change it as desired. These are only suggestions, and not an authoritative declaration on the martial arts.

AIKIDO Aikido ("Way of Harmony") is one of the most pacifistic of the Japanese arts, seeking not to cause harm but to neutralize the oncoming force of an aggressor. As such, it is often debated whether Aikido is pragmatic as a fighting style or is merely an art.

Cognate: Gamemasters may modify jujitsu, if desired, lessening student-level skills but increasing grand-master level skills.

JEET KUNE DO Jeet Kune Do, or JKD, was the fighting style created by Bruce Lee, who felt that the set fighting forms taught in traditional martial arts were too restrictive. He created a free-form art, incorporating maneuvers from a variety of styles, including Wing Chun, Muay Thai, and others.

Cognate: commando (replace "Fall" with "Dodge").

KALARI PAYAT Kalari Payat is the classical fighting art of India, its origins rooted in Hindu mythology. It is alleged by some to have been the art imported to China, eventually becoming kung fu. It involves extensive training in the sword, staff, and dagger.

Cognate: kung fu (reverse the skills so that weapon skills start before unarmed combat); acrobatics is a good skill to know for Kalari practitioners

KENJITSU Where Kendo is the "sport" and "art" of classical Japanese swordsmanship, Kenjitsu is the real fighting style. Practitioners of both kenjitsu and kendo use a bokken (a solid wooden sword) for practice, which can be deadly in the hands of a master.

Cognate: kendo

MUAY THAI Muay Thai, or Thai kickboxing, is a deadly fighting style and spectator sport immensely popular in Thailand. Its popularity in the U.S. is on the rise. It incorporates kicking, punching, and elbow/knee strikes, effectively using almost the entire surface of the body as a weapon. Muay Thai students are among the most intensively trained and conditioned fighters of all the martial arts.

Cognate: Savate: trade Throw with Elbow Strike, Grip with Knee Strike, and Weapon with Fall.

MU-TAU Mu Tau is a relatively new style with an ancient past. It was designed as the successor to the Greek fighting style called the pankration, a combination-style of kicking, boxing, and wrestling. The pankration is one of the world's earliest martial arts, introduced into the Olympics in the 7th century B.C. Its descendant was designed to be flexible and capable in modern combat. Mu-tau emphasizes low kicks, boxing, and joint-breaks.

Cognate: karate: trade the Switch and Kick scores, Dodge becomes Grip, and Weapon becomes Throw.

NEI-CHIA Nei-chia is the grouping of "internal" Chinese martial arts, which emphasize Chi cultivation. Nei-chia includes t'ai chi, pa gua (based on the principles of the eight trigrams of the I Ching) and hsing-i chuan.

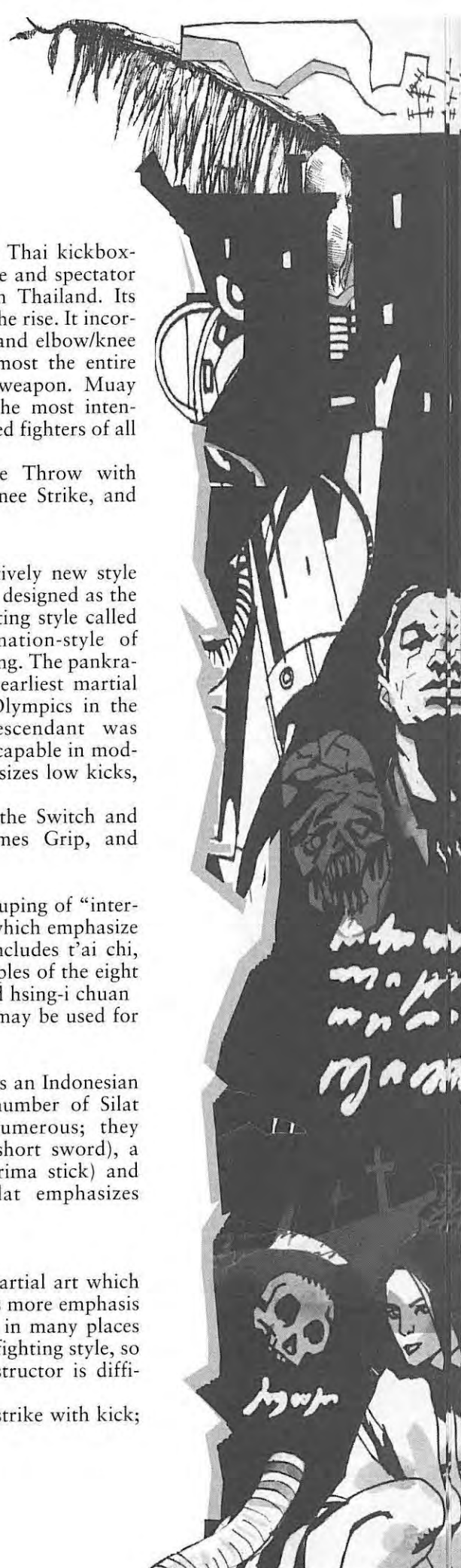
Cognate: t'ai chi ch'uan may be used for either pa gua or hsing-i.

PENCAK SILAT Pencak Silat is an Indonesian martial art. There are a number of Silat variants. Weapons are numerous; they include a parang (curved short sword), a pedang (similar to the escrime stick) and kris, or long dagger. Silat emphasizes weapon training.

Cognates: arnis.

TAE KWAN DO A Korean martial art which resembles karate, but places more emphasis on kicks. It is often taught in many places as a "sport" and not a real fighting style, so finding a good fighting instructor is difficult.

Cognate: karate (switch strike with kick; replace weapon with fall)





Creating Martial Arts

Gamemasters or players can create templates for other martial arts using the guidelines presented below. Martial arts templates can be based on real arts, or new styles created for the game; cults may very well teach their own secret fighting styles. A number of good reference sources on international fighting styles exist and are useful for this purpose.

- For Student level practitioner, distribute 36 points among your choice of skills.
- For Instructor level, distribute 55-60 points.
- For Master level, distribute 78-90 points.
- For GrandMaster level, distribute 110-125 points.

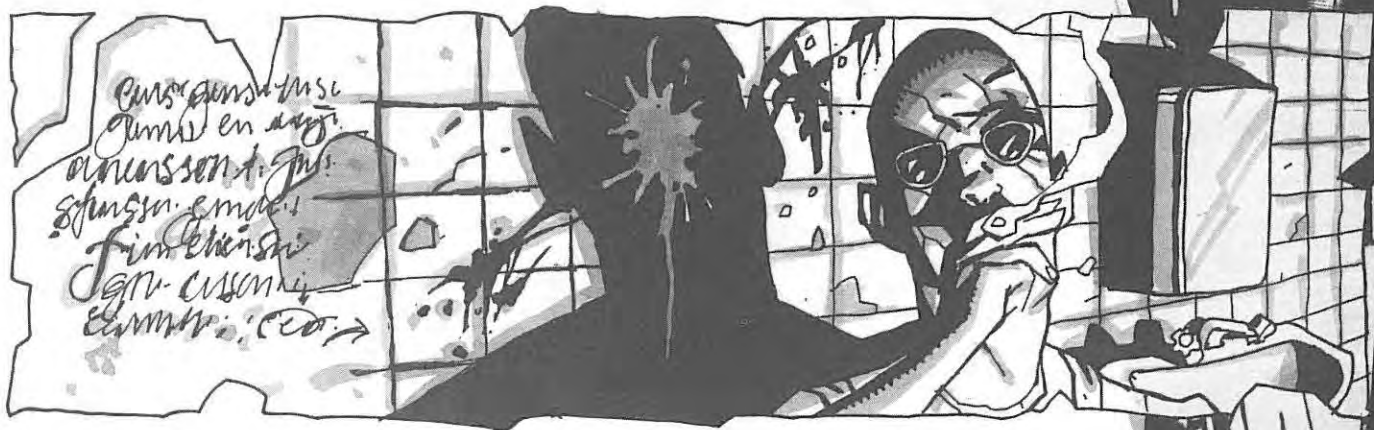
Determine which "Budo maneuvers" are available to your Art.

Some styles may be less effective than others at student level, even having fewer points to distribute than allowed; at higher levels, they can get additional points. Try to follow some consistent curve in the learning process. You can have an average distribution rate across the levels of study, or start very low and end up very high, or you can start high but not progress very well. Remember that the Gamemaster has final approval on any martial art you create.

BUDO MANEUVERS

Below is the revised Budo maneuver chart, incorporating both new Budo maneuvers and the new martial arts.

Maneuver	Ability	Martial Arts
BREAK GRIP	AGL	ALL
BREAK WEAPON	AGL	KENDO
CIRCLE KICK	STR	COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU, SAVATE, T'AI CHI
CIRCLE CUT	AGL	KENDO
COMBINE	AGL	ALL
DISARM	AGL	ALL
ELBOW STRIKE	STR	COMMANDO, KUNG FU, T'AI CHI
EVASION	AGL	ALL
FLYING KICK	STR	COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU, SAVATE
IAIDO	AGL	KENDO
KIAI	EGO	ALL
KNEE STRIKE	STR	COMMANDO, KUNG FU, TAI CHI
KNOCK OUT	STR	ARNIS, COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU, SAVATE
LEG SWEEP	STR	ALL
LIGHTNING ATTACK	AGL	ARNIS, COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU, SAVATE
ROOT	AGL	JIUJITSU, KUNG FU, T'AI CHI
SOFTEN ATTACK	AGL	COMMANDO, JUJITSU, T'AI CHI
STRANGLING GRIP	AGL	COMMANDO, ARNIS (W/STICK), JUJITSU
TIGER LEAP	AGL	COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU
TIGER PAW	STR	COMMANDO, KARATE, KUNG FU
TORNADO KICK	AGL	KUNG FU
UPPERCUT	STR	COMMANDO, KUNG FU
WHIRLWIND ATTACK	AGL	ARNIS (W/STICK), SAVATE (W/CANE), KENDO



LEG SWEEP

This is a low kick to your opponent's legs, sweeping his legs from under him and knocking him to the ground.

ELBOW STRIKE

You can strike out at an opponent using your elbow as the surface of impact. This is a strike that may begin looking like a regular punch, and is difficult to anticipate. Attempts to block are at -3.

KNEE STRIKE

You can deliver a painful, and often debilitating, strike with your knee, at your opponent's groin, kidneys, ribs (or anywhere else open for attack).

ROOT

You are rooted to the ground and cannot be knocked off your feet by an opponent's Throw or Leg Sweep attack, even if it was a perfect success. The number of people you can successfully defend against go up as your skill increases: students can defend against one attacker, instructors against two, masters against three, and grand-masters against four.

TORNADO KICK

This is a type of flying kick that allows you to strike an opponent behind you with no action penalty—you can leap up, reverse your facing and kick behind you, and return to your original facing all in one action.

KI-FORCES

The following Ki forces are treated like standard Ki forces. They can be purchased with skill or experience points, but they cannot be improved. They are not controlled by any ability.

COMBAT MIND

COST: 20 POINTS

You can read your opponents moves, knowing instinctively what action will follow; you can anticipate such moves easily. Any defensive maneuver you attempt has a +5 bonus for success.

VITALS STRIKE

COST: 25 POINTS

You have studied the meridians that run through the human body, and you are intimately familiar with the body's weakest spots; you have studied just what type of blow is necessary to cripple or kill.

Roll for a Strike, and, if successful, roll for the effect. In addition to typical damage, the following occurs:

Scratch: opponent is stunned, loses next action

Light Wound: opponent loses consciousness

Serious Wound: attacker can deliver a fatal strike if so desired

IRON SKIN

COST: 20 POINTS

You can strengthen the chi that surrounds your body, creating a protective barrier. This effectively gives you an armor rating of 3 when absorbing damage from any physical attacks.





New Equipment & Items

I was crying, I realized, the tears mixing with Tom's blood on my face, dripping down on my jeans. I willed him to be alive. I knelt there for god knows how long... blood had long ago stopped pumping out of his chest, and his hand felt like it was getting cold in mine, but I kept saying again and again... "Tommy be alive, Tommy be alive..."

Insane laughter echoed down between the buildings. There was no one in sight anywhere. Thunder rumbled distantly.

I was about to give up when his chest heaved with a terrible spasm and he sat bolt upright. I fell backward in surprise. "Oh my god, it worked," I gasped.

He turned toward me and smiled, but there was something stiff about the movement, and his eyes were... vacant somehow.

"Thanks, Kevin. You brought me back." His eyes seemed to reflect red in the streetlights for just a second and I felt a chill down my back.

It's not really Tommy.

My voice shook. "What about your wounds?"

"Oh, they will heal naturally. Don't worry." He put a blood-coated hand on my shoulder and gave me a push towards an alley. "Let's go."

"Where?" I asked weakly.

"Down." He smiled again. This time it was even more creepy than before, like an expression pasted on his face.

We started walking; he led, which was a relief because then I wouldn't have to look at his wounds—or his face. But he even walked differently...

We came to a heavy steel door in the side of a building. Tom tugged on it. "Locked." He gave it a savage yank and it tore off its hinges, landing on the ground in a clatter of torn metal. Inside an iron

stairwell led downwards. "You first, buddy."

The stair was like a parking garage stairway: dirty, dim and reeking of urine. It went down and down, every floor seemed to get hotter. The urine smell was gradually replaced by an odor like burning oil. Most of the lights were broken, and I could see Tom's eyes glowing bright red. I was in a daze of fatigue and hopelessness; I knew I should get away from him but I was even more afraid of being alone. When I stopped finally to rest he came up close to me and smiled again. It became more menacing every time. "Not much further, Kevin." He said, his voice sounding dry and raspy. The blood on his face had dried in cracking black streaks. I tried not to look down at his gaping chest. I had no choice but to go on with him.

He opened another door and we stepped out onto a gangway stretching far above a huge room filled with machines. Tommy stepped out onto the open metal mesh walkway, then suddenly doubled over. He gripped the rail with both hands, and looked up at me desperately. His eyes were back to normal blue, and his face was contorted with pain. "Help me Kevin! I'm trapped... I—" Then he stopped, and the emotion poured off his face. His eyes glowed that hellish color again. He stood up and stepped towards me, grinning.

"Tommy's gone, Kevin. I've got his body now. Your friend played with things he shouldn't have and now he's paying for it... paying dearly. You are part of that payment." His hand clamped painfully around the back of my neck, drawing my face close to his. I couldn't fight his strength... I closed my eyes and felt his cold lips touch mine as his fingers tightened on my spine.

It's just a dream...

The following equipment descriptions and price charts are meant to supplement the equipment section of Kult. The equipment that follows is primarily, but not exclusively, geared towards paramilitary equipment, which often seems to be useful to Kult characters.

Descriptions and prices of common equipment are not necessary, or provided; you don't need a game supplement to tell you the contemporary cost of jeans and a tee-shirt.

Miscellaneous Weapons

STUNGUN A small rectangular object with twin prongs in one end. These prongs deliver 40—90,000 volts upon contact, which (depending upon length of contact), can cause confusion, disorientation, weakness, and a loss of balance.

Stun “guns” do not do typical damage, nor do they require their own skill. Use of a stungun requires a successful Agility check; Damage levels are as follows:

Scratch: partial confusion & disorientation; lose actions for remainder of round.

Light Wound: confusion & disorientation; lose actions for remainder of round and the round following.

Serious Wound: confusion & disorientation; no actions possible for next five rounds.

Fatal Wound: loss of muscle control and cognition for 15 minutes.

Damage bonuses do not apply to use of this weapon.

PISTOL CROSSBOW This is a small pistol-mounted crossbow. They come in cheap models and expensive, more reliable versions. The figures are for the more dependable models.

Melee & Throwing Weapons

A variety of weapons are discussed here, from classical bladed weapons to contemporary variants. Even though Kult has a contemporary urban feel, classical bladed weapons may still come into play. Some players seem to find uses for them, they end up as inheritances or ritual objects, and so forth.

DAGGERS

All weapons in this category require the skill “Dagger.”

BALISONG KNIFE Balisong knives originate in the Phillipino martial arts, but they have become popular worldwide. They are daggers with handles that split lengthwise to rotate around the blade for easier concealment. They can be opened and unlocked quickly, with one hand. The handles can be of any material. Damage varies per size, although it is usually as for a small knife or a dagger.

DAGGER This is a catchall phrase for a number of medium-sized, well-constructed daggers, including small Bowie knives, “Arkansas toothpicks,” hunting knives, main-gauches, etc. Most blades fall under this category.

FIGHTING KNIFE This is a catchall phrase for a variety of sturdy, large-bladed knives, including bayonets, Bowie knives, long daggers, military-issue combat knives (U.S.M.C., Legion Etrangère, etc.) blades, and so forth.

“KNUCKLE” KNIFE Knuckle knives (also called trench knives, because of their use in trench warfare during WWI) are typically large fighting knives with a combination hand-guard/brass-knuckles. These daggers can be used in regular knife fighting or can make a punch much more deadly.

The blade does damage as a fighting knife; the knuckles add +2 to a punching effect. Some knuckles are serrated; serrated knuckles (a rather cruel innovation) add +5 to a punching effect.

KUKRI KNIFE The Kukri blade is the traditional weapon of the Nepalese Gurka warriors, who have been part of the British, Indian, and Nepalese armies. It is a chopping weapon, and not meant for thrusting; it is capable of amputation and even decapitation if used by skilled combatants.

The large blade of a Kukri is recurved, with a weighted spine and the edge on the concave side of the blade; these elements contribute to a devastating chopping effect. Additionally, the kukri is effective for chopping wood, digging, and other camping functions.





SMALL KNIFE This is another catch-all phrase for any small, usually concealable weapon, including most boot knives, butterfly knives, small skinning blades, wrist knives, folding knives, etc.

SURVIVAL KNIFE Survival knives are large-bladed weapons, sometimes serrated on the back of the blade. The hilt is a hollow compartment, often with a compass in the screw-off cap. It has multiple uses when in the wilderness or other survival situations. It does damage as a fighting knife or dagger.

TANTO KNIFE These are typically full-tang all-steel daggers, ideal for thrusting and slashing. The better models are renowned for their construction and design, capable of penetrating steel. Tanto knives do damage as standard daggers.

SWORDS

The following weapons all require use of the skill "Sword."

BROADSWORD This category will include most straight-edged weapons: medieval European weapons, Chinese long-swords, basket-hilt claymores, etc.

KRIS A large weapon with an undulating blade, originating in Phillipino and Indonesian martial arts. The undulating blade is an Indian influence which creates larger wounds and penetrates between bones. Treat a Kris as a short sword, with +3 to the effect.

Indonesian lore tells of the spirit powers that kris-wielding Silat masters possess, capable of inflicting damage even by stabbing someone's shadow or merely pointing with the dagger. These legends say that a kris will rattle in the sheath to warn its owner of danger.

SABRE This category includes most curved slashing weapons, including the tulwar, scimitar, and contemporary military sabres.

SWORD CANE This weapon is an anachronism, but may still be found in the hands of a dapper gentleman. The cane is a sheath for a long, thin blade. Some may be modified to become umbrellas, rendering them less obvious.

SHORT SWORD

This is a broad category that includes a number of weapons, in addition to the standard medieval style short-sword:

GLADIUS, a traditional Roman short sword

MACHETE, or large chopping instruments used primarily for clearing through brush and cutting wood

WAKIZASHI, the Japanese short sword that was paired with a katana in the samurai outfit.

TWO-HANDED SWORD

This includes the Scottish claymore and other heavy two-handed weapons. Not terribly elegant as far as weapons go, but very intimidating.

IMPACT WEAPONS

The following weapons require the skill "Impact weapons."

BOKKEN A solid wooden sword used in the practice of kendo and kenjitsu. Although a practice weapon, it can still be deadly, and there are tales of Japanese swords masters who only carried the bokken for defense, and not a bladed weapon.

A bokken is technically an impact-weapon, but is treated as a sword by those skilled in its use. Otherwise, it does damage as a baseball bat.

CANE Canes are not usually meant to be weapons, but solidly-made canes can serve as weapons in times of need.

MACE A variety of weighted weapons fall under this category: they may have flanged heads, spikes, studs, etc.

TACTICAL BATON A black 25 cm chrome baton that, with a flick of the wrist, telescopes to 66 cm in length. This concealable weapon is used for blocking and striking, and is a favorite of law enforcement officials and bodyguards.

Communications Equipment

TACTICAL RADIO

Heavy-duty radios can have one or two frequencies, with a 2-5 km range; they come with belt-pouches.

HEADSET Optional equipment for a tactical radio; includes ear & mouth piece, adjustable headband, and a clip for securing to clothing.

CLIP SPEAKER/MICROPHONE Optional for a tactical radio; this is an easily-retrieved mike-piece that clips to a military epaulet or assault piece.

CELLULAR PHONE A cordless telephone which can be used anywhere except deep underground, cellphones are becoming very common. They are not tied to a specific base, but can hold a connection even while the user is talking by switching the link on the fly from 'cell' to 'cell.' Come in a wide variety of models, with varying 'talk-time' (battery life while talking) and features.

Miscellaneous

BINOCULARS A variety of binoculars can be found. Some models come with many functions and designs, including waterproofing, rangefinder and nightlight.

CLIMBING HARNESS A nylon harness/rigging for the chest and legs, with D-ring attachments and utility loops, this is used in rappelling and climbing situations, suitable for military operations.

HANDCUFFS These are military/police issue, not novelty items. They can have chain or hinge connections, and typically come either in chrome or black-plate.

FLASHLIGHTS Cheap flashlights can be purchased at drugstores. Heavy duty flashlights, the type used in military and police operations, are impact resistant, offer brighter light and longer ranges, and have lanyard rings & hand-straps. They come in a variety of lengths.

The miniature lights are easily concealed; kits can be purchased to attach them to the bottom of handgun grips, placing the light

parallel to the barrel.

The longer size (38 cm and above) lights can easily be used as impact weapons, doing damage as steel pipes.

MINI-MONOCULAR Monoculars are single lens for viewing objects at a distance. A mini-monocular is easily concealed, and can bring objects eight times closer. It can be hung from a neck cord.

RAPPELLING EQUIPMENT This includes descenders, a pair of ascenders, carabiners, emergency belts, rappelling gloves, etc.: all the miscellaneous equipment used in rappelling operations.

RAPPELLING LINE This strong tensile line often comes in black or olive drab.

Weapon Accessories

SHOTGUN SHELL SIDE-SADDLE This side-saddle attachment for the side of shotguns holds six shotgun shells.

UNIVERSAL HOLSTER These holsters are designed for right or left-handed draw, and can be worn on the hip, or waist for side-draw or cross-draw.

Apparel

ASSAULT VEST Assault vests typically have inner pockets, four to nine pouches for ammo clips (depending upon the size of the ammo), utility pockets, and loops for a gun belt. They usually come in black or olive drab.

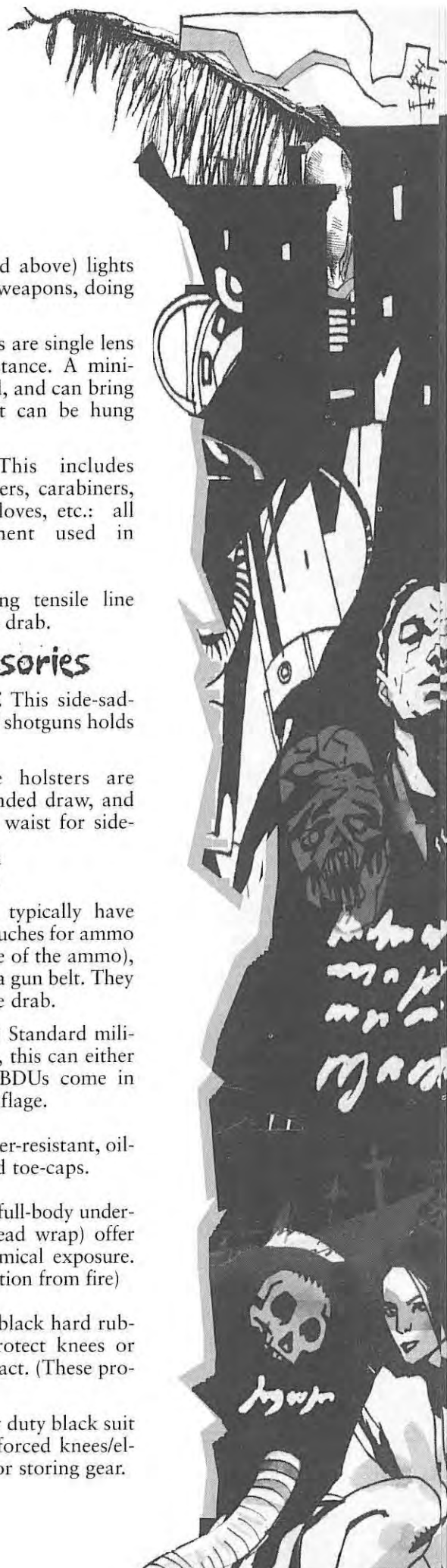
BATTLE DRESS UNIFORM (BDU) Standard military or paramilitary clothing, this can either be two-piece or a jumper. BDUs come in black, navy, gray, and camouflage.

COMBAT BOOTS Durable, water-resistant, oil-resistant, reinforced heels and toe-caps.

PROTECTIVE UNDERWEAR This full-body underwear (including socks and head wrap) offer protection from fire and chemical exposure. (This provides 5 points protection from fire)

PROTECTOR CUSHIONS These black hard rubber caps with soft liners protect knees or elbows from abrasion or impact. (These provide 3 points protection.)

TACTICAL SQUAD SUIT A heavy duty black suit (jacket and pants) with reinforced knees/elbows and multiple pockets for storing gear.



BOWS	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
HAND CROSSBOW	0	35	.6	L	100
BOLTS		(5)	0	27	25
DAGGERS/KNIVES	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
BALISONG DAGGER	0	22	.3	(I)	30
BOOT DAGGER	0	18	.3		50
BOWIE KNIFE	0	35	.4		100
HUNTING KNIFE	0	28	.4		75
KNUCKLE KNIFE	0	30	.4		25
KUKRI	0	43	.6		30
MILITARY ISSUE KNIFE	0	30	.3		50
SURVIVAL KNIFE	0	30	.4		100
TANTO KNIFE	0	28	.3		50
SWORDS	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
KRIS	0	42	.6		30
MACHETE	0	46	.5		10
SHORT SWORD	0	71	.6		200
SWORD CANE	0	89	.4		50
TWO-HANDED	0	148	2		400
IMPACT WEAPONS	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
BOKKEN	0	100	1.2		50
CANE	0	89	.4		50
ESCRIMA STICK	0	71	.4		10
TACTICAL BATON	0	66	.6		70
WEAPONS ACCESSORIES	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
SHOTGUN SIDESADDLE	0				25
UNIVERSAL HOLSTER	0				60
COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
TACTICAL RADIO	0			L	400
CLIP SPEAKER/MIKE	0				70
HEADSET	0				90
MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
BINOCULARS	0	20	1		300
CLIMBING HARNESS	0				75
FLASHLIGHT, MINI	0	12			10
FLASHLIGHT, MINI (GUN ATTACHMENT)	0	12			60
FLASHLIGHT, SMALL	0	18			25
FLASHLIGHT, MEDIUM	0	35			30
HANDCUFFS	0				40
MONOCULAR, MINI	0	10			60
RAPPELLING EQUIPMENT	0				200
RAPPELLING LINE	0	45		M	100
APPAREL	AVA	LENGTH	WT	L/I	COST
ASSAULT VEST	0				100
BATTLE DRESS UNIFORM	0				30
COMBAT BOOTS	0				100
PROTECTIVE UNDERWEAR	0				75
PROTECTOR CUSHIONS (PAIR)	0				40
TACTICAL SQUAD SUIT	0				100



Character Background & Psyche

I hadn't been to Oakmont, Missouri since I was seven years old, and one of my two memories of that trip was my grandfather, lying peacefully in his open coffin. They didn't tell me then how he had died. The other memory was my grandmother, wailing for hours on end as she greeted the endless procession of relatives at the funeral home. She died just a few weeks later. No one told me then that she had committed suicide. Only my mother went back to Oakmont that time to handle the arrangements.

I had vague recollections from previous visits of the small town square, with the stereotypical hall in the center surrounded by quaint, family-run drugstores, groceries, hardware stores and five-and-dimes.

But now my mother was dead and I was coming back to Oakmont, to dispose of the family property in this nowhere town that she had never had the heart to sell off. I was stiff and tired after the monotonous cornfield-flanked two-hour drive from Columbia, and not really looking forward to staying in some quaint little hotel where everyone wanted to know your business. Being your typical

city boy, I didn't go in for idle chit-chat or prying questions disguised as friendly interest.

The mid afternoon sun was oddly pale in the cloudless sky as I drove into that town square. It looked eerily just as I had remembered it. There were even several cars that looked like they were made in the sixties, all fins and massive rounded shapes. My rental Nissan looked alien next to them, and I wasn't the only one who seemed to think so. As I drove through town, people seemed to stop in their tracks to watch me go by—literally. People would pause on the sidewalk, their heads rotating to track the passing of my small red car, like some invading Japanese machine among a club of Buicks and Plymouths. It was a bit unsettling.

I pulled in front of the California Motel, my oddly-named inn, which I located with ease. There must be all of ten streets in Oakmont, laid out on a nice neat grid. I hauled out my suitcase, acutely aware of the gaze of two old gentlemen on the motel's front porch. Here we go, I thought. I smiled insincerely, hiding behind my Ray-bans.

"Afternoon." One of them nodded.

The California was not as painfully small as I



had feared, sporting thirty rooms, a real restaurant and a small pool out back.

I passed the hotel sitting room, where an old woman in a print house dress sat staring at an ancient Magnavox television. On the screen seemed to be some grainy World War II footage. Probably the History Channel, I thought, then wondered if they had cable here. Talk about hell! Well, surely satellite dishes at least.

The front desk was unmanned, and I resentfully rang the bell on the counter, noting from the number of wooden cubbyholes with keys that there were not too many people staying at the California tonight.

A young woman emerged after a short delay. She was perhaps in her mid-twenties, slightly overweight, short blonde hair, conservative dress under a grubby yellow cardigan. "You must be Mister Dinwiddie." She barely glanced up at me through the entire check-in process. I realized she was one of the few people I had seen in Oakmont who was near my age.

My room opened onto the courtyard and the pool. There were five people out there, two elderly men standing at the shallow end chatting, and a couple with a boy of about five who must be their grandson. The boy splashed in the water while they watched him uncomfortably from their chaise lounges. Determined not to be intimidated by a bunch of retirees and a child, I went out for a swim. I don't know if it was my Speedo or just the fact of my presence, but the minute I emerged, all activity stopped, and everyone's gaze—even the boy's—locked on me. I hate it when people stare at me.

And they didn't look away either, their eyes following me to the chair where I threw my towel and reluctantly surrendered my sunglasses, to the pool's edge where I dove in.

I came up for air and everyone was pointedly looking away—except the boy, who continued to look at me, his expression blank.

I swam a few laps, then got out and went back to my room without another look at them. Just as I got to the door, I heard the phone ringing. Who would be calling? I fumbled with the key, rushed in, and picked up the receiver—only to hear a strange rising and falling mechanical whine; a sound you never heard on a modern phone. It was eerie somehow. I put the receiver down. It rang again, almost immediately. I hesitated, then picked it up. "Hello?" I heard music playing; something I knew, but it was so dim and tinny across the line I couldn't place the tune...

"Leave town now, or you never will." *Click*

The threat was somehow more chilling because the voice was that of a child, a boy of no more than six or seven, but it was spoken with a menace no child could summon.

What was I thinking? This was crazy! Obviously it was some kid playing a prank. I got dressed, determined to go out and get dinner.

With sunset had come a chilling breeze, and it was getting dark and downright cold as I walked towards the town square. Surely there would be someplace I could get a light meal, though I despaired of finding a reassuring chain restaurant here.

I was surprised though to find a McDonald's just off the square. It was one of the old ugly ones, red and white tile with the big glowing yellow arches running right through the slanted roof. But a Big Mac is a Big Mac, after all. I went in, almost blinded by the fluorescent glare.

There were a few customers munching on their fries, but no one in line. It was so quiet that I could actually hear the Muzak, though of course the song had been so badly butchered that I couldn't recognize it.

I shuffled up to the counter, and was greeted by an elderly woman in cat-eye glasses who looked vaguely familiar.

"Hello dear, welcome! What can I get you?"

"Uhh, I'll have a Big Mac and..." At that instant my mind put words to the tune playing in the background:

...they gather for the feast.

They stab it with their steely knives,
but they just can't kill the beast."

Then I recognized the woman behind the counter: my grandmother. But she's dead; she killed herself twenty years ago!

The woman smiled sweetly. Yes, it's me, Karl. I'm afraid that Oakmont is your little hell now too. Would you like fries with that?"

I ran for the door, dimly aware that everyone was watching me. I ran for the hotel, determined to get in my car and drive far from this place, far from the Motel California. But that song from the seventies echoed in my head again...

Welcome to the hotel California. You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave...

We talked a bit earlier about developing a background as part of the process for creating your character; here we'll delve a little deeper into the concept and provide some ideas to help you flesh out your character. While character development is important in any role-playing game, it is particularly crucial in a game like Kult. A modern horror game depends on 3-dimensional characters just as a good book or movie does. If the protagonist of a book seems to do things contrary to his personality (or worse, not enough of his personality is revealed to help the reader begin to understand why the protagonist has done something), the reader will not be inclined to relate to or care much about that character.

The same is true of a role-playing game, except now the responsibility for creating a fleshed-out character falls on the GM and—principally—you. If your character seems flat and dull, uninteresting to play, you have no one but yourself to blame.

While a very important part of your background is the Dark Secret, it may not necessarily be the single driving force behind everything your character does. Humans are generally motivated by a number of goals, short and long-term. On the other hand, it's important to keep the dark secret in mind when thinking about your character's actions, because it might influence him, if even on a subconscious level.

FAMILY HISTORY & UPBRINGING

Nature or Nurture? Is your character the product of the genetic input of his ancestors, or is his psychology the result of his upbringing? It is pretty safe to assume these days that Skinner was half-right, and that the composition of a person's psyche is a combination of genetics and environment.

It's not necessary to draw up your character's family tree back 20 generations, though it might add something to have a bad egg or two in your background (before doing this you should get your GM's approval). More and more psychological conditions are being traced at least partially to genetic origins. (However, claiming to be a descendant of Vlad the Impaler has gotten very, very old.)

On the other hand, it's likely that your character's compulsive use of a certain brand of toothpaste is because his mother found

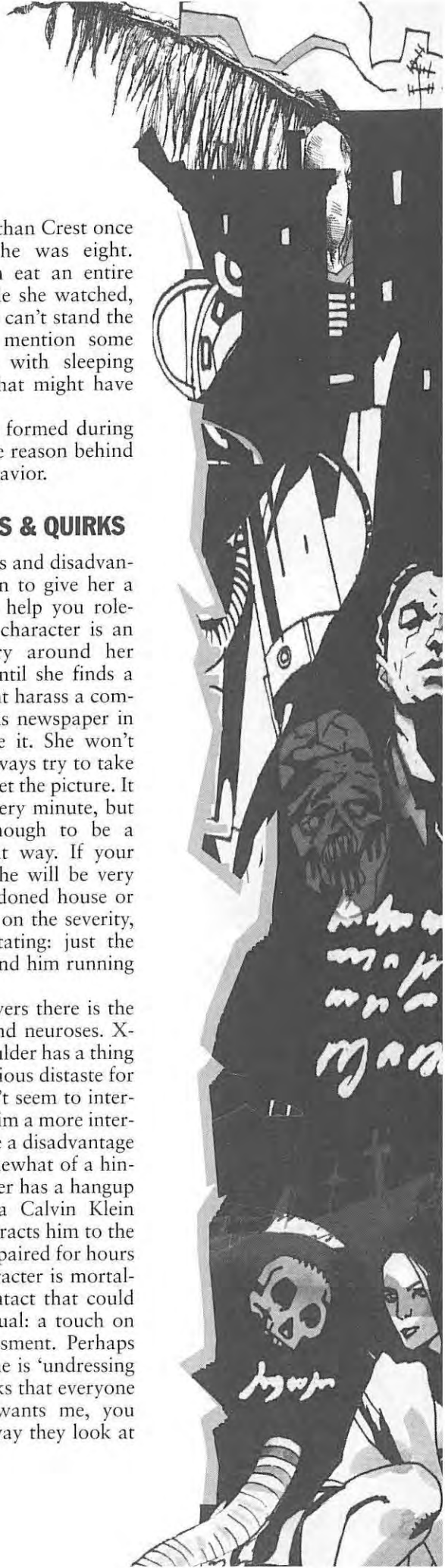
out he used something other than Crest once during a sleepover when he was eight. Mommie Dearest made him eat an entire tube of the other brand while she watched, until he threw up. So now he can't stand the taste of spearmint, not to mention some other negative associations with sleeping over with his little friends that might have become associated...

Much of our personality is formed during childhood. Look there for the reason behind much of your character's behavior.

ADS/DISADS AS TRAITS & QUIRKS

Your character has advantages and disadvantages for another reason than to give her a Mental Balance; they are to help you role-play that character! If your character is an ecomaniac, she might carry around her empty Cola can for hours until she finds a recycling receptacle. She might harass a complete stranger who throws his newspaper in the trash rather than recycle it. She won't have a car but a bike, will always try to take public transportation... you get the picture. It might not be on her mind every minute, but it's something important enough to be a disadvantage, so play it that way. If your character is arachnophobic, he will be very reluctant to go into an abandoned house or even a basement. Depending on the severity, this could be almost debilitating: just the sight of a spiderweb could send him running from the room.

For more sophisticated players there is the realm of sexual repression and neuroses. X-Files fans know that agent Mulder has a thing for porn movies and a mysterious distaste for drawstring pants. This doesn't seem to interfere with his job, but makes him a more interesting character. In Kult, to be a disadvantage it would have to become somewhat of a hindrance. Perhaps your character has a hangup about redheads, or seeing a Calvin Klein underwear advertisement distracts him to the point where he is mentally impaired for hours afterward. Perhaps your character is mortally afraid of any physical contact that could possibly be construed as sexual: a touch on the shoulder is sexual harassment. Perhaps she is convinced that everyone is 'undressing me with his eyes.' Or he thinks that everyone is attracted to him. "She wants me, you know. I can always tell the way they look at me; she was hot for me."





These are just a few examples. You need to look at your character's disadvantages—and advantages!—and ask yourself why. Why is she a habitual liar? Is she embarrassed about something in her past? How can he endure pain? Does he have some training in mental discipline that allows him to block pain? Why does she have powerful faith? Did she once witness what she believed was a miracle?

You should review your character's advantages and disadvantages at the beginning of every game session and keep them handy at all times. Maybe jot down a few notes for ideas on how to play them. After a few sessions it will become second nature to you, and make for a more enjoyable play experience not only for you but the GM and your fellow players.

PERSONAL GOALS

Everyone has a goal in life; most people have several. It can range from wanting to be the Emperor of China to surviving until tomorrow. Your character should be no less human. Unless she is independently wealthy, she has a job, which may help or hinder her as she pursues the game agenda. How does this fit in? RPG characters tend to be loners, but surely yours has other friends, maybe even a boyfriend. Is he another PC, an important NPC, or someone we hardly see in play? If the last, they are either very understanding or won't be a boyfriend for long. The GM and Player should not be afraid to explore this aspect of the character (hopefully in a more realistic manner than television shows where the protagonist has a new girlfriend every week, who dies conveniently at the end of the episode). Does your character have career goals? Does she want to settle down in the suburbs or travel the world? Does he want to own a beach house in Malibu, meet Keanu Reeves,

or end world hunger? Or does he just want to see next week's episode of "Melrose Place?"

Unless your character is obsessed with the game plot or actively chased by Lictors, he has a regular life to lead. And maybe even Lictors can't stop him from seeing "Melrose."

ORGANIZATIONS

The non-player characters are all members of secret, powerful organizations (at least they seem to be, don't they?). It can add a lot to the player background to allow him to be in certain organizations as well. These don't need to be shadowy cults to be useful either. Or maybe they just don't seem to be shadowy cults on the surface...

Maybe your character was in a fraternity or sorority in college; or a former member of an elite military or government organization; membership can come in useful later in life for making contacts, getting information, etc. Maybe he is a Mason. Perhaps your character is in a professional organization. Things as bland-seeming as computer user-groups, local Bar associations, martial-arts classes, even party circuits, can be methods for your character to meet people and learn useful information. You and your GM should develop this as much as possible at the beginning, and your GM should have a copy of your character's social and professional 'schedule' so she can use it in the game. Some things can be added later of course if they don't contradict what has already been established.

Hopefully the players will share at least some of these affiliations, so that the gatherings can be role-played. A running a few scenes of relatively 'normal' activities can help break up the more surreal, Kultish events, and if handled correctly, can provide contrast to make the horrific even more shocking.



A Kult Game

Terry K. Amthor

Before I launch into this little exposition, I should admit that I have a definite bias towards a certain direction of Kult play. I've never been a 'gratuitous blood-and-guts' fan, preferring a more subtle horror where the everyday world is a place of unspeakable terror.

I should also mention (as we do on the game) that Kult is not a game for kids. Violence and drugs—even in a role-playing game—have to be kept in perspective. And role-playing the sometimes inevitable sexual situations requires maturity and open-mindedness.

"Splatterpunk"

This is the violent, bloody, even gory aspect of horror, perhaps best typified by Clive Barker's inspirational *Hellraiser* movies. To my mind, unless used cleverly in tandem with other plot elements, this kind of gaming gets old pretty quick. It's like the *Friday the Thirteenth* movies, after awhile you become desensitized to Jason and you don't care about those camp counselors. It all becomes cartoony and silly, and that is not what Kult is about (though I think there can be a certain twisted humor to Kult; more on that later). *Hellraiser* had its moments (especially the first movie), but at times it crossed over into dumbness.

However, I think there is a place for brutal ultraviolence in Kult. I've never been so terrified in a movie theater as when I saw *Alien*. While it was technically science fiction, it was really a gothic tale of very personal horror. The crew faces this... thing... what is it? It is constantly changing; we don't even see its entire body at once until the end of the film, and then after it seems to have transformed several times. It becomes whatever it needs to in order to survive. Worse, it can get inside you, living in your gut, feeding on you, until it's ready to You are only a host... ugh.



WHAT COULD BE SCARIER? CREEPIER?

And through the movie it stalks through the ship, its intelligence and abilities uncertain. Its human opponents constantly underestimate it, and for that they pay dearly.

Another example of a successful mix of graphic violence with psychological horror is the movie "Seven", where cops in a big city are on the trail of a man who is killing people who he believes are guilty of the seven deadly sins. The film paints an evocative, Kult-like picture of a dark, rainy metropolis filled with crime and fear. Every scene is dimly lit, including—mercifully—the grisly crime scenes.

Obviously the GM is going to be the guiding force in what type of Kult game this is going to be, but the players also have considerable influence. If you encourage the GM with request for a graphic description of the dismembered body, he is going to get the idea that you want more of it! On the other hand, if you are uncomfortable with the level of violence and brutality, feel free to express it calmly to the GM, in private if you prefer. Most GMs would much rather have a player voice his concerns than wonder why Kevin just stopped coming to game sessions.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR

*"Out of the darkness of future past
The magician longs to see...
One chance out between two worlds
Fire, walk with me."*

That little verse still sends chills down my spine. David Lynch can set a mood. Twisted, menacing, and sometimes eerily humorous, Twin Peaks was a model for my kind of Kult setting.

Check it out: Laura Palmer was the homecoming queen of an average town, but under her sweet façade, she was addicted to drugs and sex, and tortured by a demonic spirit from another place... BOB. Under a serene surface, powerful forces are waging war, and a door is opening to a mystical place known as the Black Lodge. The illusion is shattering in the ancient woods near Twin Peaks. Who was BOB? The Dwarf? The Giant? And what happened to Josie? The log saw something...

Lynch used a certain sick humor—which he sometimes juxtaposed with the horror—

to devastating effect. The Miss Twin Peaks contest comes immediately to mind. A more subtle example was in the first episode: the camera s-l-o-w-l-y follows a phone cord to the dropped receiver, all the while we hear Laura's mom wailing out of it in a bizzare, choked manner. You don't know whether to laugh or cringe.

Lynch can create a sense of lurking menace better than any director I know. He had us on the edge of our seats several times. And just because I classify Twin Peaks as psychological horror doesn't mean that it didn't have a few violent scenes. There was a rape/murder that I couldn't believe the TV censors allowed.

At least rent the 2-hour movie version. Better yet, the entire series is available on video at some stores (or you probably know someone who has it; I do.) Brew up some joe and bring on the doughnuts!

Another wonderful inspiration for Kult is the film Naked Lunch, based on the book by William Burroughs. Typewriters become huge talking beetles; and sex, violence and drugs mix into a very strange brew. Burrough's Interzone is a place in Kult's Metropolis, where people and things are not what they seem. The central character is a pawn, manipulated by several different factions, all seemingly alien and malevolent. Meanwhile, commonplace objects become animated things, dangerous or sexually suggestive, or both. This movie is not for the prudish (but then neither is Kult).

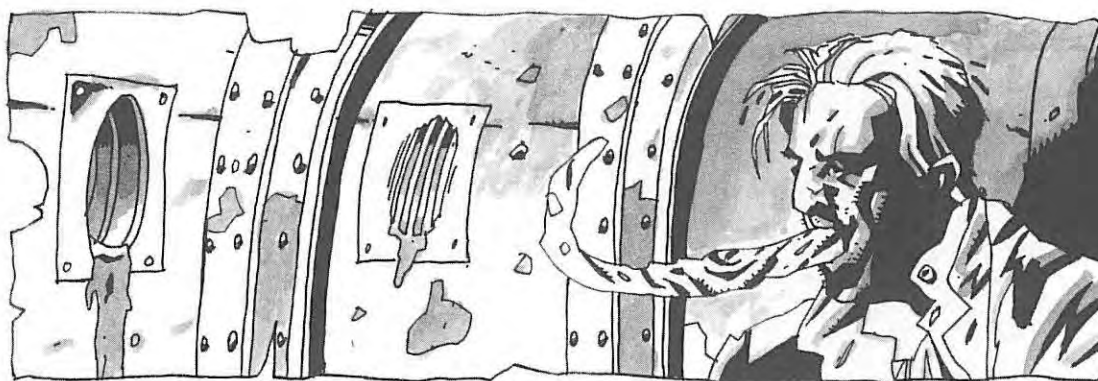
In games like this, there is a twisting of reality so carefully insinuated into your life that you almost believe that it was always there. Are you, going crazy? Maybe so.

Dark Heroes

James Estes

I've often wondered about the role of heroism in dark roleplaying games. Are heroes really possible in dark role-playing? More to the point, can we really have "heroes" in Kult? What is the role of the hero in a dark world with a bleak future? If the world appears doomed to destruction, if humanity seems to have no future, if society seems not to merit redemption, then why bother playing the hero?

This can be difficult to discuss, of course, when we don't have a common vocabulary.



You are perfectly entitled to your own lexicon, but instead of arguing what words I'm choosing, at least see what I'm trying to say. As long as we understand what concepts we're discussing, the words can vary. (In a different world, we'd all use the same precise definitions for the same words. But this is not the case, for better or for worst.) To that end, let's start with what is "Dark Role Playing"?

DARK ROLE-PLAYING

What do we mean by "dark" roleplaying? I've seen this topic argued countless times on the Internet and America Online. In a sense, no one seems really capable of defining it, but we all use it, and we all know when a role-playing game is dark. What is "dark" science-fiction, or "dark" fantasy? Is it just a lower level of illumination, draping everything in dark shadows? That is a good start, but it's only cosmetic. The darkness should extend beyond the shadows to what is being engulfed. Dark role-playing should bespeak more than just the ambient lighting of a setting. This much is only common sense.

It is fairly commonly accepted that a dark setting—regardless of whether we're talking fantasy, contemporary horror, or science fiction—should be grim. It should have the "edge" that everyone talks about. Cutting edge? The razor's edge? It should be on the edge of absolute despair, oblivion and hopelessness. The value of life is lessened, crime is on the rise (exacerbated by either an authoritarian government or total anarchy), few people are trustworthy, no one is what they seem, and humans just generally have little hope for the future. No

matter how bad things are, things just seem to be getting worse. This is far more important (in my mind at least) than the presence of any supernatural evil in a "dark" setting. A world that posits the regular and frequent use of demons isn't "dark" per se, if this demonic activity is a commonly accepted part of life. Now, if this selfsame diabolism is a contribution to the decline of the society (and plays a role in the other "dark" factors mentioned above), then voila! A dark setting, albeit much darker for its inherent demonic activity.

Remember that one function of darkness is to "hide." Darkness implies ignorance as well as lack of illumination. The Dark Ages weren't called this because of any popular color scheme or peculiar solar activity: Europe had fallen into the darkness of ignorance following years of classical knowledge and enlightenment. What little knowledge and learning that existed was in the hands of the ecclesiastical authorities. Africa was called the "Dark Continent" because so much of it was unknown until the 19th century. This feature of ignorance should, in my opinion, be an inherent part of dark role playing. The ignorance can be, at the very least, an uncertainty about the future. At its best, such ignorance represents the entirety of the human condition. Worse than not knowing, we are told, is not knowing but believing we are wise.

Kult is a "dark" role-playing game because it fulfills all these criteria. The world is slowly breaking apart, violence is increasing, man questions his meaning more and more, and ultimately, we live in ignorance: truly a world shrouded in darkness.





Role-Playing in Kult

A lot has been said about how to create Kult characters. Hints and advice have been given for character concepts, mechanics have been discussed, new skills suggested, and so forth. What we'd like to discuss now is the most important part of playing a Kult character: role-playing. We're not going to tell you what role-playing is "about." You can figure that out on your own, or at least make up the answers. This is just basic advice that you can take or leave; it applies to role-playing in general, and not just Kult. You may know all of this already, or this may be new advice entirely.

Some of this advice is geared toward the actual role-playing of a character. The rest of it deals with effective ways of making a game run smoothly.

LIKE YOUR CHARACTER

It is hard to play a character that you don't like. Don't get us wrong – this doesn't mean you have to play a "likeable" character. But there has to be something in the character that resonates, or you find challenging, or you (and maybe even only you) like. If you can't find something in your character that you like, then you'll probably get bored quickly.

"BE" YOUR CHARACTER

When you're playing a character, try to think and act like that character. Don't think of your character as a bundle of game mechanics. When you're going to do something in the game, think of what your character would realistically do, not just what "skills" are listed on your sheet. If you're acting in character, then you'll be taking into account





your character's background, dark secret, and more, but not as just game details.

Your Gamemaster, or other players, might question on occasion whether you are doing something in character. In such a case, just think it over. Your Gamemaster might decide that there is no way that your character might know or do something that you yourself would do, but this should be rare.

It can be incredibly easy to "be" your character in a game, and play very much in character (particularly if you like your character). It can be rewarding, and you might even wonder, at the end of a session, just what prompted you to do or say something. This is often a good sign—your character is growing.

We sometimes speak of our character "talking" to us. When we say it, we don't mean literally—it means we are letting our

character grow, and be somewhat distinct from the player. Role-playing should be fun, and part of the fun is the dramatic creativity it can provide.

At this point, we feel obliged to point out that when we say "be" your character, we're not speaking literally. We really don't want you to be potential psychopaths or suffer from multiple-personality disorder. We're just talking about a game, after all.

KNOW THE RULES

It is unreasonable to think that you'll know each and every rule in your very first Kult game. But have at least some idea of what the game mechanics are, and try to learn more as you play. Certainly gamers should be sympathetic to people who are just now learning rules.



KULT™

Name _____
Profession _____
Date of Birth _____
Place of Birth _____
Home _____
Employer _____
Address _____
Standard of Living _____
Height _____ **Weight** _____ **Age** _____
Hair Color _____ **Eye Color** _____

Family _____

Friends/Enemies _____

Income & Property _____

Personality/Special characteristics _____

Concept/Background _____

Hero points _____
Experience points _____

STR: _____
AGL: _____
EGO: _____
CON: _____
PER: _____
EDU: _____
CHA: _____
COM: _____

Load capacity _____
Movement _____
No. of actions _____
Initiative Bonus _____
Damage Bonus _____
Endurance _____
Mod.to Ego throw _____

_____ **Scratches = 1 light wound**
 _____ **Light wounds = 1 serious wound**
 _____ **Serious wounds = 1 fatal wound**

Advantages _____ - **Disadvantages** _____ = **Mnt bal** _____
 -(Disadvantages+Limitations) for Children of the Night Archetypes

Disadvantages/Limitations	Points

Total points of Disadvantages _____

Advantages/Powers	Points

Total points of Advantages _____

Dark secrets _____

Physical changes _____

[illegible][illegible]

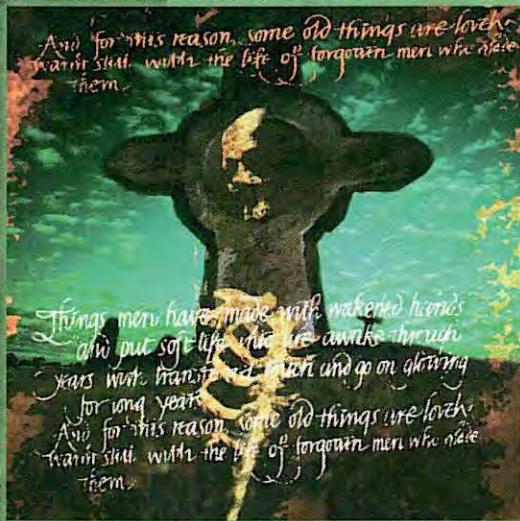


We are unlikely heroes. We are voices of hope in a world shrouded in despair.

We may not necessarily be good people. Our ranks include psychopaths, human monsters, fallen angels. We are warriors and priests, servants and masters. Saints and sinners all. No one is perfect, no one innocent. For some, madness is only a refuge from a harsh reality. For others, it is a key to unlocking that reality.

Once, we were as gods, far more than merely "mortal." We could manipulate matter and we were not limited by the dimensions of time and space. Reality was ours to control, and we could see through the many worlds that now we can only imagine. The enemies we face are many – from the lictors who were our slaves to the Demiurge's dark twin who now prepares for war, a final ragnarok that will plunge us back into ignorance.

They won't stop us that easily.



The Kult Player's Companion is designed as a supplement to the role playing game Kult, which more fully details the nature of the illusion and the condition of humanity. Where many Kult releases—which detail the secret truths of reality and the plans of our jailers—are intended more for Kult gamemasters, this work is directed to players and gamemasters alike. Players should use this work as a means of further enhancing their characters. It guides you carefully through the process of creating a character, and builds upon the wealth of material presented in Kult. New Dark Secrets, advantages, skills, equipment and more are presented herein. This book gives you the tools to creating a more fully detailed Kult persona.

RECOMMENDED FOR MATURE PLAYERS ONLY.

You must have access to the KULT RPG
in order to use this book.



Metropolis Ltd.

Distributed by Heartbreaker Inc.

P.O. Box 105

Folsom, PA 19033



Printed in the U.S.A.

ISBN 91-7898-396-7



9 789178 983964

No 5005



kult@target.se