

RIFTS®

MACHINATIONS OF DOOM™

BY RAMÓN PÉREZ



A GRAPHIC NOVEL & SOURCEBOOK FOR RIFTS®

AN EPIC WORLD BOOK FOR THE RIFTS® SERIES

COMPATIBLE WITH THE ENTIRE PALLADIUM BOOKS® MEGEVERSE®!

WARNING

VIOLENCE AND THE SUPERNATURAL

The fictional world of Rifts® is violent, deadly and filled with supernatural monsters. Other dimensional beings, often referred to as “demons,” torment, stalk and prey on humans. Other alien life forms, monsters, gods and demigods, as well as magic, insanity, and war are all elements in this book.

Some parents may find the violence and supernatural elements of the game inappropriate for young reader/players. We suggest parental discretion.

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A RIFTS® GRAPHIC NOVEL AND RPG SOURCEBOOK

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RIFTS®: MACHINATIONS OF DOOM™

written & illustrated by RAMÓN PÉREZ

GRAPHIC NOVEL

By Ramón Pérez

SOURCEBOOK MATERIAL

Comic strip characters created by Ramón Pérez, inspired by the RIFTS® game line.

Written by Kevin Siembieda

Additional Writing by Julius Rosenstein

Editors Alex Marciniszyn & Wayne Smith

Interior Artwork Ramón Pérez

Art Direction, Typography & Layout Ramón Pérez

Based on the RPG world, rules, text, characters, concepts and Megaverse® created by Kevin Siembieda.

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LONE STAR COMPLEX: Sector 7C

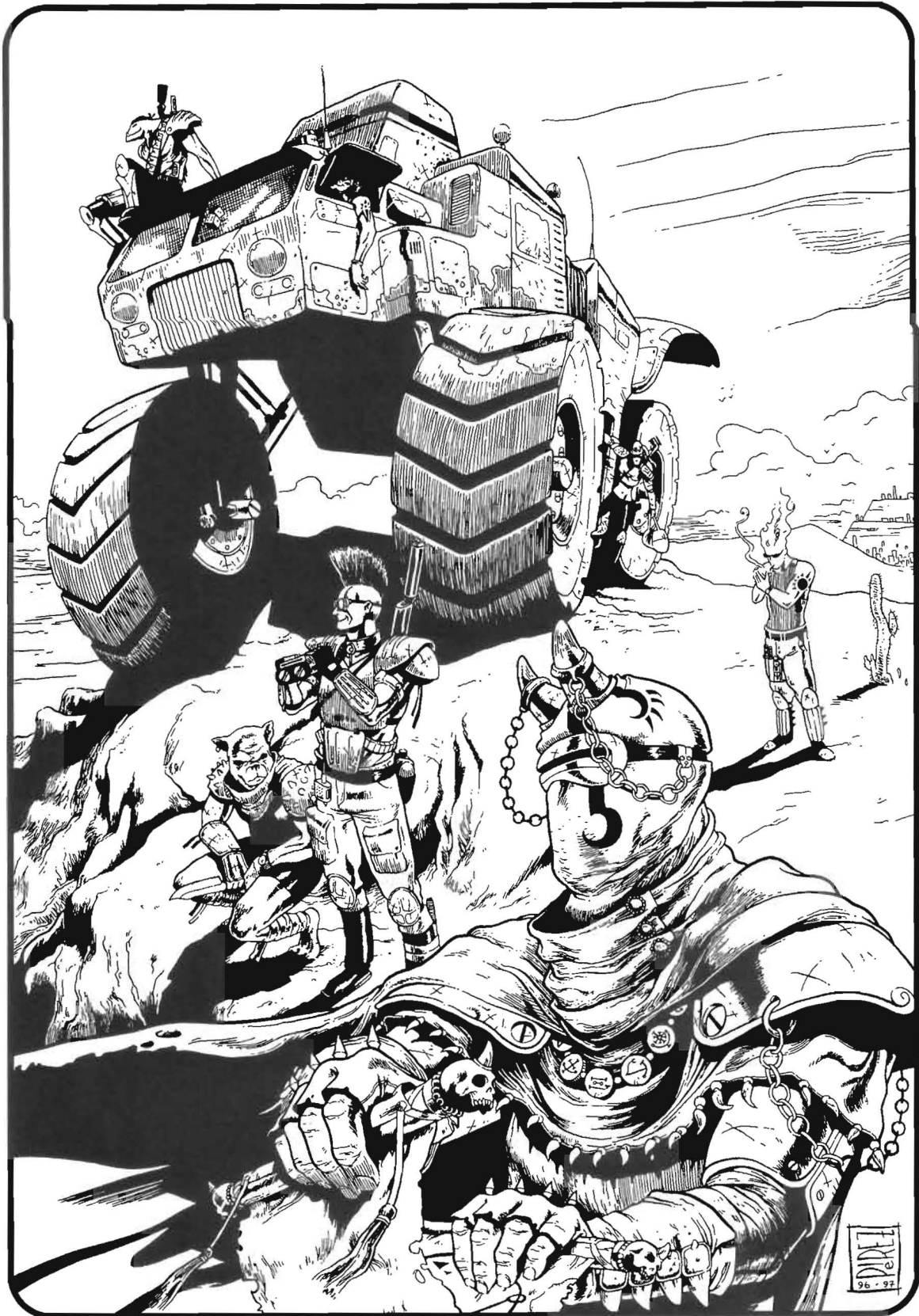
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SPECIAL THANKS

To my good friend Rob who i used perpetually as a sounding board and pseudo editor on this book. To Coleen, who co-scripted the original first few chapters because I was too afraid to go it alone. To Bill and Kate for an extra pair of hands in laying out the book you now hold in your hands. And last, but most definitely not least, a big thanks to Kevin for giving a new kid a chance so many years ago.

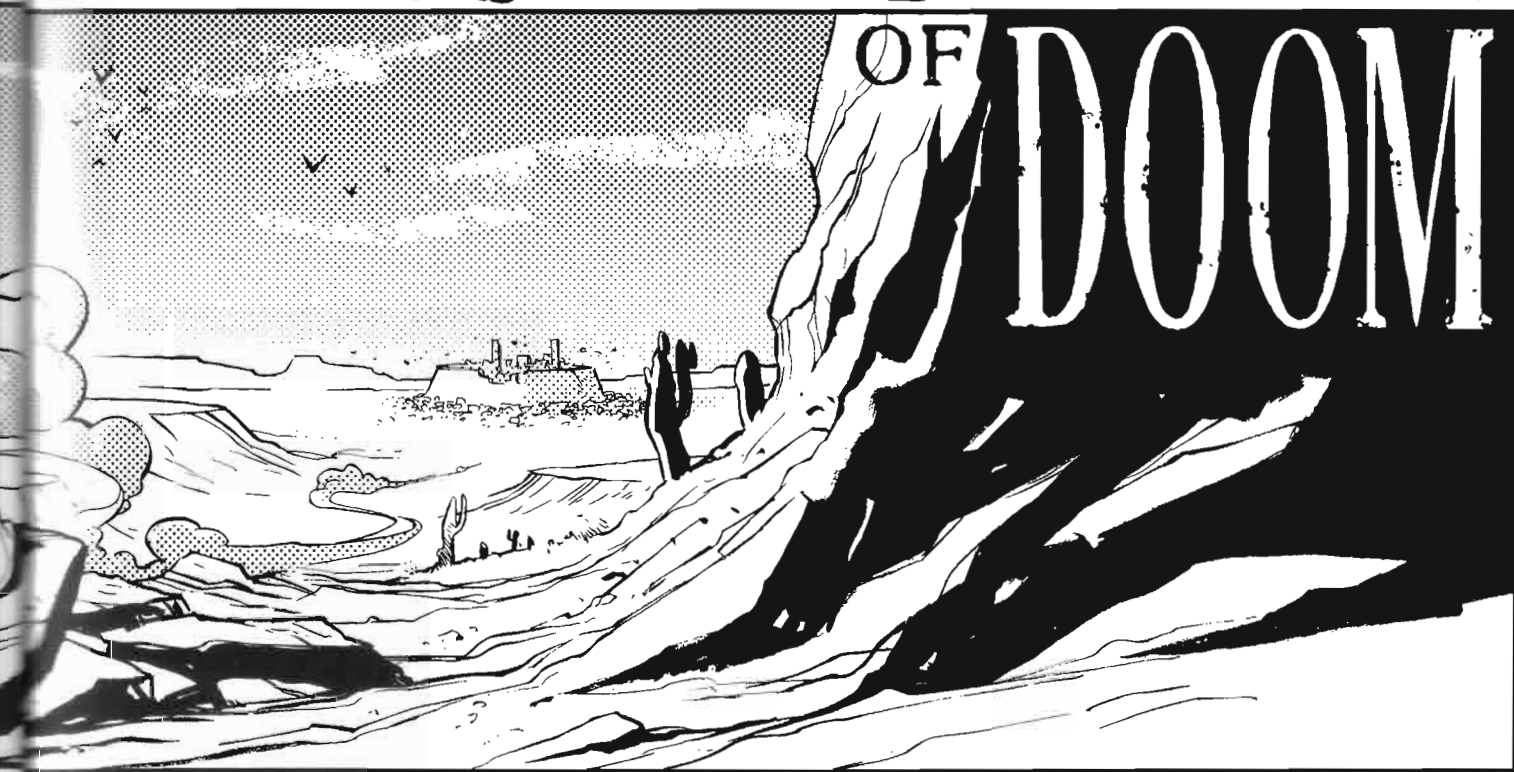
- Ramón Pérez, 2007

To Ramón Pérez for his artistry, dynamic storytelling and dedication to Palladium Books and its many fans. Also to Julius, Alex and Wayne who worked hard to get this book out on deadline.

- Kevin Siembieda, 2007



MACHINATIONS



WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF RIFTS...

AN ERA WHERE MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY COLLIDE
ON A FUTURE EARTH RAVAGED BY MAGIC, SCARRED BY WAR
AND TRANSFORMED INTO AN ALIEN LANDSCAPE.

IN THE DAWN OF THE THIRD MILLENIUM, DURING A GOLDEN
AGE OF SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENT, HUMANKIND IS NEARLY
OBLITERATED BY THE RETURN OF MAGIC AND THE COMING OF
THE RIFTS. WHAT IS LEFT OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION PLUNGES
INTO SAVAGERY AND BARBARISM.

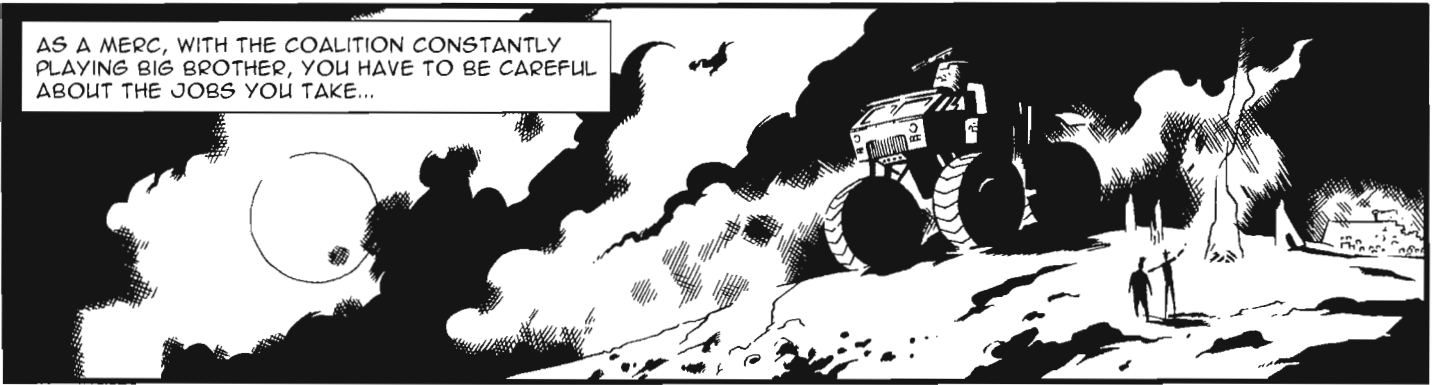
CENTURIES LATER, HUMANKIND BEGINS TO RISE FROM THE
ASHES OF DESTRUCTION AND RECLAIM THE PLANET, ONLY TO
FIND IT IS NO LONGER THE WORLD OF THEIR FOREFATHERS.
THE EARTH HAS BECOME A DIMENSIONAL NEXUS, A JUNCTION
POINT WHERE RIFTS THAT TEAR THROUGH THE FABRIC OF TIME
AND SPACE LINK THE PLANET TO A THOUSAND DIFFERENT
DIMENSIONS AND WORLDS.

IT IS NOW A TIME OF CONTRADICTION AND JUXTAPOSITION,
WHERE MAGIC AND TECHNOLOGY CLASH. ALIENS, MONSTERS
AND ANCIENT GODS, ONCE BELIEVED THE STUFF OF MYTH
AND LEGEND, WALK THE EARTH VYING TO CLAIM THE EARTH AS
THEIR OWN.

A TIME WHERE EVIL RUNS RAMPANT AND THE HERO IS A RARE
COMMODITY.

BUT SOMETIMES HEROES CAN BE FOUND IN THE UNLIKELIEST
PLACES...

AS A MERC, WITH THE COALITION CONSTANTLY PLAYING BIG BROTHER, YOU HAVE TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT THE JOBS YOU TAKE...



GOIN' IN BLIND YOU CAN COME OUT DEAD. BUT WHEN MONEY'S LOW SOMETIMES YOU OVERLOOK THE DETAILS.



SO WHEN THIS GUY CONTACTS US FROM THE LONE STAR COMPLEX...

c h a p t e r o n e



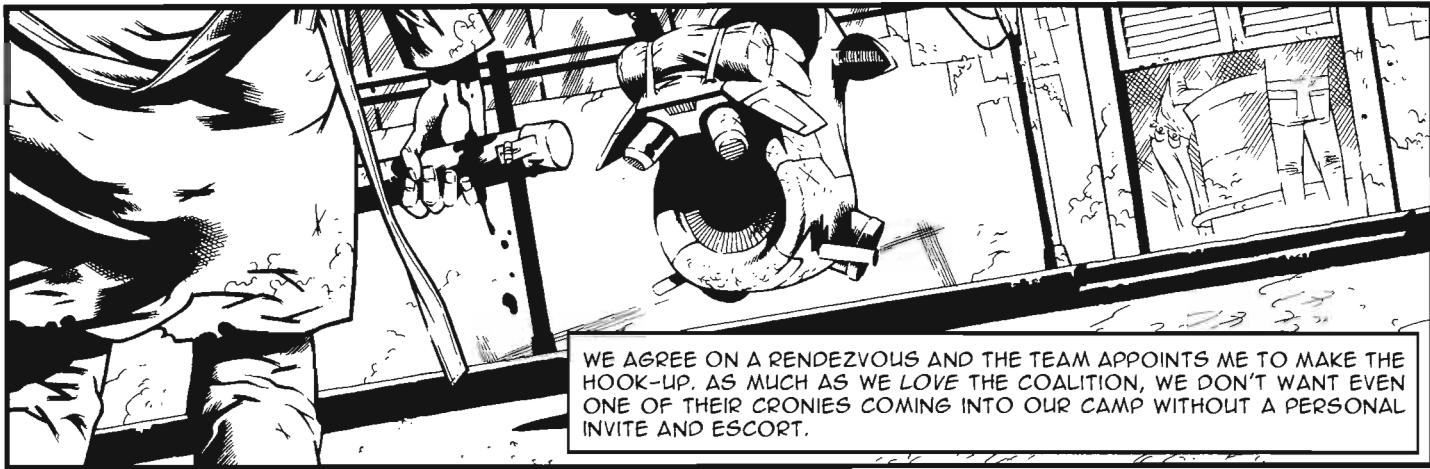
BY RAMÓN PÉREZ AND COLEEN LAXALT

WE IGNORE THE WARNING BELLS AND LISTEN.



THIS SCIENTIST, OR SO HE SAYS, ASKS FOR TRANSPORT AND PROTECTION TO CHI-TOWN. PLAYING TAXI AIN'T USUALLY OUR BUSINESS, BUT HE WAS OFFERING BIG MONEY.





WE AGREE ON A RENDEZVOUS AND THE TEAM APPOINTS ME TO MAKE THE HOOK-UP. AS MUCH AS WE LOVE THE COALITION, WE DON'T WANT EVEN ONE OF THEIR CRONIES COMING INTO OUR CAMP WITHOUT A PERSONAL INVITE AND ESCORT.



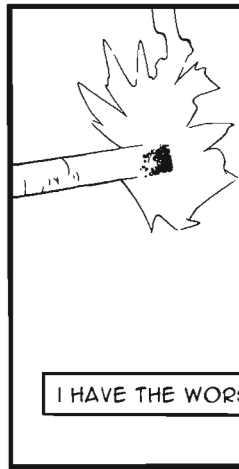
SO I LEAVE THE CREW TO STRIKE CAMP AND GET THINGS READY FOR OUR LAME LITTLE TRIP TO CHI-TOWN.



SHOULD HAVE KNOWN.

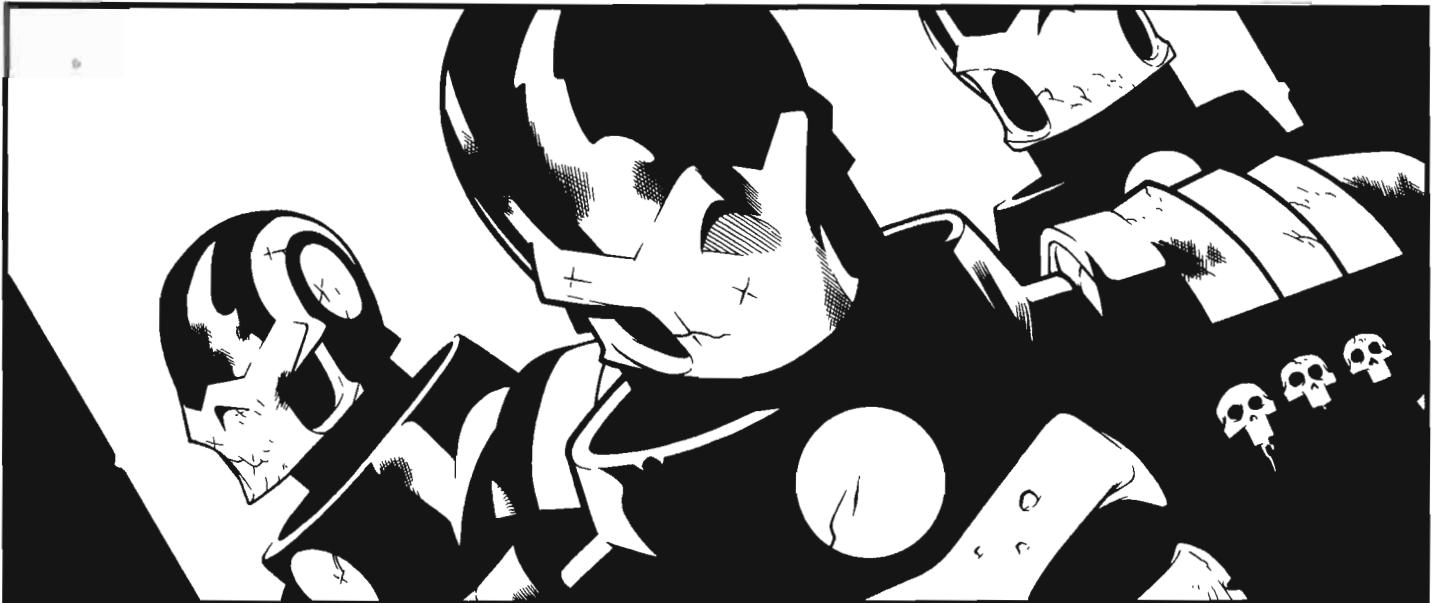


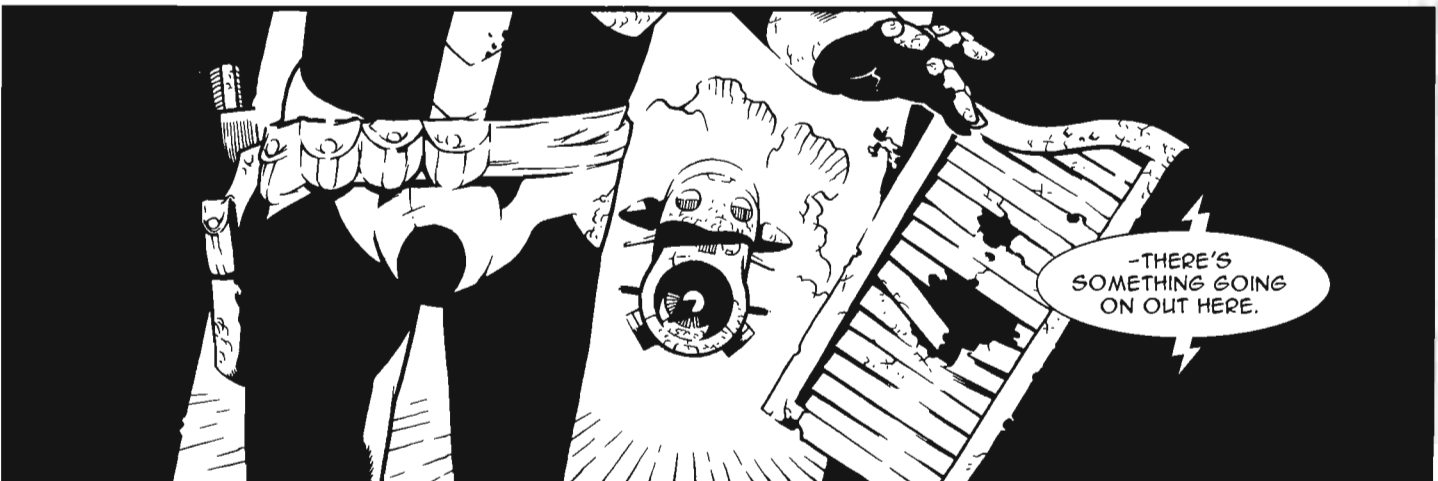
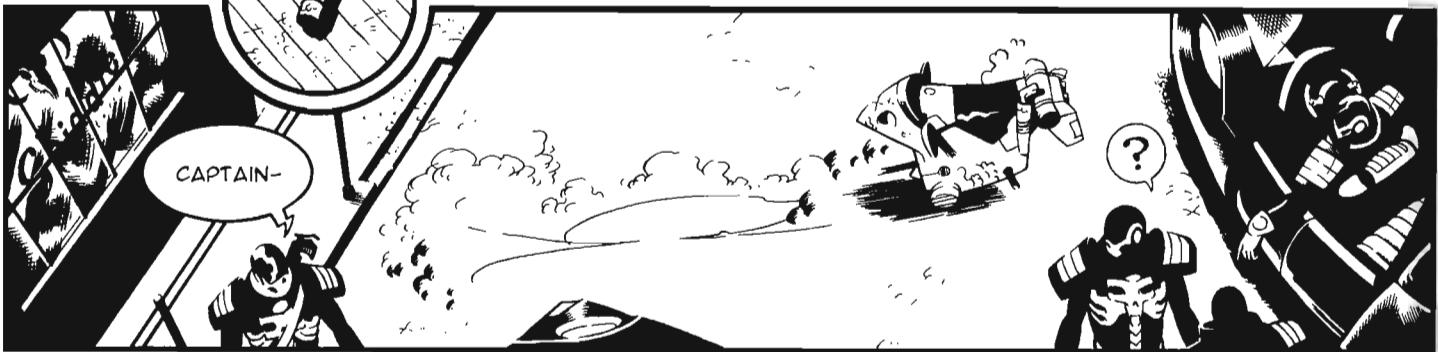
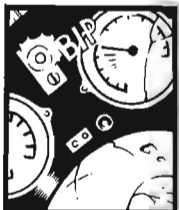
AFTER ALL,



I HAVE THE WORST LUCK.





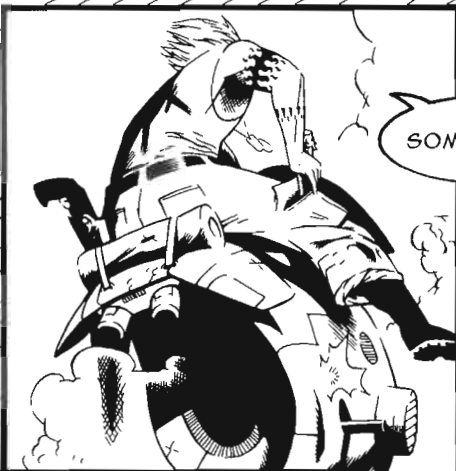




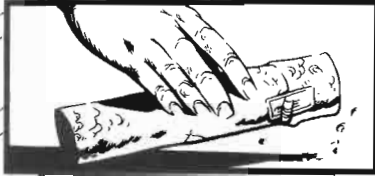
I'VE NEVER HAD THE
BEST JUDGEMENT...



HEY
GUYS, WHAT'S
THIS?



SOMETHING...



...IMPORTANT?



YOU DON'T
WANT TO GET
INVOLVED.

WHO, ME?

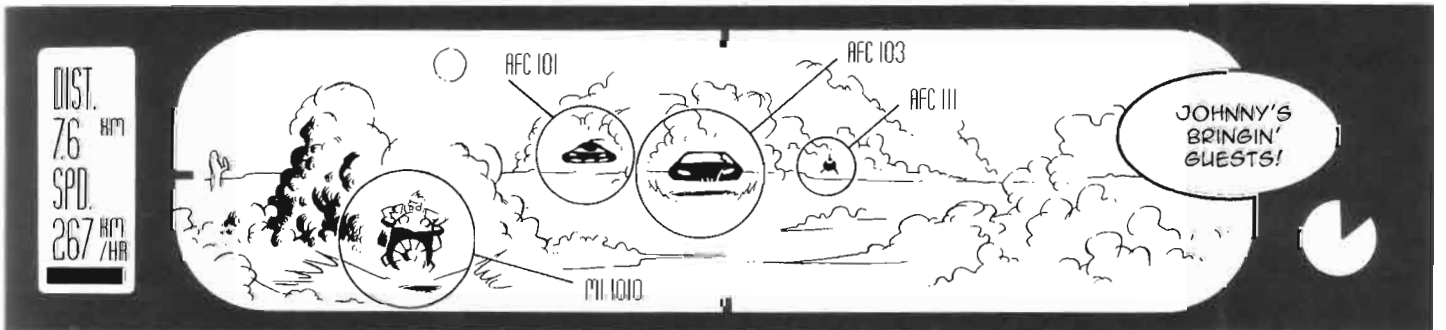
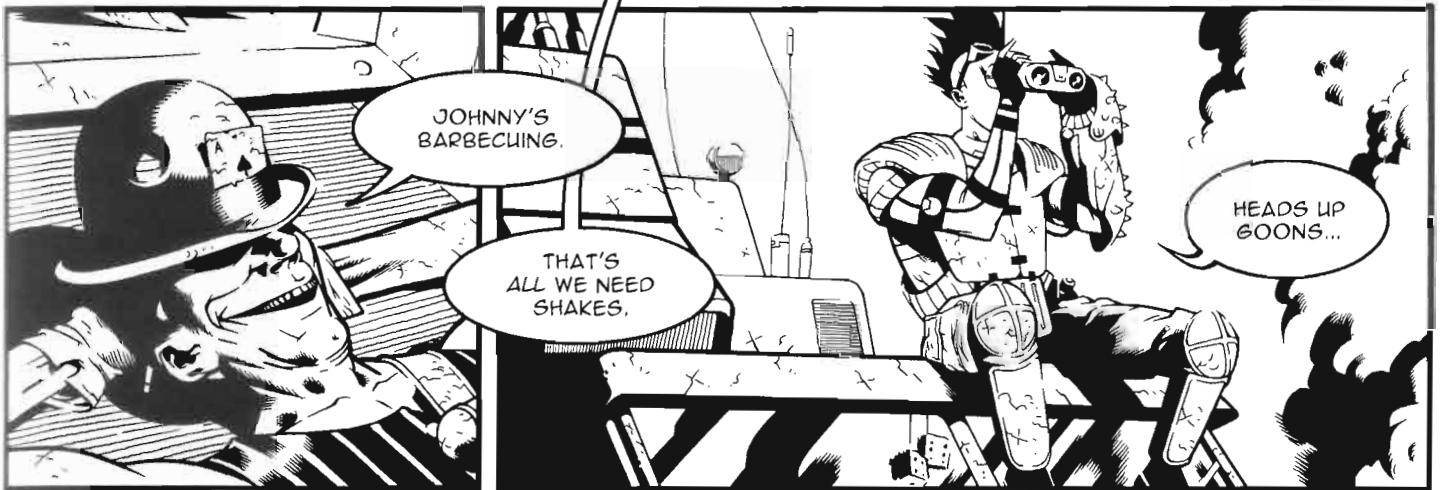






MY FRIENDS ARE GOING TO
LOVE ME FOR THIS...



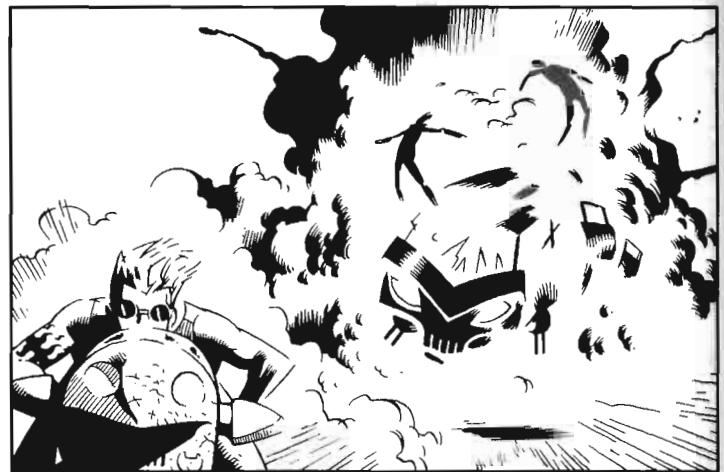


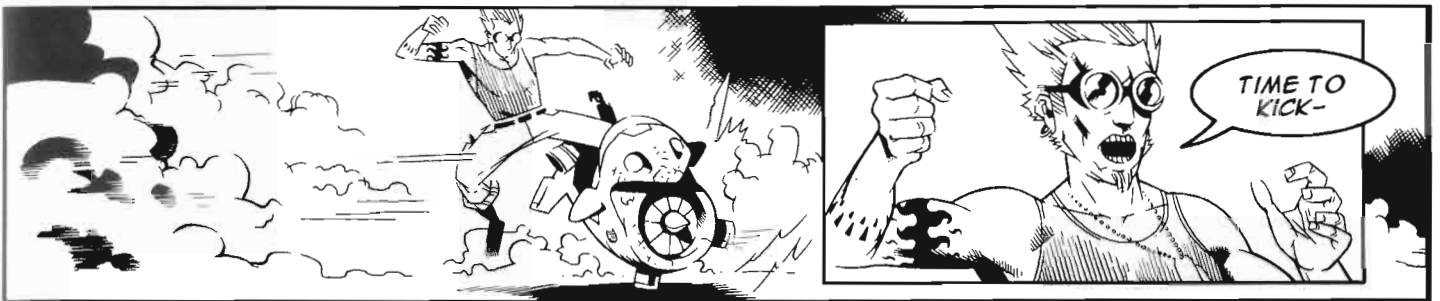
chapter two

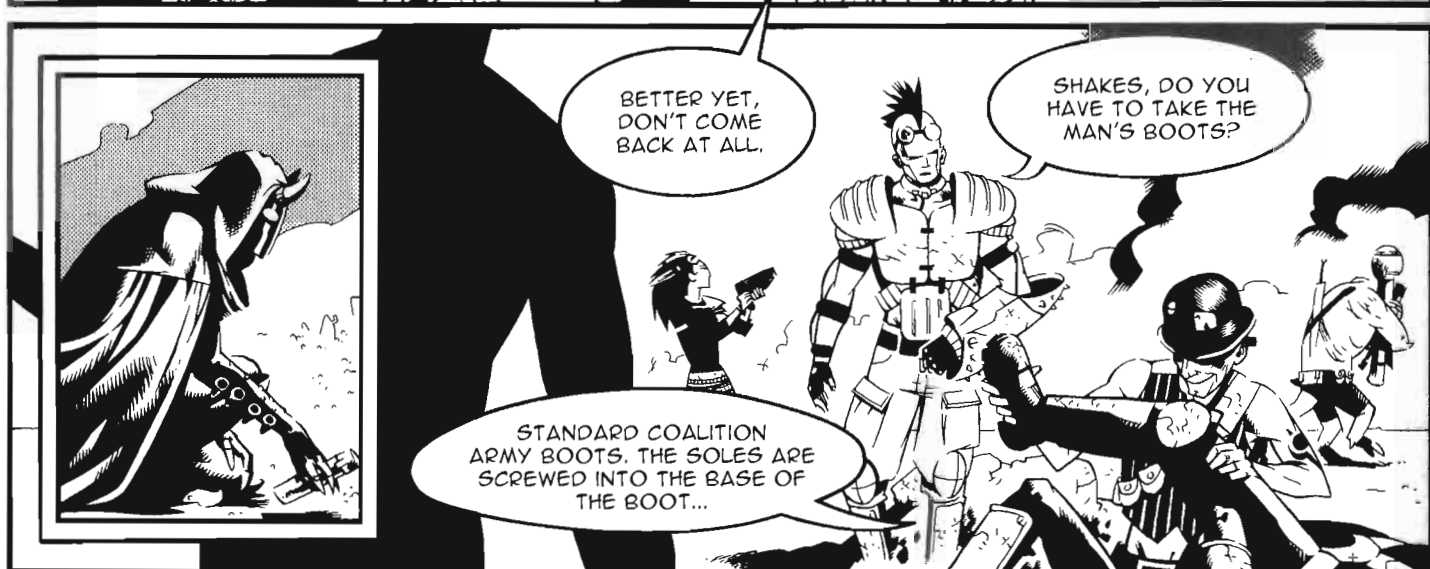


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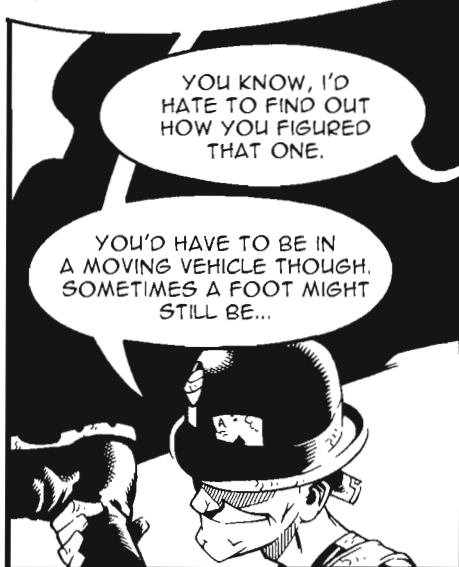








YOU COULD KNOCK A MAN RIGHT OUT OF HIS BOOTS IF YOU HIT HIM WITH ENOUGH FORCE...







WHAT IS THIS?



"THE SCIENTIST", OUR PASSENGER, DROPPED IT WHEN THE COALI-

HEY! HOW'D...
NOT YOU, JOHNNY.



WELL?

YOU TELL ME, TOUGH GUY. WHAT DOES IT ... LOOK LIKE?

SOMETHING THE COALITION IS WILLING TO KILL FOR.

I DON'T KNOW ... KAFF ... ANY ... THING ABOUT IT.



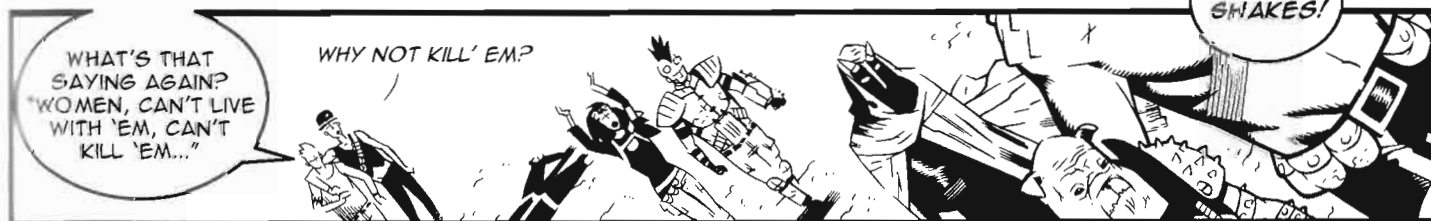
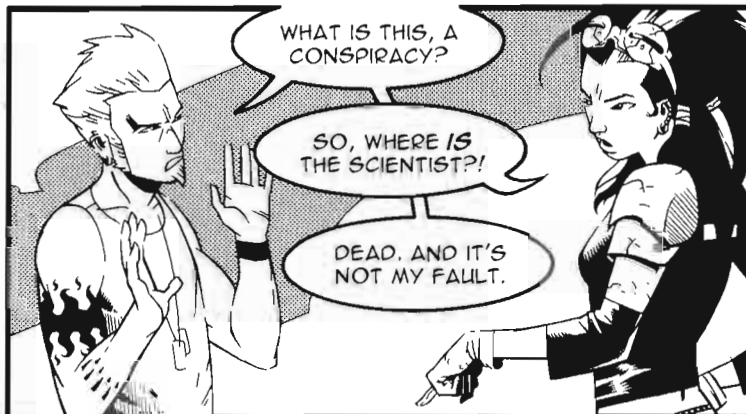
KNEW HE WOULD SAY THAT.

DOES IT KAFF EAT PEOPLE?

NO.



BUT WE THINK HE MIGHT.



LATER, INSIDE THE MOUNTAINEER A.T.V. AFFECTIONATELY NAMED PETUNIA...

SO, WHAT IS IT?

LOOKS LIKE SOME KIND OF OLD GENETICS BLUEPRINT.

OH, VERY GOOD BOWIE. THAT WOULD EXPLAIN THE WHOLE 'SCIENTIST' THING.

...COULD THIS SPECIES STILL EXIST? HOW DID THEY GET HERE?

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM?

WE NEED TO FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT.

WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU MEAN BY "FIND OUT"?

WE ARE GOING TO THE LONESTAR COMPLEX.

'SCUSE ME, WHAT!?

WHAT!?! WHY SHOULD WE PICK UP AFTER LITTLE JOHNNY ADVENTURER HERE?

SOUNDS LIKE SUICIDE TO ME.

BODAKHAN, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

TRUST ME.

IF IT IS WHAT I THINK IT MIGHT BE, SUICIDE WILL BE A BLESSING...



IT SURE STINKS
IN HERE...

ANIKA, ANY
DEADBOYS ON
OUR TAIL?

THERE MAY
BE METHANE, BEST
TO KEEP YOURSELF
IN CHECK.

NOT OUT
HERE. IT'S PRETTY
QUIET.

MAYBE THERE'S
A PARTY GOING ON
SOMEWHERE...

NICE! I COULD
USE A DRINK, A
ZAMBOOTI...

chapter three



BY RAMÓN PÉREZ AND COLEEN LAXALT



IS BOWIE
KEEPING AN EYE ON
THE PERIMETER?

YEAH.

SAY, DID
I THANK YOU
GUYS?

THANK US
FOR WHAT?

LEAVING
ME OUT HERE
TO BABYSIT THE
FREAK. THANKS
A LOT.



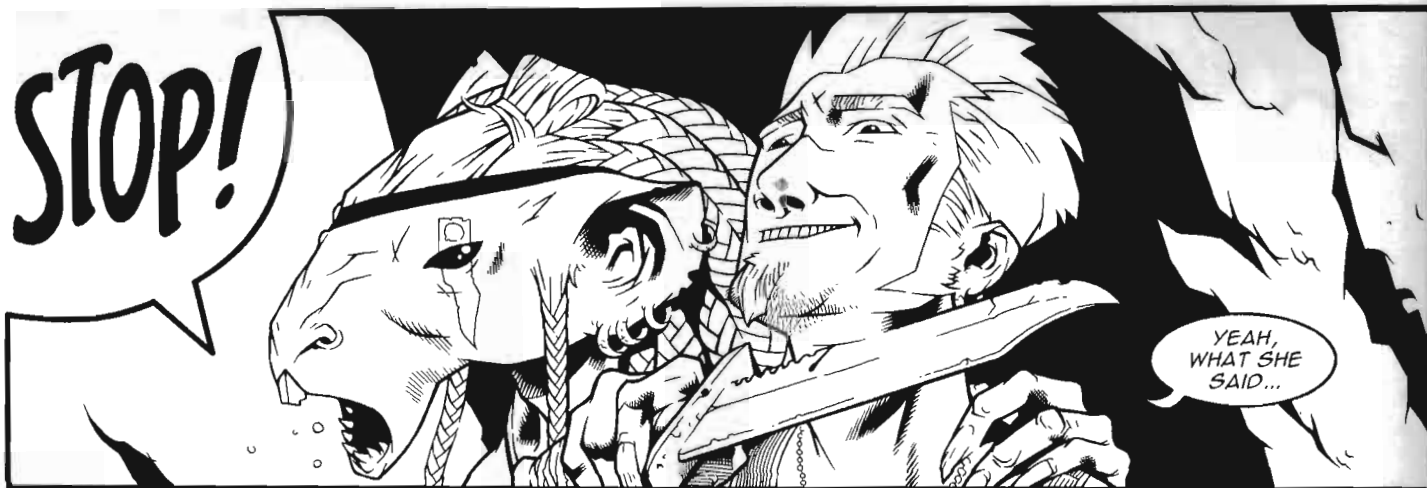
MOSES, SOME
LIGHT PLEASE.



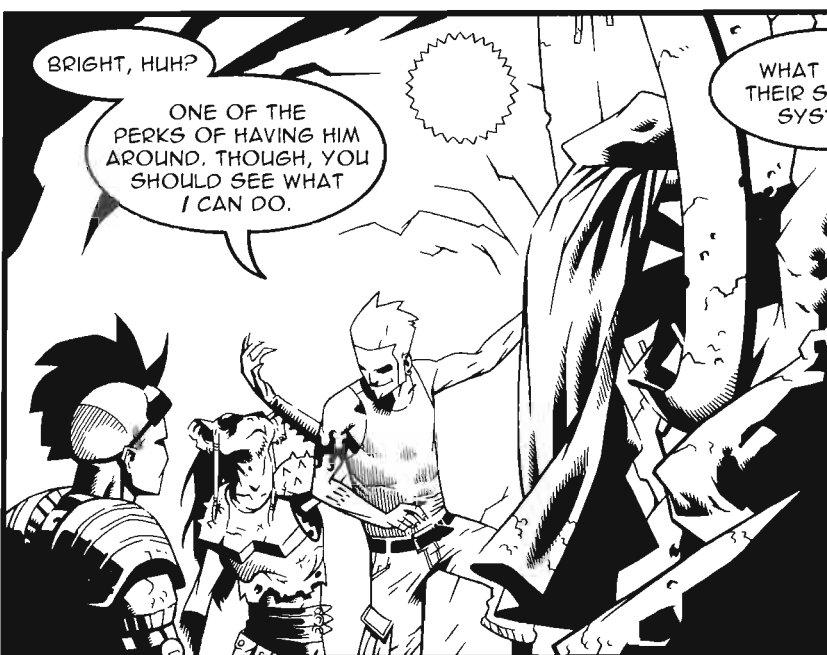


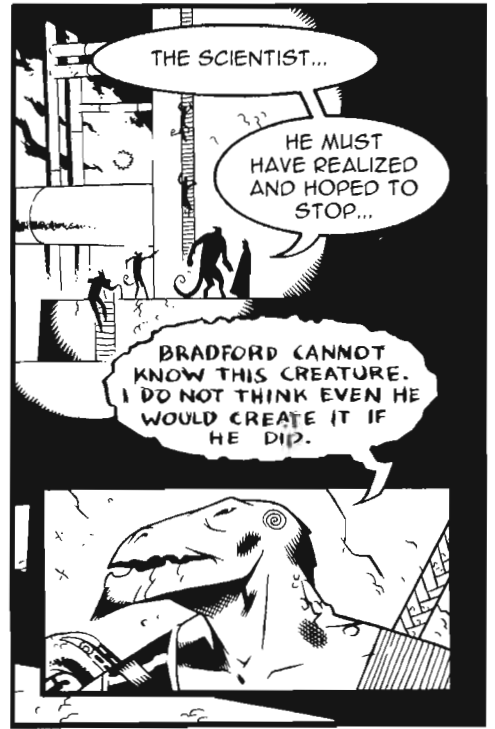
GUYS!

HEY GUYS!!

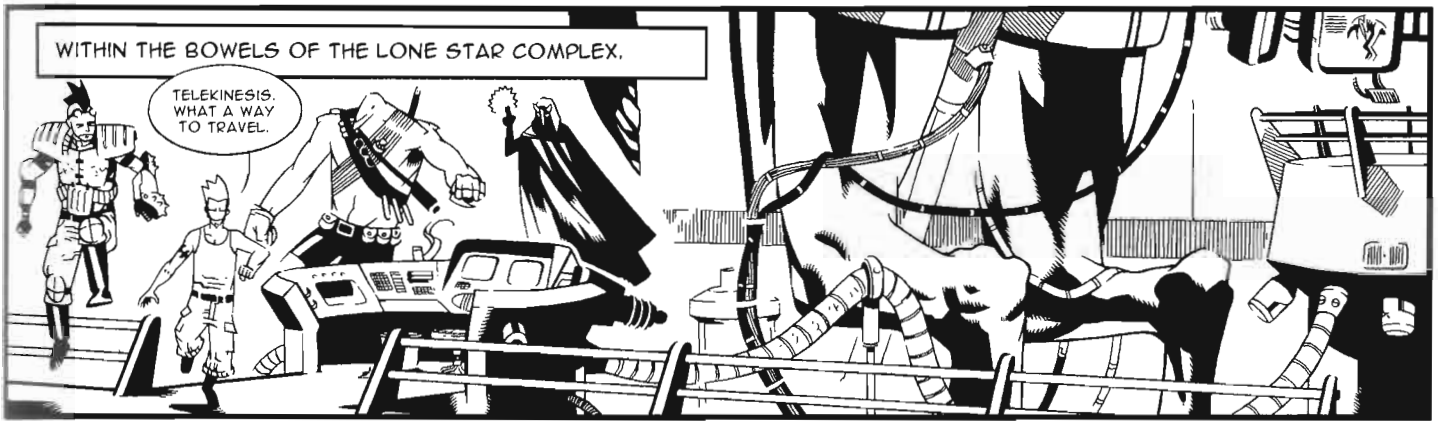




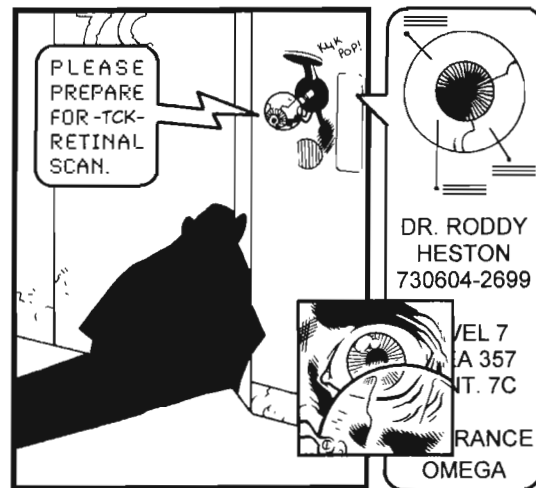
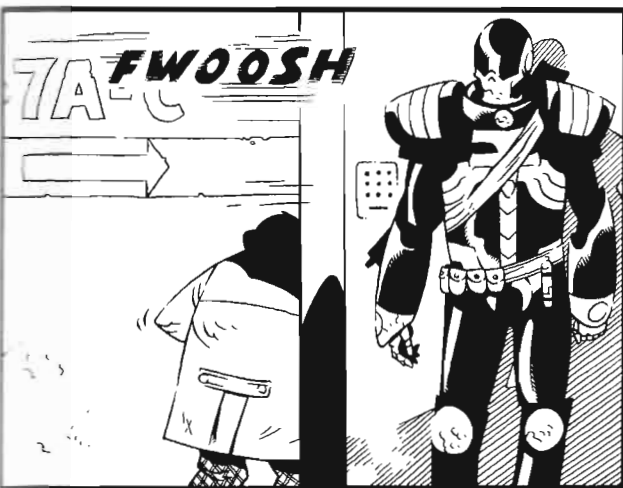


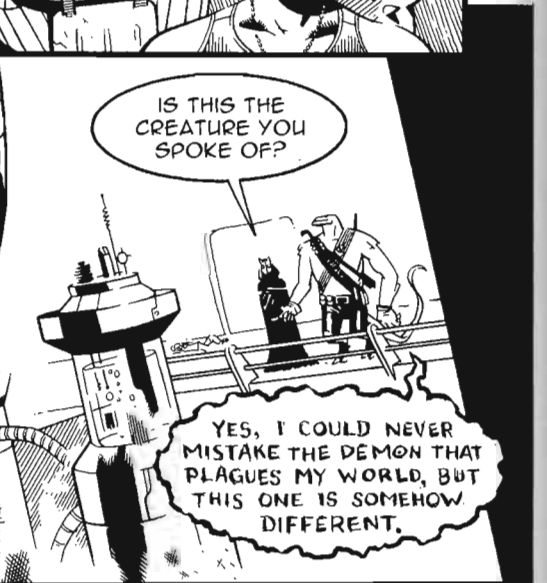
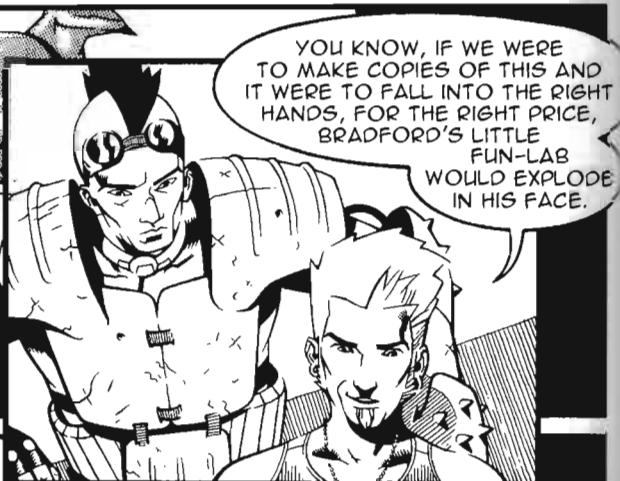
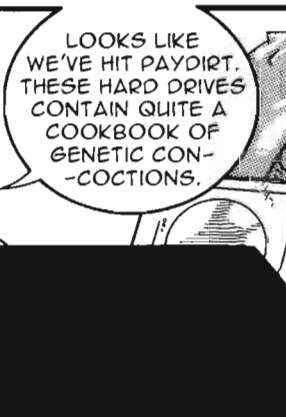
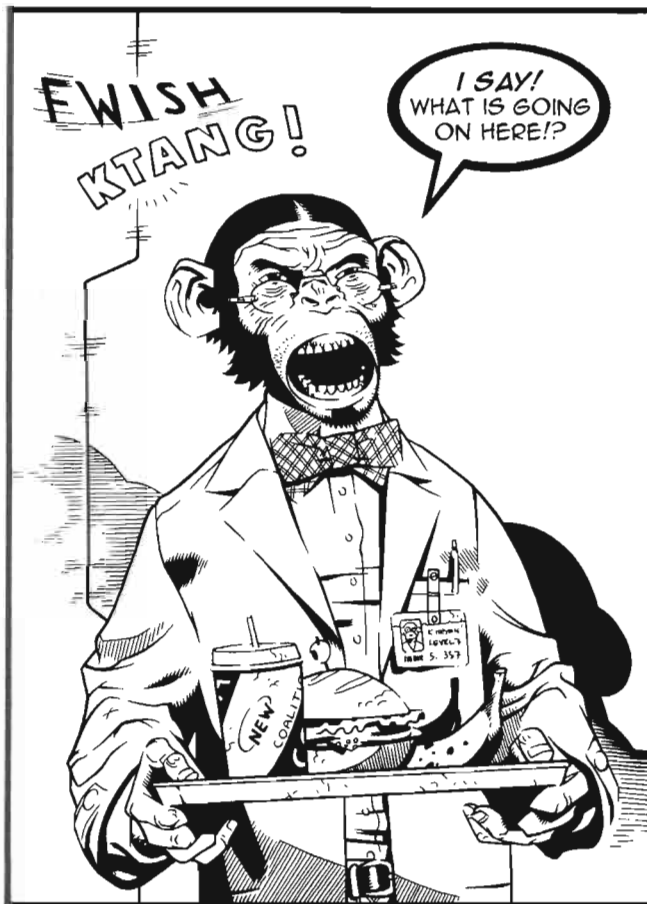






chapter four BY RAMÓN PÉREZ WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM HIS FRIENDS





OUTSIDE THE LONE STAR COMPLEX.

...NOPE.
GO FISH.

ENTERING A
RESTRICTED AREA
VIOLATORS WILL BE
PROSECUTED

BIP-BIP
BIP-BIP
BIP

HEY SWEETS,
WONDERING IF
YOU COULD LEND
US A HAND?

IF IT'LL
SHUT YOU UP,
ANYTHING.

GET PETUNIA
READY TO RECEIVE
AN UPLOAD ON
FREQUENCY ONE-
OH-TWO-POINT-
ONE.

THEN GET READY
TO RENDEZVOUS.

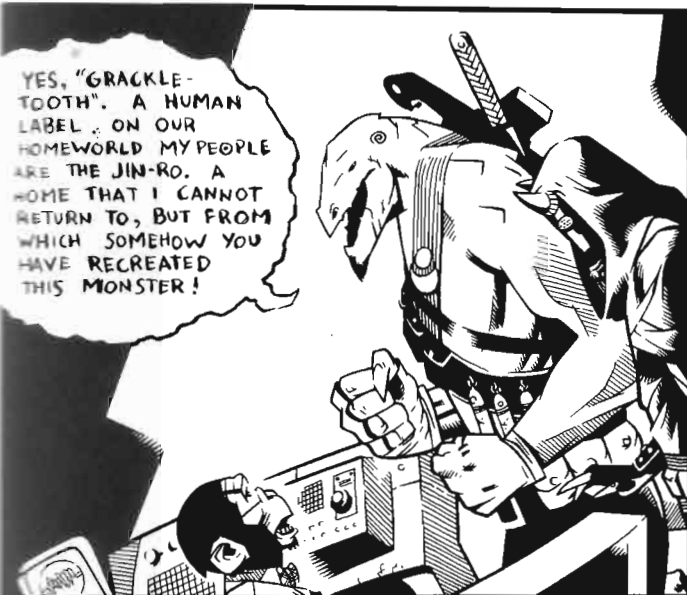
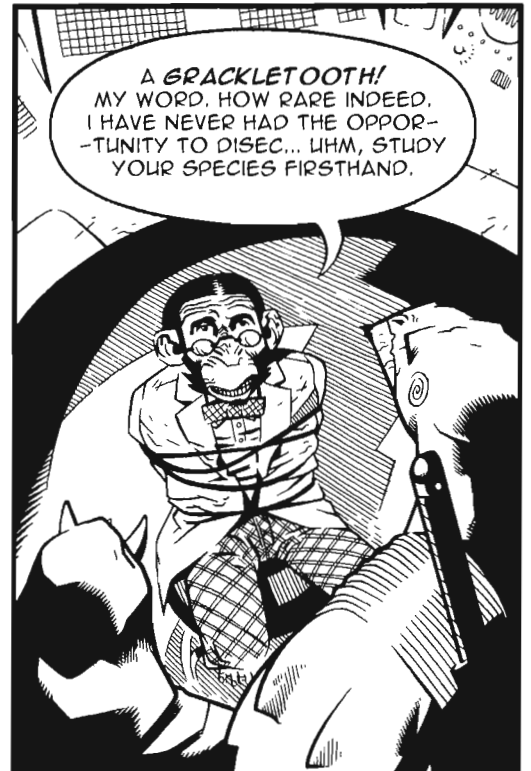
YES?

I'M ON IT.

OKAY BOYS, TIME
TO PACK UP THIS PICNIC
AND GET BUSY.

FIGURES!
I WAS JUST
GETTING
LUCKY!





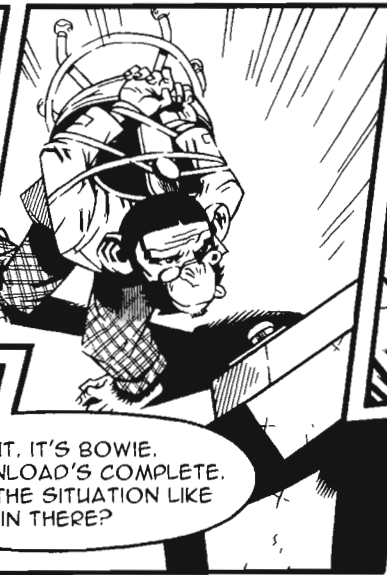
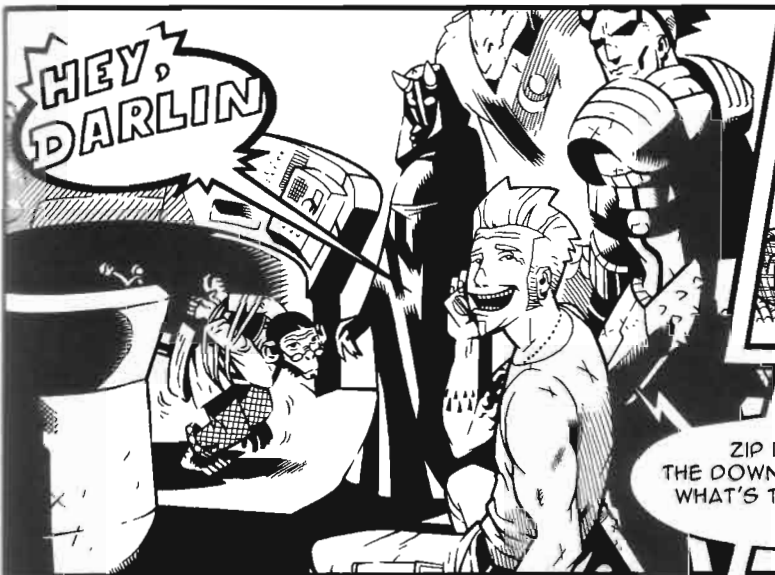
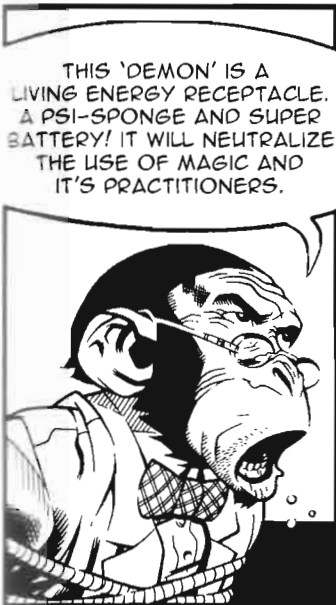


WHAT WORK IS DONE HERE IS FOR THE GOOD OF THE COALITION, AND SINCE YOU ARE OBVIOUSLY ITS ENEMY, IT IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS.



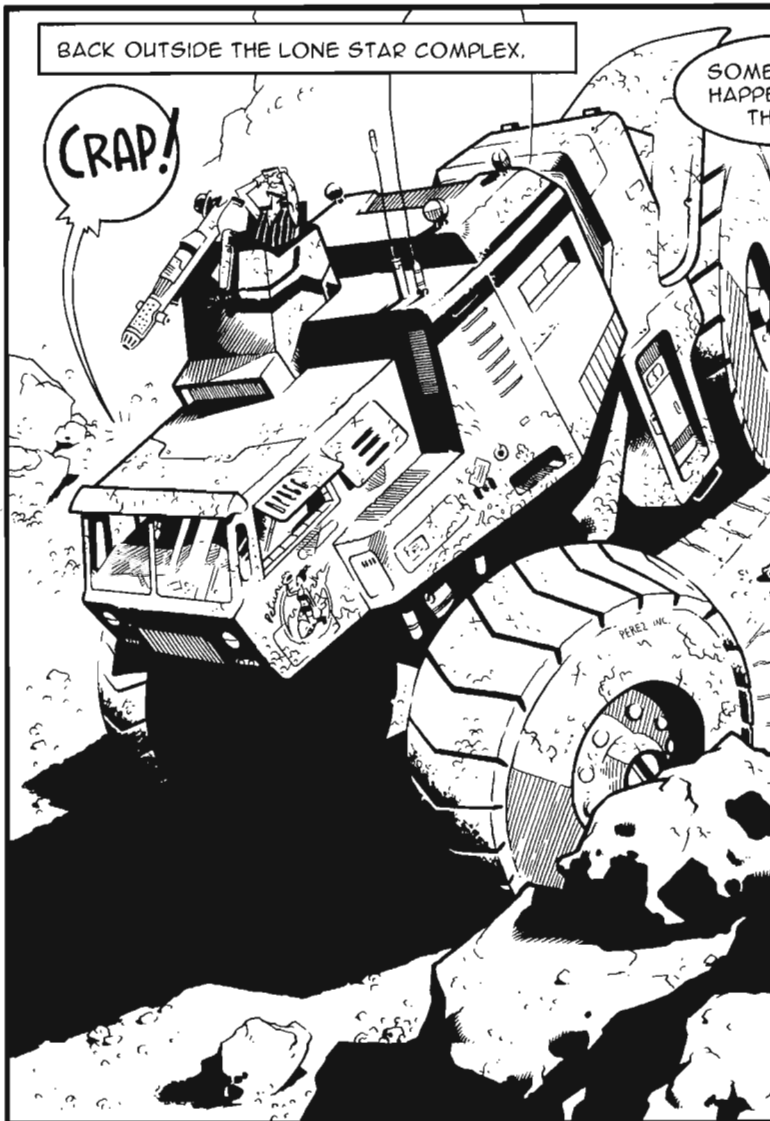
ACTUALLY IT IS QUITE FASCINATING. BY USING HUMAN DNA AS A SPRINGBOARD AND SPLICING IT WITH THIS NEWFOUND INFORMA-





WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW WEOW



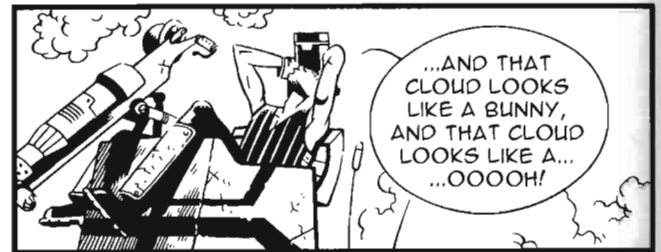


BACK OUTSIDE THE LONE STAR COMPLEX.

CRAP!



SOMETHING'S
HAPPENING IN
THERE!



...AND THAT
CLOUD LOOKS
LIKE A BUNNY,
AND THAT CLOUD
LOOKS LIKE A...
...OOOOH!



PARDON MY
INTURSION, BUT
HAVE YOU EVER SEEN
A CLOUD THAT LOOKS
LIKE A 'SAMAS'
PATROL?

NO!



HMM... THAT'S
WHAT I THOUGHT.
MIGHT I DIVERT YOUR
ATTENTION...



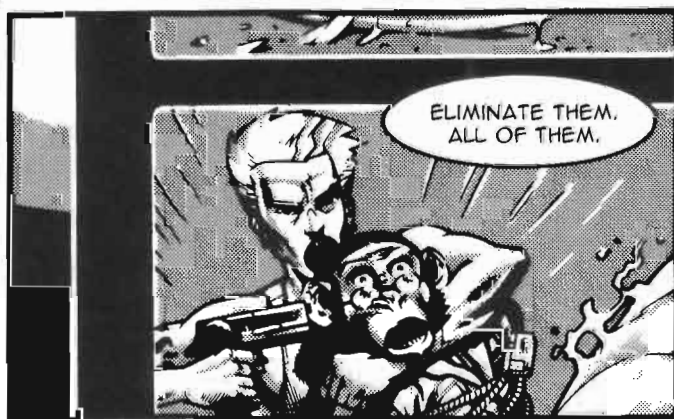
TIME TO GET
DIRTY, BOYS.

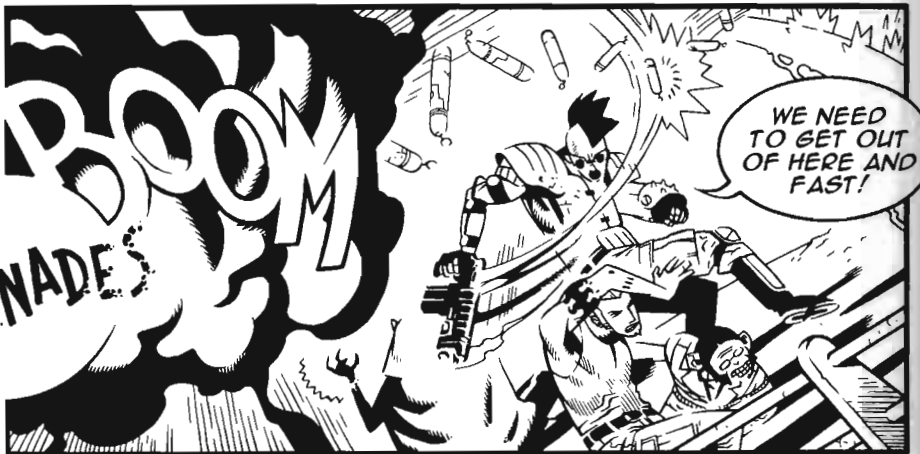
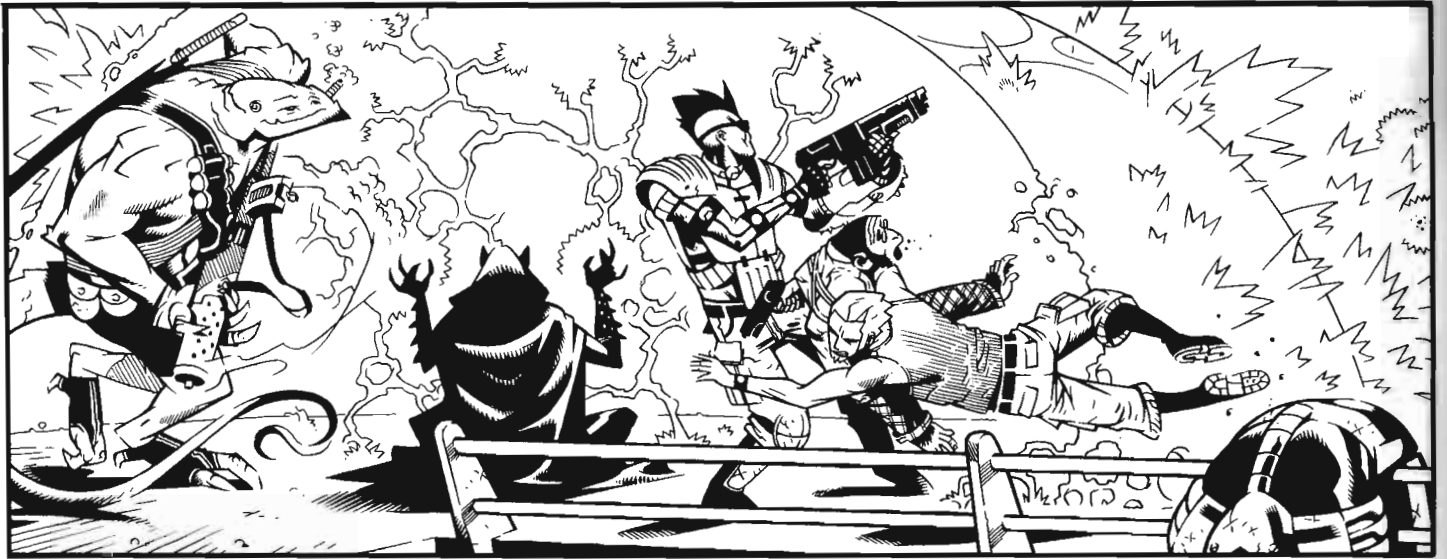


c h a p t e r f i v e



BY RAMÓN PÉREZ & A LITTLE HELP FROM A FRIEND

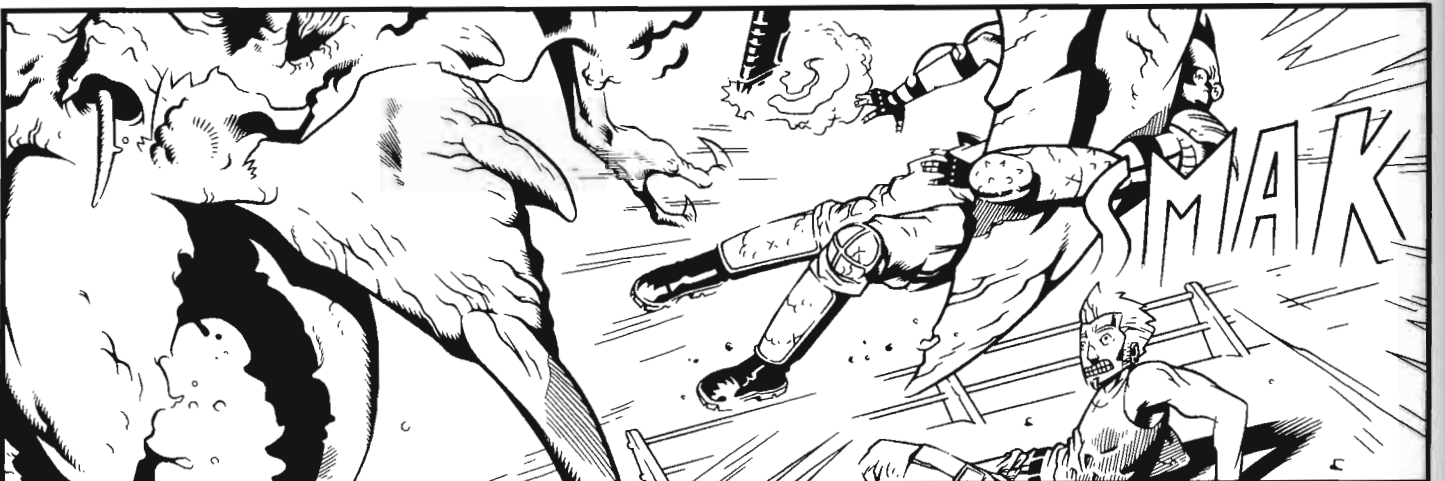
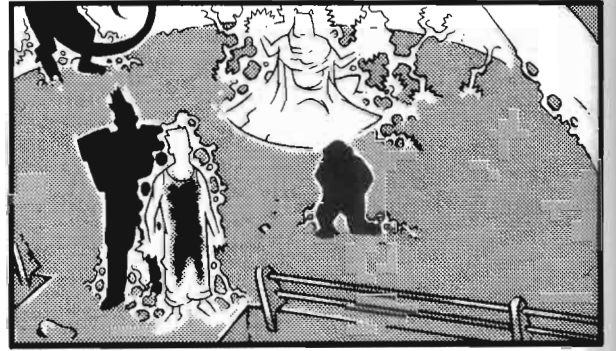
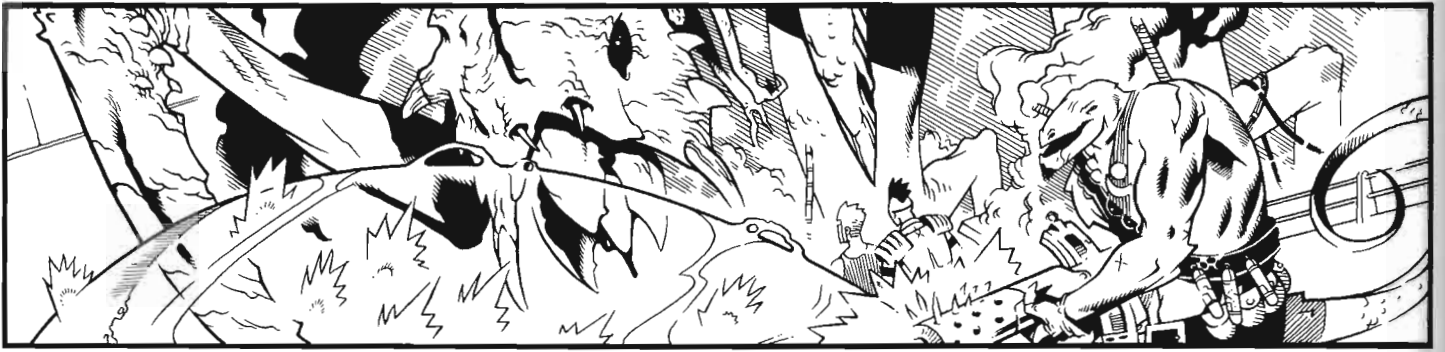


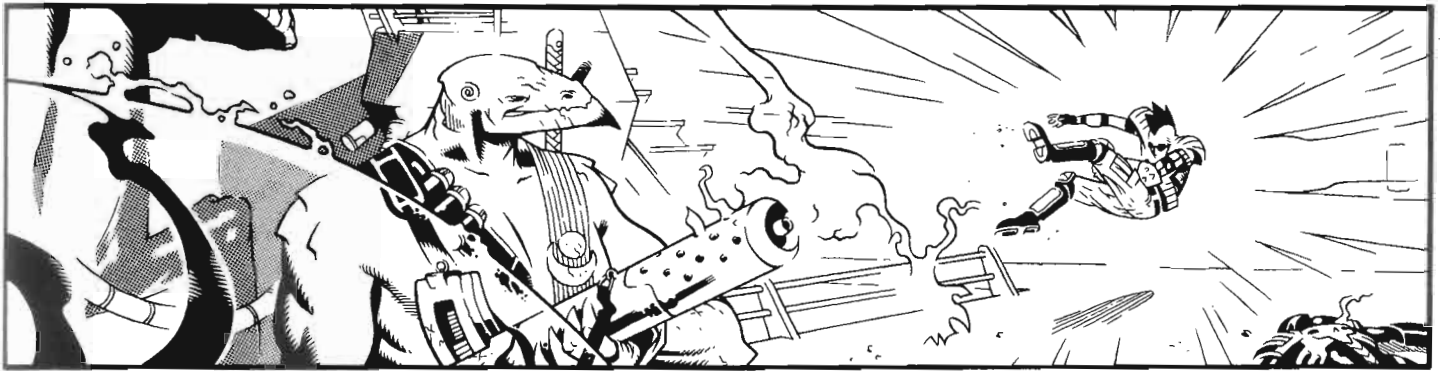














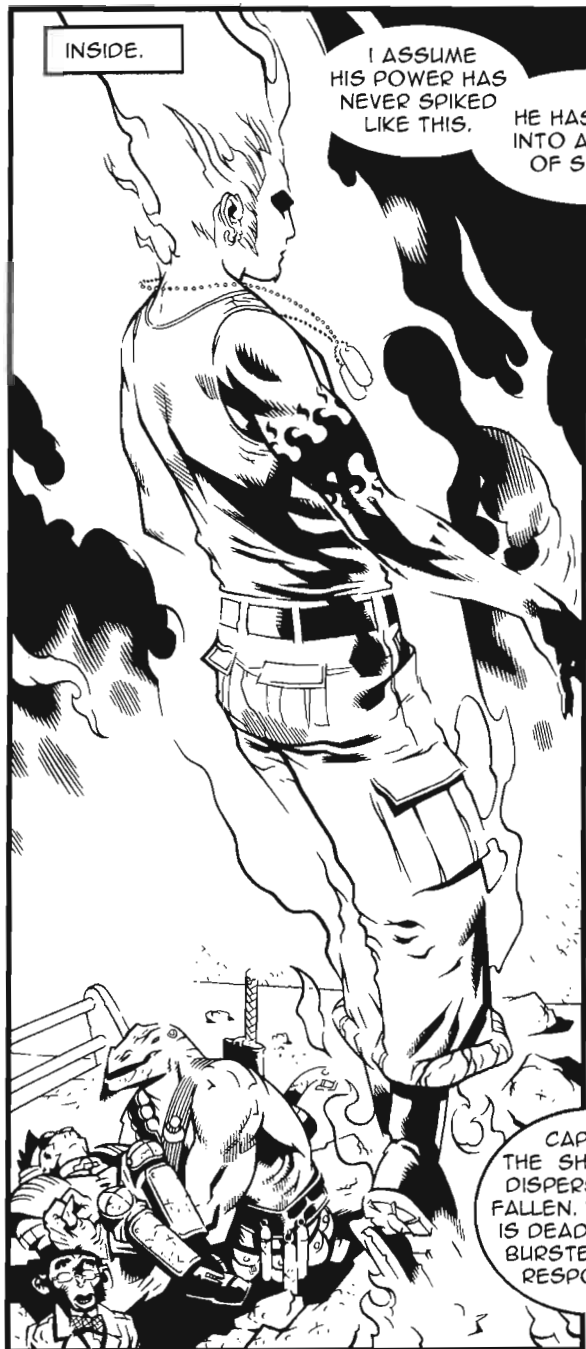


c h a p t e r s i x



BY RAMÓN PÉREZ & THE DEVIL'S ADVOCATE





INSIDE.

I ASSUME HIS POWER HAS NEVER SPIKED LIKE THIS.

HE HAS GONE INTO A STATE OF SHOCK.



WE MUST WAKE HIM.



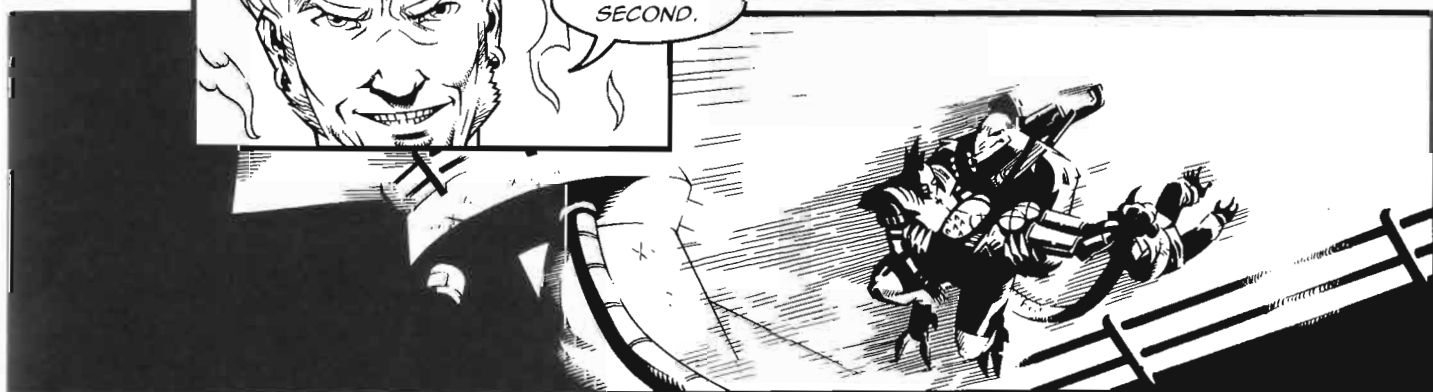
THE AISHWARRA FEARS THE FLAME AND DIGS ITS ESCAPE. TIME IS SHORT.



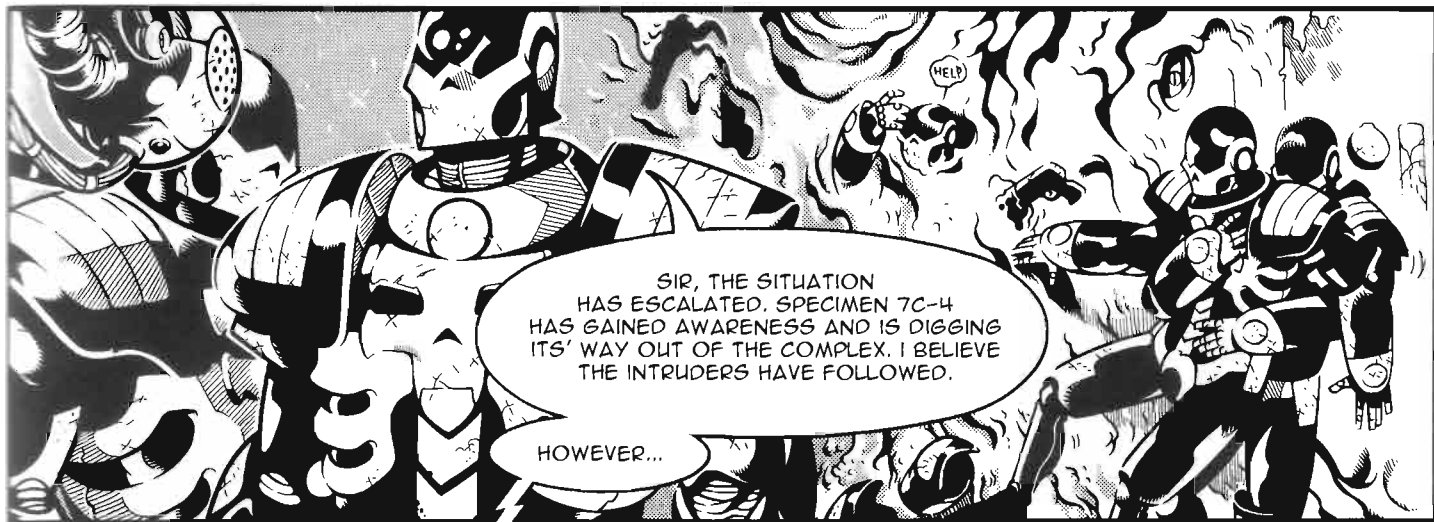
CAPTAIN, THE SHIELD HAS DISPERSED AND FALLEN. THE MAGE IS DEAD AND THE BURSTER IS UNRESPONSIVE.



FINISH THEM OFF.





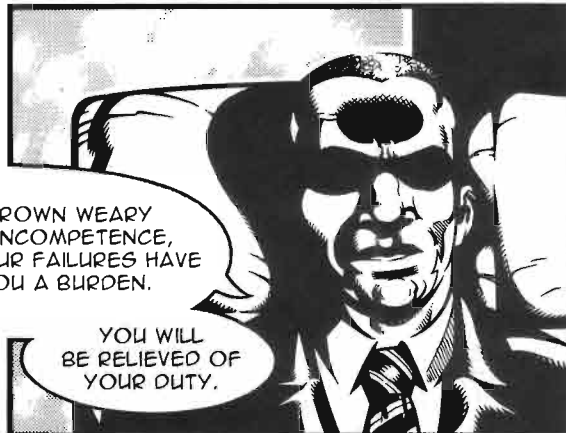


SIR, THE SITUATION HAS ESCALATED. SPECIMEN 7C-4 HAS GAINED AWARENESS AND IS DIGGING ITS WAY OUT OF THE COMPLEX. I BELIEVE THE INTRUDERS HAVE FOLLOWED.

HOWEVER...



WE ARE UNABLE TO PURSUE AT THIS TIME AS THE ENTRANCE TO 7C HAS BEEN MELTED SHUT.



I HAVE GROWN WEARY OF YOUR INCOMPETENCE, CAPTAIN. YOUR FAILURES HAVE MADE YOU A BURDEN.

YOU WILL BE RELIEVED OF YOUR DUTY.



AGENT KRIEGHOFF. A BRIGHT LIGHT THREATENS TO EXPOSE SOME VERY DARK SECRETS. THE COALITION AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, MYSELF HAVE AN IMAGE TO UPHOLD.

I TRUST THIS SITUATION WILL BE RECTIFIED.



IT SHALL BE AS IF IT NEVER WAS.



GIVE THE CAPTAIN MY WARMEST REGARDS.



WITH PLEASURE, SIR.

FOLLOWING THE
CREATURES TRAIL.

I MAY NOT HAVE
BOWIE'S TRACKING SENSE.
BUT I THINK IT WENT
THIS WAY.

LISTEN. THE
AISHWARRA HAS
STOPPED ITS
DIGGING.

IT IS
GONE.

MAGALI.

THAT MONSTROSITY
YOU SENT OUR WAY DES-
TROYED OUR HOMES AND
NEARLY KILLED US IN
THE PROCESS!

SORRY,
THINGS HAVEN'T
GONE ACCORDING
TO PLAN.

WE HAD
A PLAN?

OH
MY.

HELLO
DOCTOR. IT
HAS BEEN
QUITE SOME
TIME.

YES.
YES IT HAS.
HEH.

WE MAY BE
FOLLOWED.

I LEAVE THE
BEAST TO YOU
THEN.

WHILST WE
PREPARE FOR ANY
UNWELCOME GUESTS.
GOOD HUNTING.

CREEPY.





MEANWHILE...

DAMN!
THAT WAS TOO
CLOSE!

ANYTHING?

ZIP.

ENOUGH
OF THIS CRAP!
TIME TO SHOW'EM
THIS DOG BITES
BACK!

SHAKES!
THEY'RE ALL YOURS.
ENJOY!

HOT DIGGITY.

HUH!



DOWN BELOW...

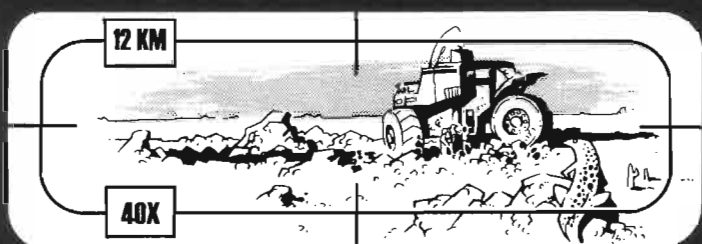


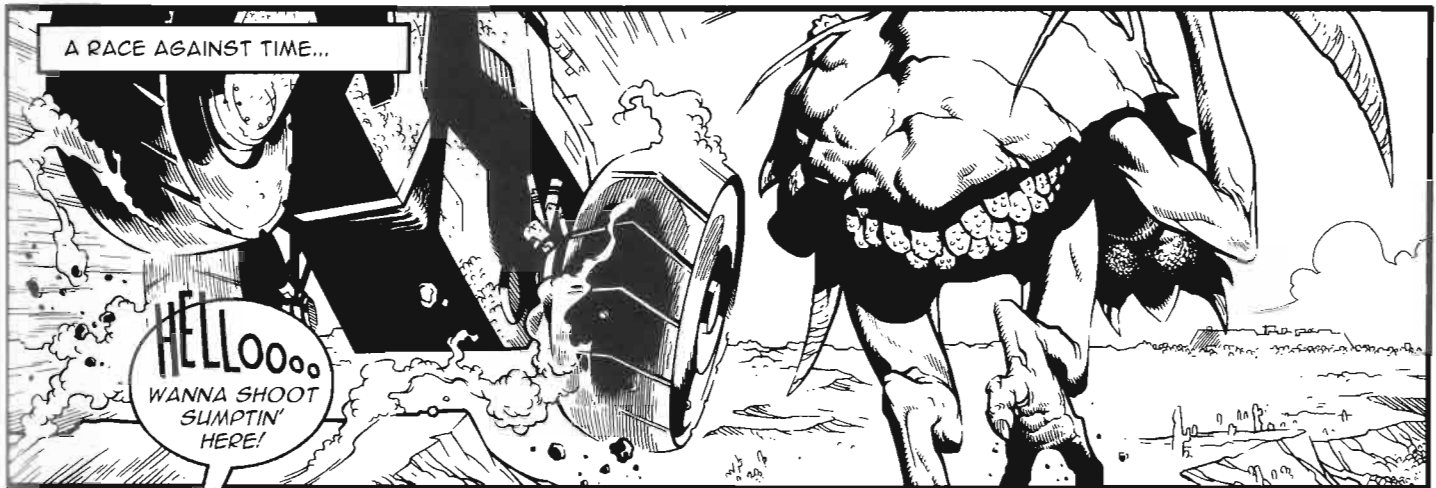


NO IDEA POOCHIE, BUT IT WAS BIG AND UGLY ENOUGH TO SCARE OFF THOSE SAMs FOR NOW.

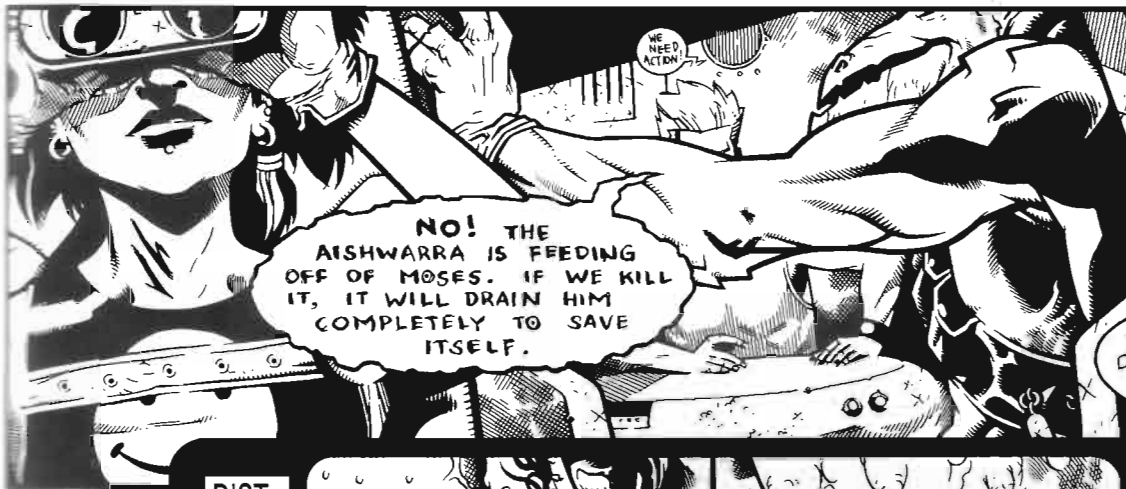
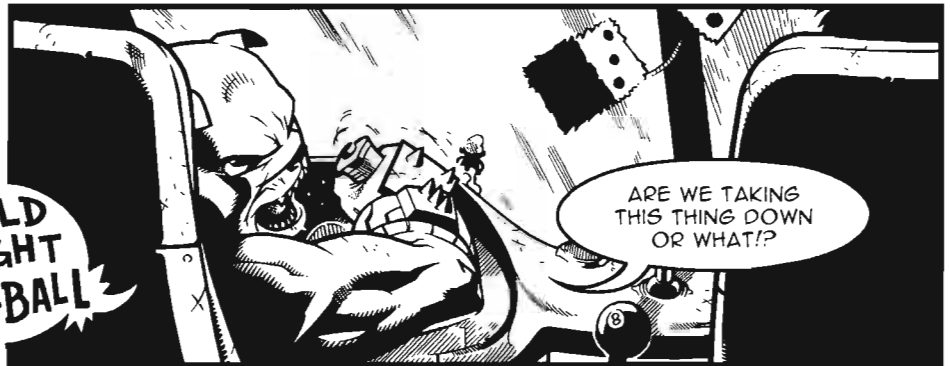


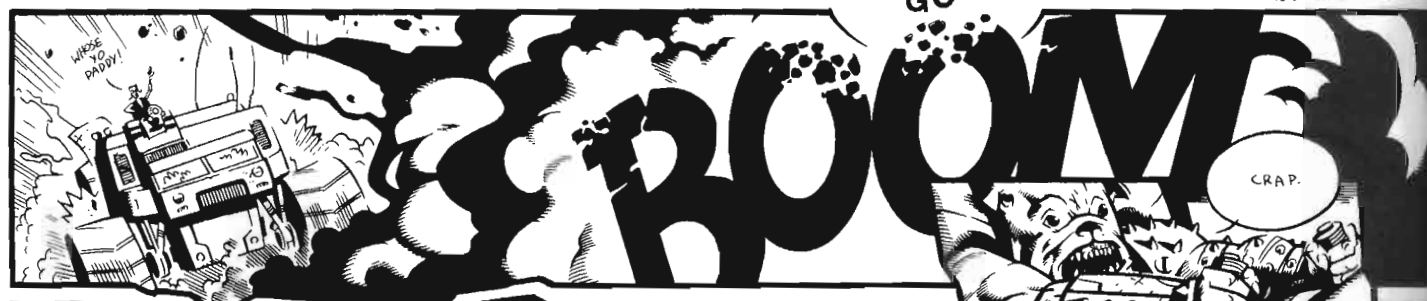
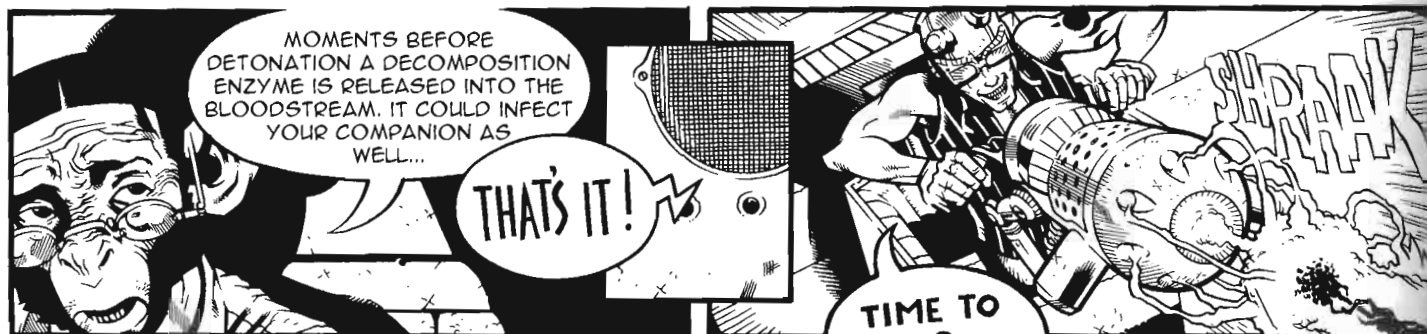
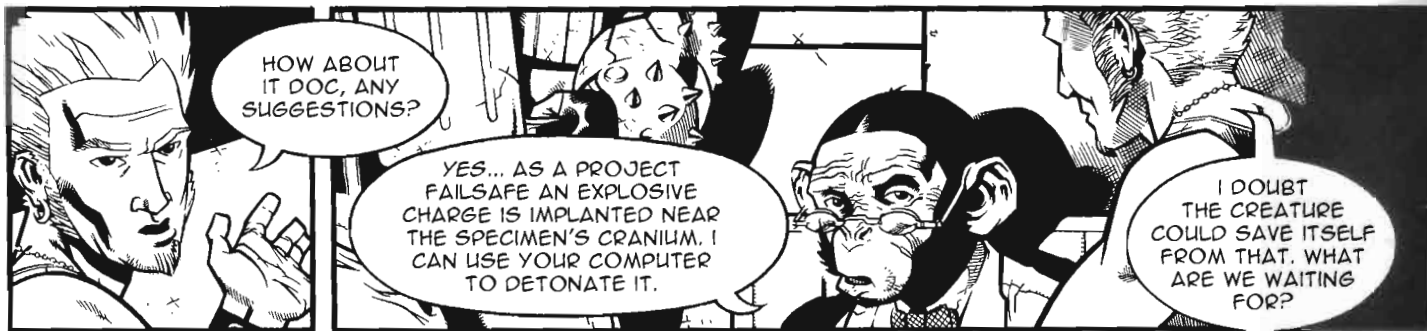
I SEE 'EM. LET'S GO SAY HELLO BEFORE MORE COMPANY ARRIVES.





c h a p t e r s e v e n BY RAMÓN PÉREZ





THE REMAINS OF ROOM 7C...



A.4. FILES SELECTED
22.7 MB OF DISK SPACE OCCUPIED
DELETE ALL FILES?
YES



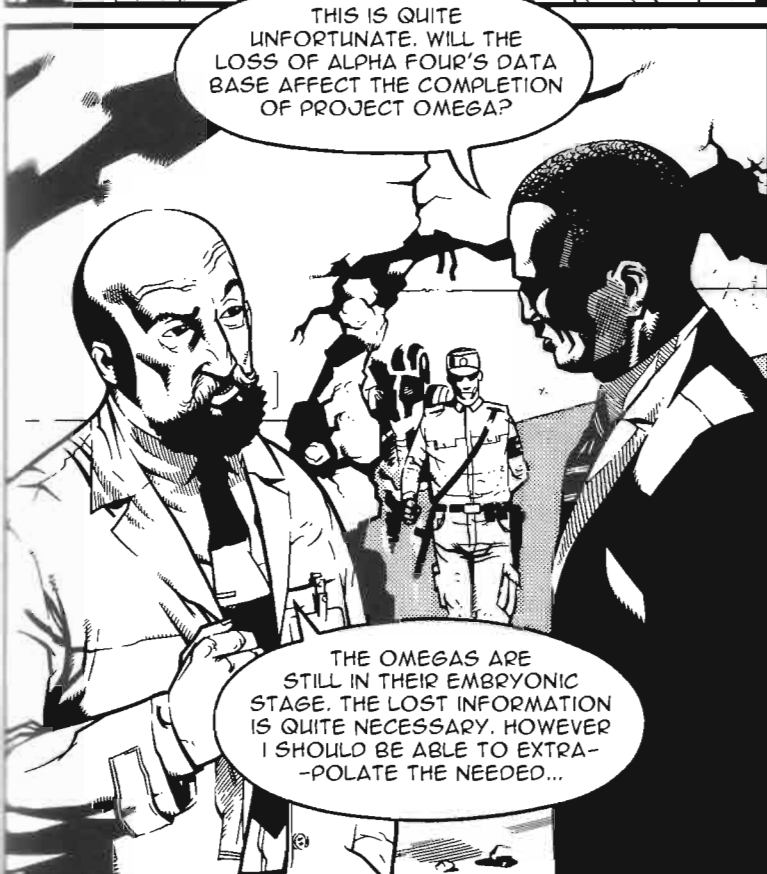
DR. ALEXANDER.



HAS THERE BEEN ANY SUCCESS?



THE HARD DRIVE IS BADLY DAMAGED. I'VE BEEN UNABLE TO RETRIEVE ANY OF ITS FILES.



THIS IS QUITE UNFORTUNATE. WILL THE LOSS OF ALPHA FOUR'S DATA BASE AFFECT THE COMPLETION OF PROJECT OMEGA?

THE OMEGAS ARE STILL IN THEIR EMBRYONIC STAGE. THE LOST INFORMATION IS QUITE NECESSARY. HOWEVER I SHOULD BE ABLE TO EXTRAPOLATE THE NEEDED...



PARDON ME, DOCTOR.

SIR, YOUR PRESENCE IS REQUIRED. WE HAVE DISCOVERED A SECURITY COMPROMISE.

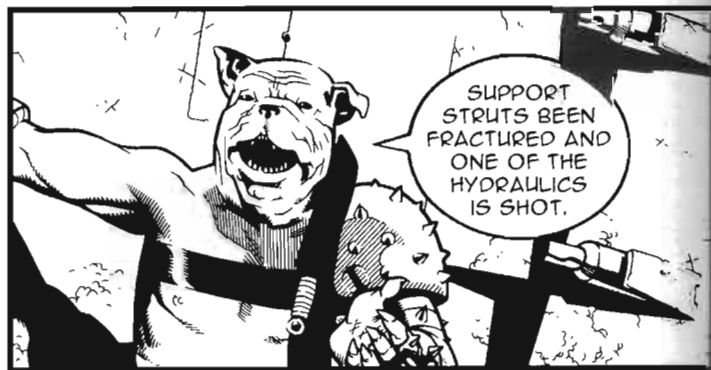
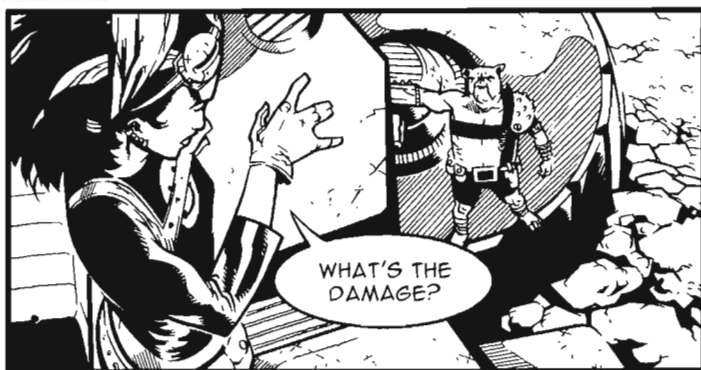
VERY WELL.

DOCTOR, ONE LAST ORDER OF BUSINESS. INITIATE THE FLATLINE SIGNAL.



ACTUALLY
HE'S A SHE.

BLUUUUUTCH.

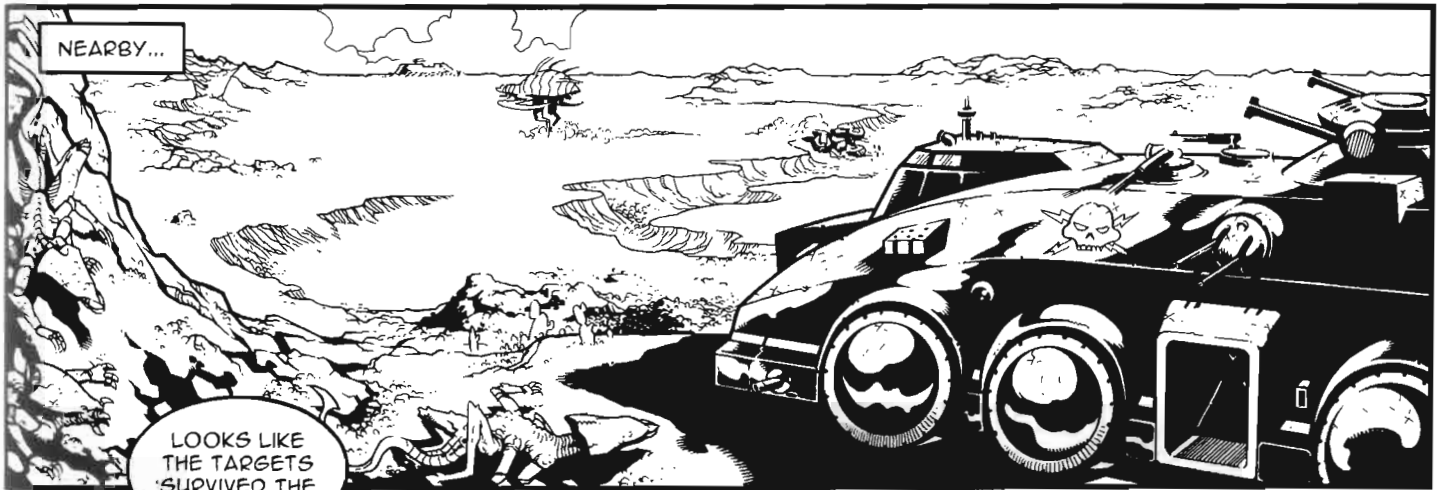


CAN YOU
FIX IT?

I'LL NEED
ABOUT TWENTY
MINUTES.

YOU'VE
GOT TEN.





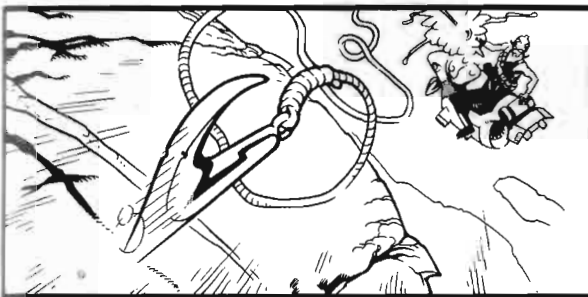
LOOKS LIKE
THE TARGETS
SURVIVED THE
CRASH.



HOW FORTUNATE.



SHOULD I
ERASE IT?





LISTEN UP.
THE CREATURE IS
HEADING TOWARDS
THE CITY.

OUR FIRST
PRIORITY IS TO
KEEP IT FROM REACHING
SAID DESTINATION. THE
SECOND IS TO ERASE ALL
OUTSIDERS WITH
INVOLVEMENT.

FROM HERE
WE SEPARATE



ARQUEBUS,
YOUR TEAM STAYS WITH
ME. WE CONTINUE WITH
THE CREATURE.



KHOLA, TAKE
YOUR TEAM AND ELIM-
-INATE THE REST OF
THE PROBLEM.



NO WORRIES
CAPTAIN.



DIST.
6.2 KM
SPD.
0 KM
HR



WE'VE GOT
TROUBLE.

COALITION'S
ON THE SCENE
AND THEY'RE SENDING
THE WELCOMING
COMMITTEE.



YOU BOYS
FINISH UP HERE
AND GET PETUNIA
UPRIGHT.



DOC, YOU
GET INSIDE AND
PREP TO BLOW
THAT THING.

WHILE
JOHNNY, BODIE
AND I GREET OUR
FRIENDS.



AND LET'S HOPE
SHAKES STILL HAS HALF
A MIND LEFT.

SPEAKING OF SHAKES...

HERE I COME
TO SAVE
THE DAY

HEY
PUMPKIN'!

BIP
BIP

FEH! ...AND
I THOUGHT THEY
SMELLED BAD ON
THE OUTSIDE.

SKREEE!

D'OH!

CHOOM



LONE STAR BASE,
SECURITY ROOM.

...WE WERE
TO MAKE COPIES
OF THIS
VRRRT
FALL INTO THE RIGHT
HANDS FOR THE
RIGHT PRI...

c h a p t e r e i g h t



BY RAMÓN PÉREZ

A MOST
INTRIGUING
DEVELOPMENT.

REPLAY
THE SEQUENCE
CORPORAL.

YES SIR.



DETONATION
HAS OCCURRED.



THANK YOU
DOCTOR.

ALPHA FOUR'S
REMAINS WILL BE
UNRECOGNIZABLE
WITHIN THE
HOUR.

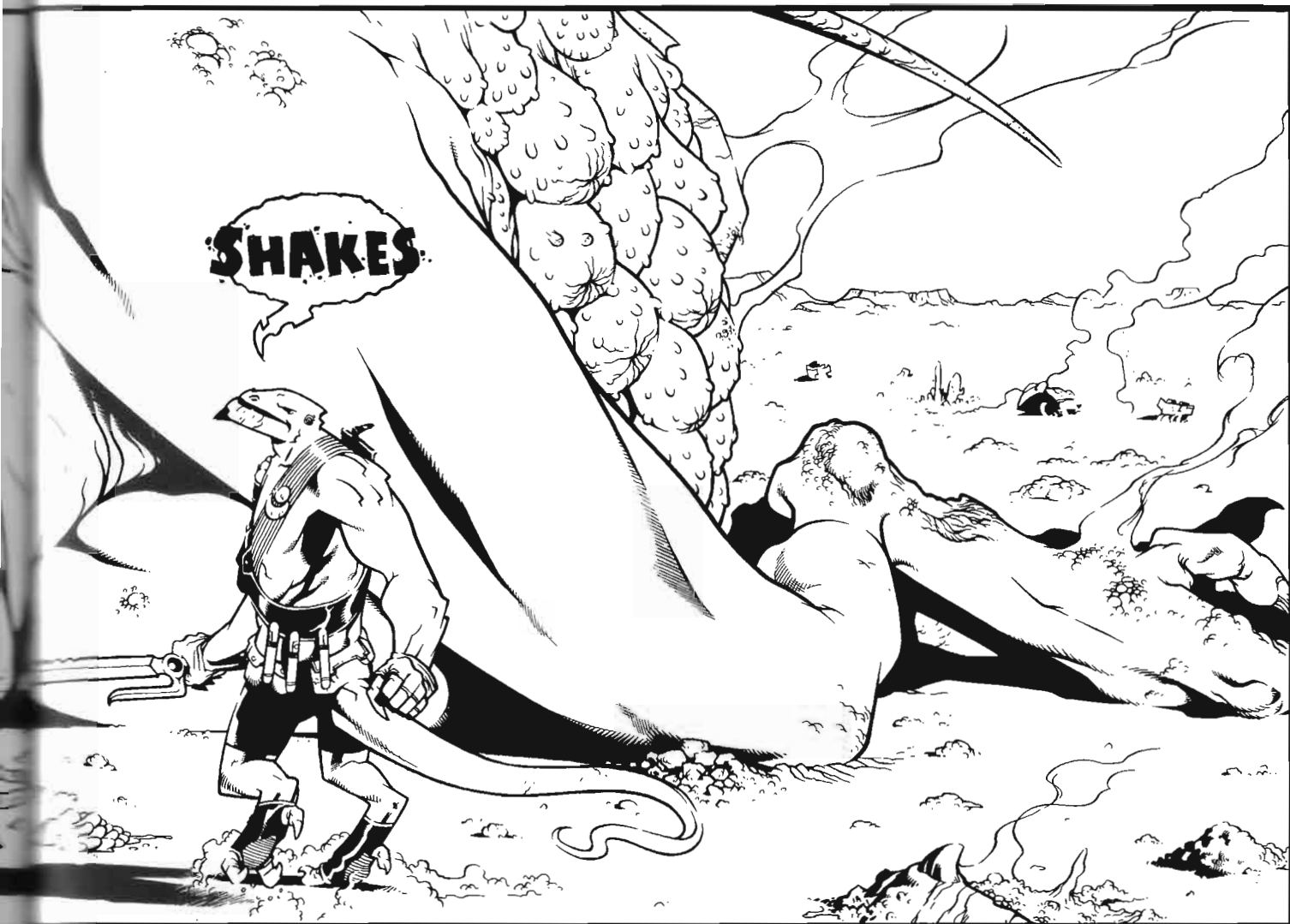


CORPORAL,
CONTACT AGENT
KRIEGHOFF.

YES SIR.

WITHIN MOMENTS...







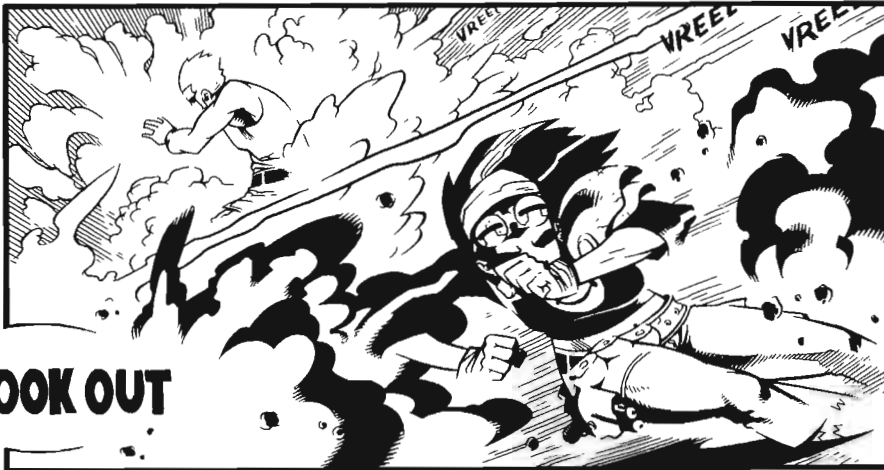
ON THE PROWL...

KINDA TURNED
ME ON BACK THERE. THE
WAY YOU TOOK CONTROL,
ALL DOMINEERING LIKE.
...YUMMY!

STUFF IT
JOHNNY, WE'RE
GETTING CLOSE
TO...



LOOK OUT



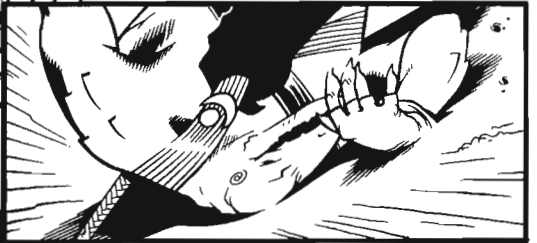
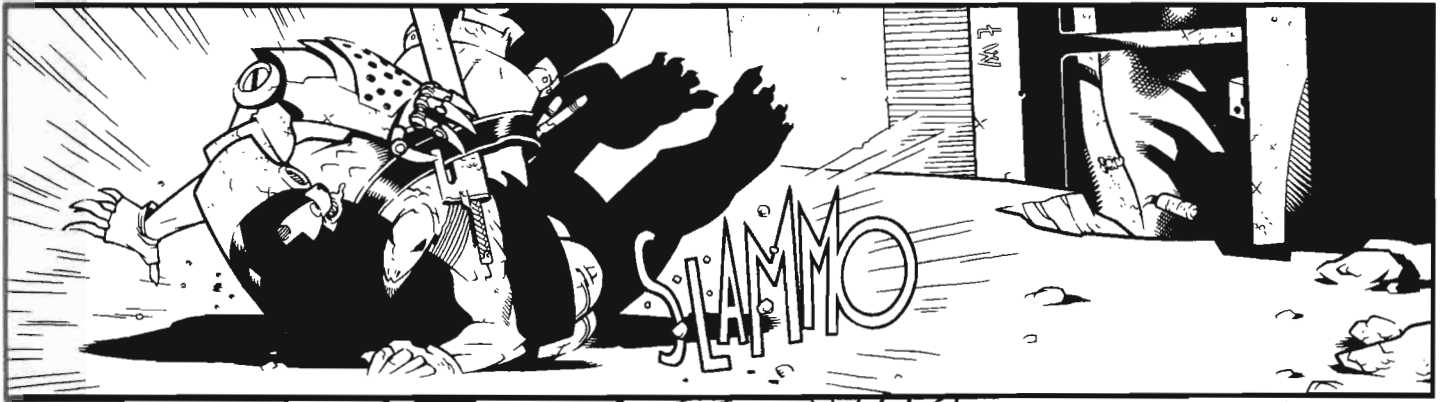
SOMETHING'S
UP, THERE SHOULD
BE FOUR!

YOU'RE
COMPLAINING?

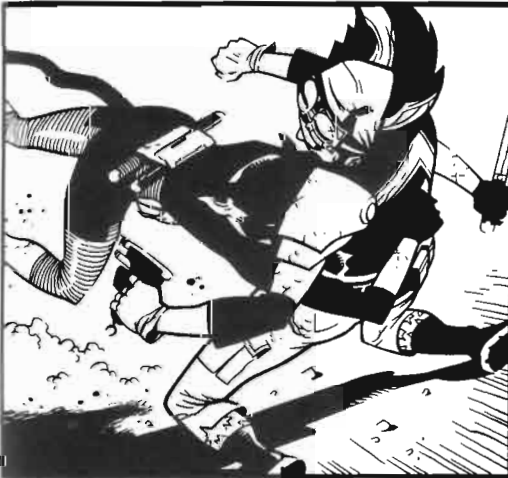
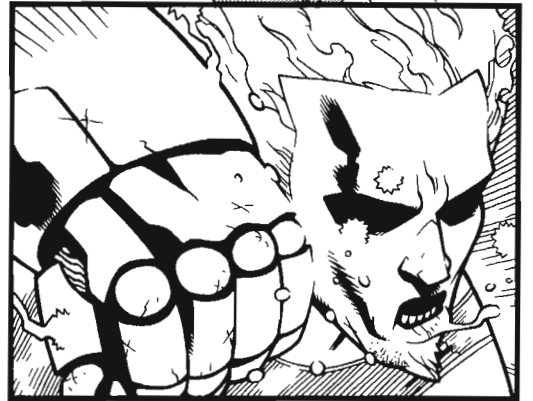


THE FOURTH
WAS A BIG
SUCKER...









A PSIONIC SUMMONS
INTERUPTS KHOLA...

ABORT
MISSION.
RELEASE
TARGETS.

BUT
CAPTA--

SNOOZE
AND YA' LOSE
ROBO-PUP!

I RECEIVED
NEW ORDERS.

...AS DID I.

BOOM!

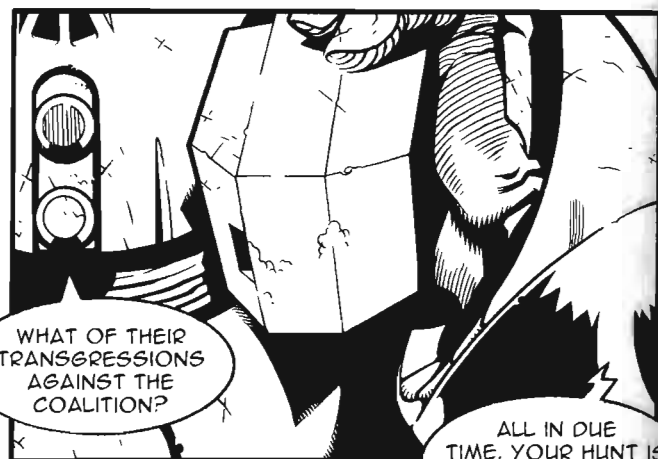
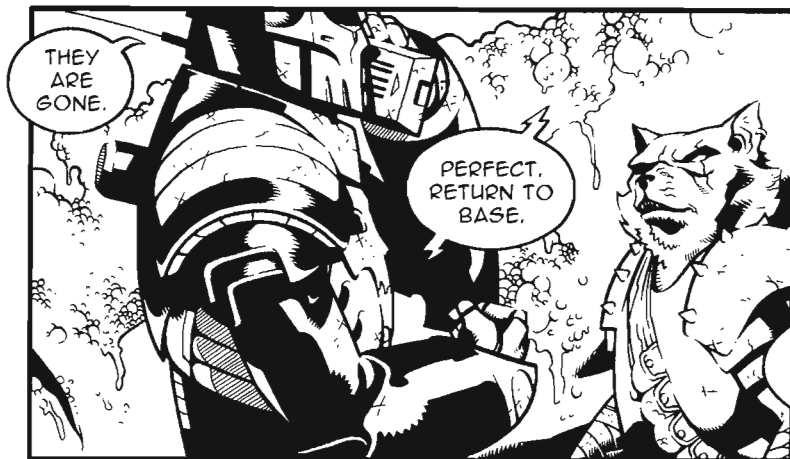
PLAYTIME'S
OVER KIDS,
TIME TO GO
HOME.

ALL
ABOARD!

LET THE
FOOLS BELIEVE
THAT THEY HAVE
WON.

☠ EPILOGUE





ALL IN DUE TIME. YOUR HUNT IS NOT OVER, SIMPLY POSTPONED.



I AWAIT YOUR RETURN, BRADFORD OUT.



YES, KEEP THEM ALIVE. LITTLE DO THEY KNOW BUT THEY ARE NOW WORKING FOR ME...

FINI 

WELCOME TO RIFTS®

by Kevin Siembieda

The comic strip you have just read is inspired by, and based on, the popular role-playing game, *Rifts*®.

The *Rifts*® RPG has been played by an estimated 1.5 million people and has been optioned by Walt Disney Pictures for development by Jerry Bruckheimer (*Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Top Gun*, *CSI*, etc.) into a live-action sci-fi movie.

THE RIFTS® STORY

The Earth has become a dimensional nexus. A junction point where the Rifts tear through space and time linking Earth to a thousand different worlds. Meanwhile, the Earth itself has become an alien landscape where the people, cultures, technologies and madness from a thousand alien worlds collide!

It is a world of contradiction and juxtaposition where high technology clashes with magic, and robot warriors and power armored troops battle dragons and demons of legend. Humans augmented through super-science share the planet with sorcerers and creatures of magic.

Nearly 200 years in the future, during a golden age of science and advancement, humankind is nearly obliterated by the *Coming of the Rifts* and the return of magic. What's left of human civilization plunges into savagery and barbarism.

Centuries later, humankind begins to rise from the ashes of destruction to reclaim their planet, only to find it is not the world of their forefathers. The Earth has been transformed into an alien landscape.

Alien beings, mutants, dragons, and demons have emerged through the Rifts and lay claim to places on Earth for themselves.

Magic and technology clash, while aliens and ancient gods and monsters, once believed the stuff of myth and legends, walk the Earth.

Meanwhile, humankind has emerged from a dark age to battle these superhuman invaders in a desperate effort to reclaim their planet.

Some of these heroes (and villains) use super-science to *augment* themselves, effectively making them just as superhumanly powerful as the creatures they must fight. Such warriors include *Combat Cyborgs*, *Headhunters*, *Juicers*™, *Crazies*™, *Dog Boys*™, and inhuman *D-Bees*™.

Others draw upon magic. The *Ley Line Walker*™, *Mystic*, and *Techno-Wizard*™ are

just a few of the new masters of magic.

The Rifts are both a blessing and a curse. Their existence offers endless possibilities as they are magic doorways to countless other worlds and alien civilizations. Rift travelers can go virtually anywhere in the Megaverse®.

However, these tears in space and time also unleash all manner of demons, monsters and alien invaders onto our ravaged Earth. Magic and technology collide in a world where reality has gone mad. And heroes are a rare commodity.

THE INSIDE TRACK

Chi-Town • Chi-Town is both a Coalition State and one of the great fortress cities. It is home to the Coalition government, capitol of the Coalition States, and where the illustrious Emperor Prosek resides. Only humans live inside the city while tens of thousands of people live in the squalid 'Burbs around it.

Coalition States (CS) • Arguably the salvation of humankind, the Coalition States is loosely patterned after the old American Empire (USA). The only difference is that the CS is ruled by *Emperor Karl Prosek* and his human supremacists. Thus, the Coalition States is becoming more like Nazi Germany than the USA. Its storm troopers dress in black, skeleton armor and are known as *Dead Boys* because of their dark, skeletal appearance and the fact that they bring death to D-Bees, mages and all *enemies* of the Coalition States.

Emperor Prosek and his Coalition States are obsessed with destroying all alien life forms and users of magic, whether they use their powers for good or evil. In their own way, the Emperor and the Coalition Army are just as evil as the monsters they fight.

D-Bees • This is the slang term for "Dimensional Beings," humanoids from alien worlds living on Rifts Earth.

Lone Star Complex • This is a sprawling, top secret, pre-Rift military compound bigger than Area 51. It is built underground and specializes in genetic engineering. The CS discovered it and made it their own years ago. This is where the Coalition's famous *Psi-Hounds*, better known as *Dog Boys*, like Bowie, are engineered, grown, and trained to be elite grunts in the Coalition Army. They are able to sniff-out magic and supernatural monsters, and make great scouts.

In recent years, Lone Star has created a

range of new and monstrous mutant animals to serve the Coalition States. This includes *Monkey Boys*, *Battle Cats*, *Kill Cats*, *Ursa-Warriors* (bears), and *Mutant Rats* (which have gotten a bit out of control, with rogue rats living underneath the compound in the sewers and between the walls).

The Lone Star Compound is run by the enigmatic *Doctor Desmond Bradford*. A gentleman who gives new meaning to the term "mad scientist." Whether he is a super-patriot loyal to the Coalition, or a madman with his own machinations for a better future, is yet to be determined.

The 'Burbs • Slang referring to the urban cesspool of alien monsters, D-Bees, refugees, and villainy that usually settle outside the walls of the Coalition's great fortress cities such as Chi-Town or Lone Star Complex.

THE RIFTS® RPG

RIFTS® is a *pen and paper RPG*. An RPG is basically *make-believe* or *let's pretend* with formal rules and story-like adventures. It is played with a group of friends and is a combination of improvisational theater, storytelling, silliness and fun.

You, the players, are the heroes. The Game Master is the director who plays all the bad guys and other characters, and helps to start and develop the story you tell. There's no real acting or props involved and you can play in your living room. When you're done playing a game session, it has the feel of having just seen a great movie, only *YOU* played the main characters and shaped the story. It's awesome and there's nothing like it!

If you'd like to learn more about *Rifts*® and our other role-playing games, check out our website at palladiumbooks.com for the complete lowdown.

Or write to ask for our *free* catalog at Palladium Books, 12455 Universal Drive, Taylor, MI 48180. Tell 'em you heard about us in the Lone Star graphic novel and source-book.



ANIKA TAHERRI

TECHNO WARRIOR HEADHUNTER

THE LONESTAR RAIDERS

Our heroes are members of a group of freelance mercenaries and adventurers who have traveled and fought together plenty of times. They are not a major mercenary organization like *Crow's Commandoes* or *Braddock's Bad Boys*, let alone *Larsen's Brigade*. The group didn't even have a catchy name up until recently when they decided to go up against the Coalition and the maniacal Dr. Desmond Bradford himself!

They preferred keeping a low profile. But sometimes when you plan on saving the planet you have to stick your neck up above the crowd.

WANTED / ALIVE: THE LONESTAR RAIDERS FOR CRIMES AGAINST THE COALITION.

And so *The Lonestar Raiders* were christened when the Coalition began broadcasting their faces on wanted posters and news feeds everywhere.

The team is somewhat loosely structured, and there is no official leader, per se. Instead, leadership (and what courses of action the group takes) is derived from: a general consensus of everyone involved or by who yells the loudest. That or you're an eight foot tall orange alien from another planet bristling with muscle that has a voice akin to a chainsaw cutting through concrete that no one will argue with!

At various times *Anika*, *O.J.*, *Moses* or *Bodakhan* may take charge, giving orders or making sweeping decisions that affect the entire group. Even *Johnny* and *Bowie* take the lead when the timing is right, though that is not often. *Shakes* is the only team member who the others totally disregard as leadership material, though he may run off to do something on his own. That having been said, more often than not, **Anika** is the *de facto* leader, due to her strong leadership skills and ability to make quick decisions.

Tough, smart and capable, Anika is the team's natural, if unofficial, leader. She and Moses see the big picture and Anika has the best mind for strategy and tactics. She steps into the role of leader without even thinking about it, taking charge and barking orders as circumstance dictates. Everyone on the team recognizes and welcomes her military capabilities and clear judgement in combat situations. They all know Anika can size up most situations at a glance and come up with a combat plan two heartbeats later. She is also courageous and sharp under fire.

Anika likes to hold her cards close to the vest and often acts more calm and aloof than she's really feeling. Underneath her tough, cool exterior is a heart of gold full of warmth and compassion. She considers her teammates family, and cares for each and every one of them, even Johnny.

She grew up in Kingsdale, a town that caters to Juicers, mercenaries, and adventurers. She had five brothers in the mercenary business who all treated her like one of "the guys." They're the ones who taught her how to shoot along with the basics of the mercenary trade. However, soon Anika was a better sharpshooter than they were. Anika is deadly with guns of all kinds, but she prefers pistols, is a quick draw and can fire weapons with both hands simultaneously with deadly accuracy.

Tired of living in the shadow of her brothers, Anika struck out on her own at the age of 17 and hasn't looked back since. In addition to a love for guns, travel, and adventure, Anika has always been fascinated with secrets and the hidden face of people and society. She also enjoys technology in all its forms, including bionics and cybernetics. Though it is not obvious, Anika has a bionic left arm and a number of bionic implants.

Anika is glad they have managed to survive their adventure in Lone Star, but she knows something else is going on *behind the scenes*. There is no way they should have been able to escape – not if Doctor Bradford really wanted to stop them. The complex must have several platoons of Dead Boy soldiers and SAMAS, hundreds, maybe thousands

of Psi-Hounds and other mutants, and plenty of resources to have stopped them dead in their tracks. No, she is convinced something else is afoot here, and fears they are being used as pawns in a greater scheme. If only she could figure out what, because that might change what they do next with the information in hand. And is this some machination of Desmond Bradford or some other, yet unseen, hand?

Name: Anika Taherri

Species: Human, augmented by cybernetics and bionics.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 12, M.A. 15, P.S. 20, P.P. 23 with right hand, 20 with left (bionic) one, P.E. 15, P.B. 19, Spd 10.

Size: 6 feet, one inch (1.85 m).

Weight: 150 pounds (67.5 kg).

Hit Points: 43. **S.D.C.:** 34.

Age: 26

M.D.C.: Via M.D.C. body armor or magic from Moses.

P.P.E.: 3

Experience Level: 7th level Headhunter.

Disposition: Anika is resourceful, clever, and calculating. She can accurately sum up most situations at a glance and immediately starts formulating the best course of action. She thinks fast on her feet and is a natural born leader, not that she'd admit it or accept the title. Somehow accepting the title of "leader" has too much responsibility attached to it, which is why she's the unofficial, *de facto* leader of the squad. Every one of her teammates trusts her and her judgement completely, and seldom hesitates to follow her lead or commands.

Anika considers Moses and O.J. equals. She likes and enjoys working with Bodakhan and Bowie, but she finds Johnny to be annoying, impulsive, childish and irresponsible. She understands and appreciates Shakes, but sometimes finds him to be a bit disgusting and unpredictable (he *is* crazy).

Special Abilities:

• **Headhunter's Find Contraband:**

A variant of the standard *Find Contraband* skill, only it is much more

narrowly focused on technological contraband, particularly bionics and weapons, to the exclusion of all else (drugs, magic, etc.). This means Anika has a good idea of where to go to find arms dealers, weapons or bionics smugglers, Body-Chop-Shops, Cyber-Snatchers, and underground Cyber-Docs, as well as how to spot and approach them. She is also familiar with their practices, hangouts, gang or criminal ties, general practices, code of conduct, fees, pricing and modes of operation. Likewise, she has a good idea what Black Market weapons and cybernetics should cost and what these people pay for contraband items (typically only 20% of the retail market price). Additionally, she knows the penalties for being caught with an illegal weapon, implant or bionics (not that Headhunters care).

Anika's Current Skill Level: 77%.

Note: In all CS cities and most other societies, M.D. weapons, concealed weapons and side arms are forbidden inside large population centers.

This skill cannot be used to identify or locate drug dealers, assassins, smugglers of other items (such as books or magic), practitioners of magic, guilds, sects or other secret societies or operations - only those dealing in the making, selling and smuggling of weapons, armor, vehicles, cybernetics, bionics and advanced technologies.

Contacts: As a Techno-Warrior Headhunter, Anika also has numerous contacts and connections in Kingsdale and about half as many at MercTown. Contacts include technology smugglers, arms dealers, forgers, fences, information brokers, and other mercenaries.

Skills of Note: Boxing, Computer Operation 83%, Detect Ambush 73%, Detect Concealment 73%, Electronic Countermeasures 83%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Land Navigation 77%, Language: Native Tongue: American 98%, Language: Other: Spanish 84%, Literacy: American 83%, Lore: D-Bees 68%, Lore: Demons & Monsters 73%, Lore: Psychics & Psionics 68%, Hovercycle 94%, Pilot: Jet Pack 85%, Pilot: Tanks & APCs 77%, Pilot: Truck 81%, Radio: Basic 93%, Sensory Equipment 78%,

Recognize Weapon Quality 78%, Tracking (people) 77%, Weapon Systems 88%, Wilderness Survival 73%, and W.P. Paired Weapons, W.P. Quick Draw, W.P. Targeting, W.P. Handguns, W.P. Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle, all at 7th level.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: As per hand to hand combat or weapon. The left, bionic arm and hand does one M.D. with a power punch but that counts as two melee attacks.

Bonuses (total): +2 on initiative, +2 on Perception Rolls, +6 to strike, +7 to parry, and +7 to dodge, +5 S.D.C. damage from punches and kicks,

+5 to pull punch, +8 to disarm with guns on a "Called Shot," +9 to strike with a "Called Shot" or careful aim, +5 to disarm in Hand to Hand Combat, +5 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs Horror Factor and +10% to save vs Coma & Death. Critical Strike (double damage) on a Natural 18, 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: None per se.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

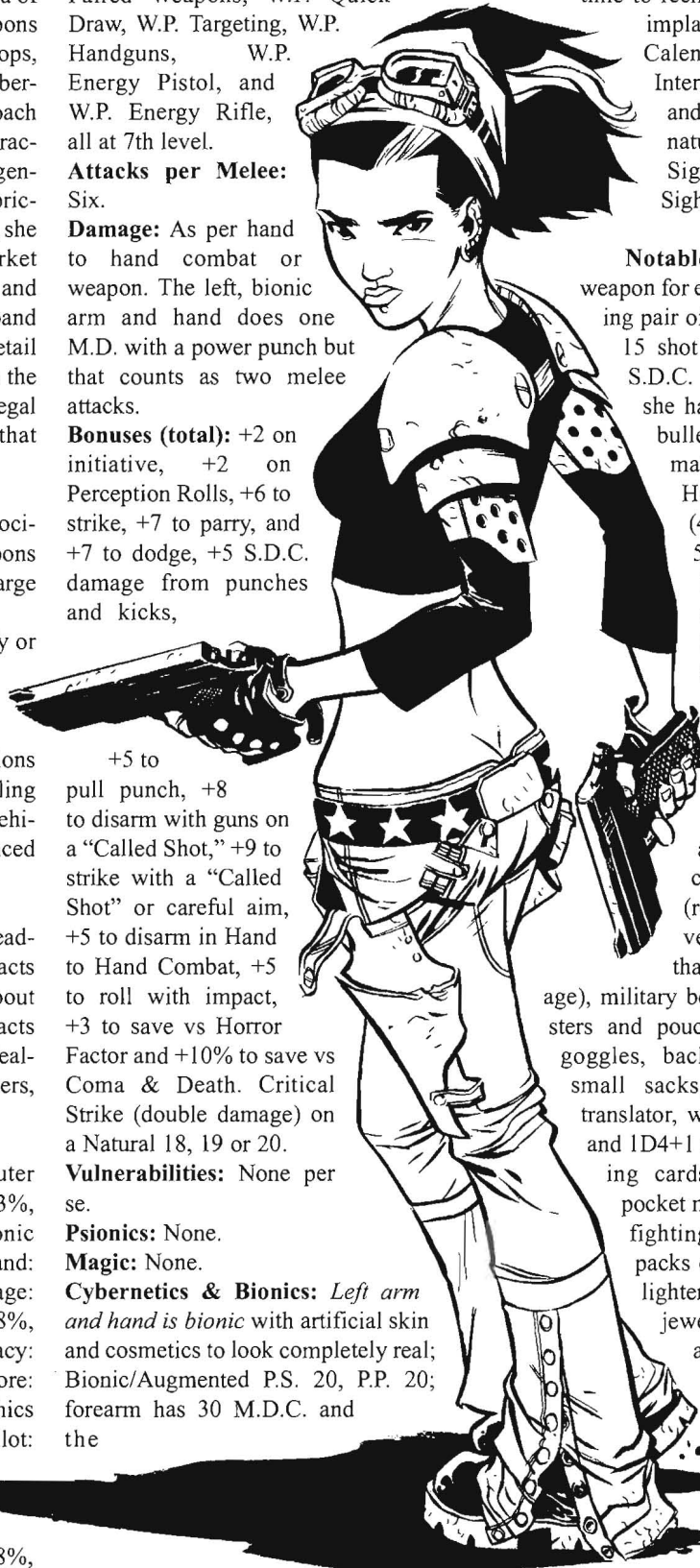
Cybernetics & Bionics: *Left arm and hand is bionic* with artificial skin and cosmetics to look completely real; Bionic/Augmented P.S. 20, P.P. 20; forearm has 30 M.D.C. and the

upper arm has 50 M.D.C. Fingerjack and Laser Finger Blaster (1D4 M.D., 300 foot/91.5 m range, 6 blasts before needing time to recharge). Plus cybernetic

implants, including Clock Calendar, Gyro-Compass, Internal Comp-Calculator, and one bionic eye (looks natural and has Targeting Sight and Telescopic Sight).

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P., has a matching pair of 10 mm pistols with a 15 shot clip each (does 5D6 S.D.C. damage per shot and she has 96 rounds of silver bullets when needed), a matching pair of NG Heavy Ion Blasters (4D6 M.D. per blast, 500 foot/152 m range; her favorite weapons), a pair of Vibro-Knives (1D6 M.D.), a pair of survival knives (1D6 S.D.C. damage), a suit of Bushman body armor (60 M.D.C.) for when fighting gets serious, a modest wardrobe of clothing, belt with stars (really detachable, silver-plated shurikens that do 1D4 S.D.C. damage), military belt with a pair of holsters and pouches, air filter, tinted goggles, backpack, satchel, 1D4 small sacks, portable language translator, walkie-talkie, note pad and 1D4+1 markers, deck of playing cards, portable tool kit, pocket mirror, silver cross (for fighting vampires), 1D4 packs of cigarettes, cigarette lighter, some southwestern jewelry, and some personal items.

Money: 6,000 credits on her, 44,000 credits in savings.



BODAKHAN

JIN-RO MERCENARY SOLDIER

Bodakhan is a loveable, big lug who is as loyal to his friends as anyone can be. He thinks of them all as family, and will do anything to protect them. He's an excellent fighter who likes big guns and explosives, and knows how to use them (unlike Shakes). Like all Grackle Tooth, Bodakhan has Supernatural Strength, a Mega-Damage body, and enjoys roughhousing, physical sports and combat.

He doesn't know how he came to Rifts Earth and has no idea how to get home. He and his fellow tribesmen were locked in a battle with an ancient Aishwarra during one of the great wars, when suddenly there was a swirl of color and energy and he found himself in an unknown and alien land – Rifts Earth. (When the Aishwarra was slain, a Rift erupted from its magically bloated corpse and it sucked in several Jin-Ro warriors and shamans, who were dimensionally teleported to Rifts Earth.) That was 20 years ago. Since then, Bodakhan drifted for a while to get the lay of the land and was surprised to find Jin-Ro (aka Grackle Tooth) already on Earth. However, he was even more surprised to learn they remembered nothing of their home world or the customs of their people, or even the name of their race. It was a disturbing revelation, but he came to terms with it long ago.

One of the things Bodakhan quite enjoys about Rifts Earth is the wide variety of weapons available, as well as all the strange and wondrous sights to be seen and places to visit. For a while he just drifted and explored. Then he ran with various mercenary companies in the Midwest before finally settling down with this group.

Old enough when Rifted away from his home world to remember it, Bodakhan often thinks about his native planet, the people, and battles with hated monsters like the Aishwarra. He still wears his tribal sash that displays the symbol of his family, the Chakarra tribe, over his left shoulder, and carries his ancestors' enchanted blade. Now that he has a better understanding of magic and dimensional portals, he plans to, one day, find his way home and bring with him an arsenal of modern weapons to replace his people's primitive ones and help defeat their home world's destroyers. Until then, he craves adventure and enjoys playing the role of

wandering hero and hired gun. In fact, he often tries to persuade his comrades to follow a more noble and honorable path. Though he is not always as successful as he'd like.

Bodakhan agrees that they were probably allowed to escape Lone Star with the information. Though for what purpose he can't imagine, and that troubles him. He has never been one to play games with other people's lives and can't understand people who do. Consequently, he hopes that Anika, O.J. or Moses figures out what sort of treachery may lay ahead of them, so they can avoid it, or turn the tables on their nemesis. He has never been to the Chi-Town 'Burbs and is looking forward to the experience.

Name: Bodakhan

Species: Jin-Ro. Nicknamed Grackle Tooth on Rifts Earth.

Alignment: Principled.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 14, M.A. 23, P.S. 31 (Supernatural), P.P. 16, P.E. 18 (Supernatural), P.B. 9, Spd 15.

Size: 8 feet, 6 inches (2.6 m).

Weight: 600 pounds (270 kg) of muscle.

Age: 38 (young for a Grackle Tooth, who live to 160-200 years old).

M.D.C.: Jin-Ro/Grackle Tooth are minor Mega-Damage beings. Bodakhan has 122 M.D.C.

P.P.E.: 9

Experience Level: 6th level Merc Soldier.

Disposition: Good natured, straight-forward, friendly, kind, compassionate, brave, idealistic and heroic, Bodakhan lives by a strong code of honor. He hates injustice, cruelty, slavery and tyranny. His word is bond, and he is so honest, trustworthy and noble, that if you didn't know better, you might think he was a Cyber-Knight. Bodakhan is one tough hombre in combat, and can be merciless when dealing with the enemy. Away from the battlefield, he is a gentle soul who enjoys the simple pleasures in life. Two of those simple pleasures are a good cigar and a brew, another is exploring new realms and meeting new people, but the best is being with friends who make a difference in the world.

Special Abilities: Sharp vision, incredible

strength, excellent reflexes, quick wit, and a fast healer: recovers lost M.D.C. at a rate of 2D6 per 12 hours.

• **Prehensile Tail (special):** All Grackle Tooth have a long, tapering, 12-15 foot (3.6 to 4.6 m) prehensile tail. Adds one extra attack per melee round and can use handheld melee weapons (Vibro-Blades, clubs, etc.) to strike, and even handguns. However, a weapon fired by the tail is -3 to strike even for an Aimed Shot. **Note:** If damaged or lost, the tail will regenerate at the rate of one foot (0.3 m) per month until it reaches its full length.

• **Specialized Skills:** All Grackle Tooth have mechanical aptitude and Bodakhan's area of specialty (MOS) is Demolitions! All skills and applicable bonuses are listed below.

Skills of Note: Appraise Goods 65%, Barter 68%, Basic Electronics 90%, Basic Mechanics 85%, Computer Operation 80%, Demolitions 93%, Demolitions Disposal 98%, Demolitions: Underwater 90%, General Athletics, General Repair and Maintenance 80%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Language: Native Tongue: American 94%, Language: Other: Spanish 80%, Literacy: American 80%, Math: Basic 80%, Military Etiquette 85%, Radio: Basic 85%, Recognize Weapon Quality 65%, Trap/Mine Detection 70%, and W.P. Blunt, W.P. Sword, W.P. Shotgun, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons, all at 6th level.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: Supernatural Strength or by weapon. Restrained Punch does 5D6 S.D.C. damage, Full Strength Punch 4D6 M.D., and a Power Punch does 1D4x10 M.D., but counts as two melee attacks.

Bonuses (total): +2 on initiative, +3 on Perception Rolls, +3 to strike, +5 to parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +1 to disarm, +4 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs poison, +7 to save vs disease, +1 to save against magic, psionic attacks and illusions, and +5 to save vs Horror Factor. Critical Strike on a Natural 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: None, per se. If anything, it is his good nature and idealism.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P. and 1D4+4 E-Clips/ammo for each, plus a Coalition CR-1 Rocket Launcher loaded with 12 rockets (1D6x10 M.D. each) and has an additional 24 plas-

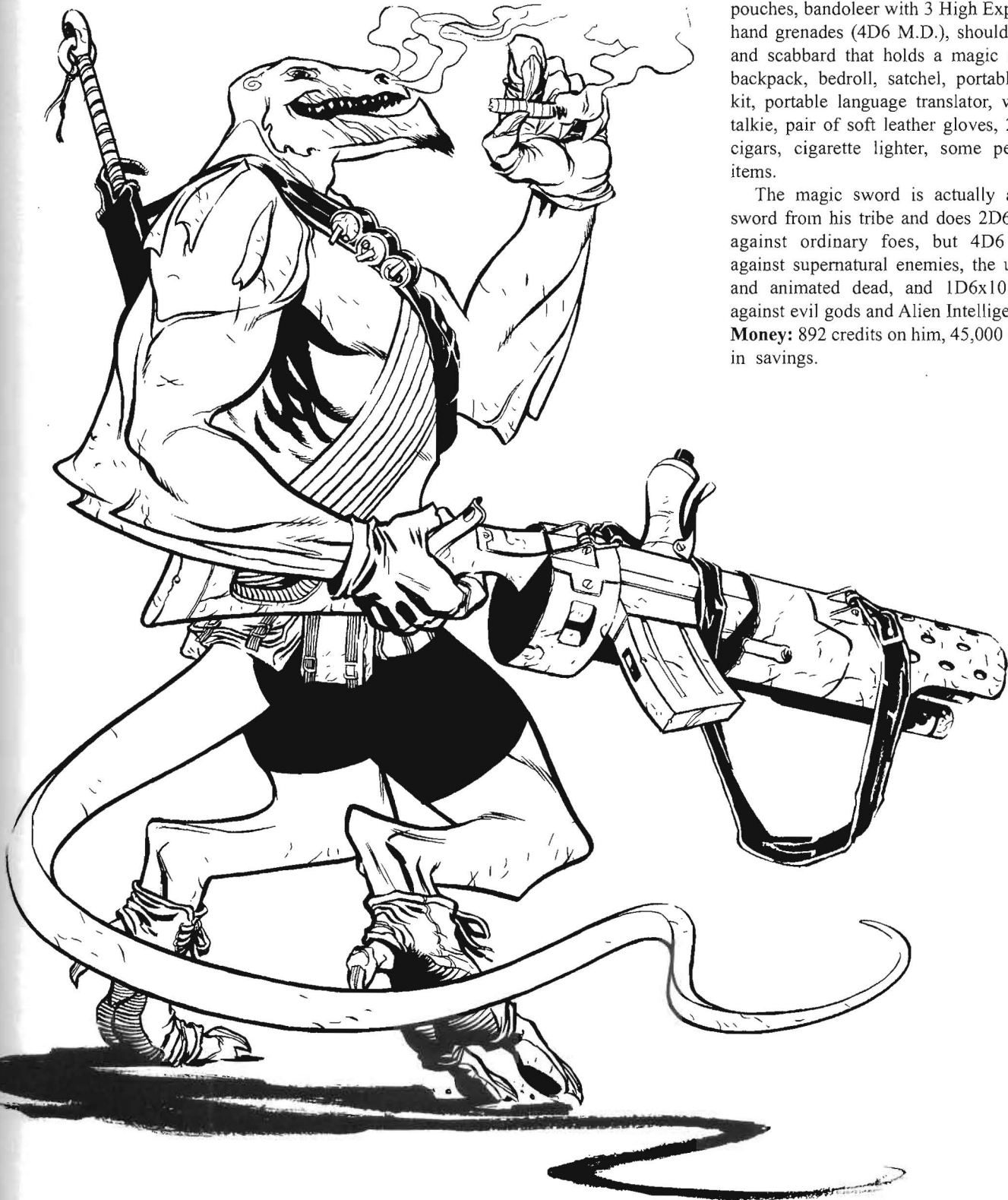
ma and 12 armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) rockets, but his other favorite is a Warlords of Russia-made import: AR-44 "Sledgehammer" rail gun (1D4x10 M.D. per 20 round burst; range: 4,000 feet/1219

m; may use a 10 burst clip or a 3000 round/150 burst drum).

Other equipment includes patchwork suit of body armor (62 M.D.C.), survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), several pairs of pants and shorts, a poncho, belt with holster and pouches, bandoleer with 3 High Explosive hand grenades (4D6 M.D.), shoulder belt and scabbard that holds a magic sword, backpack, bedroll, satchel, portable tool kit, portable language translator, walkie-talkie, pair of soft leather gloves, 2D6+6 cigars, cigarette lighter, some personal items.

The magic sword is actually a holy sword from his tribe and does 2D6 M.D. against ordinary foes, but 4D6 M.D. against supernatural enemies, the undead and animated dead, and 1D6x10 M.D. against evil gods and Alien Intelligences.

Money: 892 credits on him, 45,000 credits in savings.



BOWIE

FREEBORN DOG BOY & OPERATOR

Bowie is a rare "free born" Psi-Hound. Psi-Hounds, better known as "Dog Boys," are canines genetically engineered at the Lone Star Genetics Complex into humanoid soldiers and defenders of humanity in the service of the Coalition States. A *Free Born Dog Boy* is a character who was born, not grown in a test tube, to two Psi-Hound parents. The parents were either feral, escapees from Lone Star or Rogue Psi-Hounds who went AWOL. Bowie has never served in the Coalition Army and knows nothing about Chi-Town other than the stories he has heard. Still, like all Psi-Hounds, Bowie has an instinctive hatred for demons and evil supernatural beings, and an affection for, and an affinity with, humans. In fact, all Dog Boys can *sense* the presence of the supernatural and magic, and even track powerful sensations and scents to their source.

Bowie is a skilled mechanic, or Operator, specializing in automotive mechanics. He's also a good driver and can handle himself in a fight.

He's not sure of what to make of recent events at Lone Star. Clearly something is going on beyond the obvious, but he just hopes their involvement doesn't come back to haunt them.

Name: Bowie

Species: Freeborn Dog Boy

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 13, M.A. 9, P.S. 20, P.P. 15, P.E. 13, P.B. 8, Spd 11.

Species: Boxer, mutant dog.

Size: 5 foot, 4 inches (1.6 m).

Weight: 160 pounds (72 kg).

Hit Points: 36. **S.D.C.:** 43.

Age: 19 (That's like 29 for humans).

P.P.E.: 10

Experience Level: 5th level *Operator*. Bowie is freeborn and has never served in the military other than the current squad of mercs.

Disposition: Serious and somber. Bowie is a nuts and bolts kinda guy who likes to talk straight and get to the heart of the matter. He too considers the group to be his adopted family and enjoys working, playing and living with the rest of the squad.

Special Abilities:

• Sense Psychic and Magic Energy.

Bowie's Skill Level: 65% +5% per level of experience (roll once every melee round). Range: 650 feet (198 m). No I.S.P. cost.

• Recognize

Psychic Scent:

Bowie's Skill Level: 30% to recognize the

general

psychic scent of a

particular race or species of mortal monster, animal (familiar) or D-Bee. 18% to recognize *a specific individual*; +10% bonus if the mutant has a bit of hair, skin, blood, or an article of recently worn clothing (4 hours or less) and +10% if it is somebody or something the Dog Boy has encountered in the past and knows well. Bonuses are accumulative. Range: 70 feet (21.2 m). No I.S.P. Cost.

• Sense Supernatural Beings:

Bowie's Skill Level: 72% to identify the *specific type/race* of supernatural beings, such as Alien Intelligences, gods, demigods, demons, and vampires, as well as creatures of magic such as Faeries and dragons. *Tracking by Scent:* 60%.

Range 500 feet (152 m), 1,500 (457 m) to track when magic as it is being cast, and 5,000 feet (1524 m) to sense and track Demon Lords, gods and other powerful supernatural beings. No I.S.P. cost. **Note:** Close proximity

to ley lines (within a mile/1.6 km) *disrupts and blurs* the psychic senses (reduce range and skill performance by half) and completely obliterates them when on/within a ley line.

• Enhanced Physical

Endurance: Twice that of the average human when it comes to resisting fatigue and lifting weights; can carry 40 times his P.S. in pounds and can lift twice as much as they can carry. Dog Boys and most mutant animals recover in about 15 minutes of rest or light work (half the time a human needs).

• **Superior Sense of Smell:** The olfactory ability of mutant dogs is superior to humans - roughly one million times better than a normal human.

Recognize and accurately identify general/common/known smells is 85%. Range: 500 feet (152 m).

Identify specific odors familiar to Bowie 64%. Range: 125 feet (38.1 m).

Track by smell alone: 60%.

• **Keen Sense of Hearing:** Dog Boys have exceptional hearing. They can hear into a higher range of sound and can register sounds of 35,000 vibrations per second compared to 20,000 in humans and 25,000 in cats. Their large ears work like external sound receivers that can prick up and swivel to focus in on the sound of the noise (thanks to 17 ear muscles). They can



also shut off their inner ear to filter the general din of noise to zero-in on the sound they want to concentrate on.

- **Good Sight/Vision:** The field of vision in short-nosed canines (like boxers and terriers) is 200 degrees, in long-nosed breeds (like the German Shepherd and hounds) 270 degrees; compared to the human's 100 degrees. Dog Boys see color in a similar range as humans.

- **Sense of Taste:** All Dog Boys have only a fair to good sense of taste. This is probably a blessing of evolution for true dogs because they are both carnivores who eat what they catch (usually on the run) and scavengers who eat old and decaying food of all kinds.

- **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** The steady stream of magic energy *completely obliterates* their abilities to sense magic, psionics and the supernatural.

- **Repair and Soup-Up Machines & Vehicles (Operator ability):**

Repairs for Cheap: Can completely repair most parts, machines and vehicles at a cost of 25% of its original list price (plus his time if he's charging for it; typically another 30% to 50%). Requires the right parts and time to make the repair.

Replace M.D.C. on the main body and key sections at a cost of 1200 credits per every one M.D.C. point restored. Cannot exceed the original M.D.C. amount.

Add M.D.C. to brand new vehicles and body armor. The percentage increase depends on the Operator's level of skill and experience; +5% at levels 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, and 14.

Maximize Performance. Can tweak a vehicle or most any machine to perform

better. Can increase Spd 20%, range (of weapons, radio signals, sensors, etc.) by 10%, reduce weight by 10%, and add one extra weapon or feature per each body area of a vehicle or standing fortification (front/nose, midsection, rear section, top/roof, bottom/undercarriage, and wing).

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for more details about these powers.

Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note:

Automotive Mechanics 70%, Barter 54%, Basic Electronics 80%, Basic Mechanics 80%, Combat Driving, Computer Operation 80%, Computer Programing 70%, Find Contraband (limited to Machine Parts & Components) 66%, General Repair and Maintenance 75%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Jury Rig 75%, Land Navigation 77%, Language: Native Tongue: American 94%, Language: Other: Spanish 80%, Literacy: American 80%, Math: Basic 90%, Physical Labor, Pilot: Hovercycle 90%, Pilot: Hover Craft (Ground) 85%, Pilot: Truck 70%, Pilot: Tracked & Construction Vehicles 70%, Radio: Basic 85%, Recognize Machine Quality 73%, Vehicle Armorer 80%, and W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, and W.P. Energy Pistols, all at 5th level.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Via Hand to Hand Combat or by weapon.

Bonuses (total): +2 on initiative, +6 on Perception Rolls, +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +3 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, +4 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs fatigue and disease, +2 to save vs psionic

attack and all forms of mind control, +2 to save vs illusions, +2 to save vs possession and curses, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. Critical Strike on a Natural 18, 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: None, per se.

Psionics: Dog Bogs automatically get the Psychic Sensitive powers, but as an Operator, Bowie has the following: *Object Read* (6), *Sense Evil* (2), *Sixth Sense* (2), *Telemechanics* (10), *Telemechanic Mental Operation* (12) and *Speed Reading* (2).

Considered Master Psychic with a special psionic sensitivity as described above. I.S.P.: 109. Spent I.S.P. is regained at the rate of 2 points per hour of activity, or 12 per hour of meditation or sleep. Needs a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attacks.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P., suit of customized Bushman armor (80 M.D.C.), plus a backup suit of Dog Boy armor (50 M.D.C.), Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.; left hip), survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), portable tool kit, tool belt, clothing, belt with holster and pouches, backpack, bedroll, satchel, a variety of tools for working on vehicles, plasma torch, tinted goggles, air filter, handheld portable computer, language translator, walkie-talkie, wristwatch, cigarette lighter, and some personal items.

Money: 1,129 credits on him, 35,700 in savings.

Johnny's fiery and flamboyant personality matches his psionic powers of *Pyrokinesis*. He's one cocky son of a gun, who enjoys being a swashbuckling hot-shot, and mixing it up. He has skills and impressive powers, but he has a nasty habit of leaping before he looks and underestimating his opponents or the trouble he's in.

Despite his devil-may-care attitude, Johnny cares a great deal about his teammates, and respects and trusts every last one of them. Which is good, because they've pulled his fat out of the fire on plenty of occasions. As much as he gets on

her nerves, even Anika grudgingly cares about Johnny. She treats Johnny like an annoying "little brother" who enjoys teasing and needling her. However, Johnny is secretly in love with Anika, he just doesn't know how to tell her or show it properly. They have been "buddies" for so long, he fears she can't think of him in a romantic light. Ironically, Anika finds Johnny charismatic and dashing, if only he'd grow up and stop acting like a teenager. In fact, he gets on her nerves so much, because she is attracted to him, and it bugs her. When push comes to shove, both are there for each other no matter what.

Ironically, Johnny grew up in the Chi-Town 'Burb of *Firetown*. He knows that 'Burb well, and he is also well acquainted with the surrounding 'Burbs, the Coalition State of Chi-Town, and how its police and soldiers operate. He has no love for Emperor Prosek, the CS government or its army, but he's not a radical subversive out to bring Chi-Town down. He just wishes the government would lighten up, treat people in the 'Burbs better, and accept a larger range of people. Johnny knows a number of other Burstlers, City Rats and Black Market agents who live and work in the 'Burbs.

JOHNNY FERRO

BURSTER

Johnny is excited about the outcome of their adventure in Lone Star and is convinced they have data that *somebody* will pay a mountain of credits to get their hands on. He's happy to use the information they pirated from the computer in the Lone Star Complex to discredit Doctor Bradford or create trouble for the CS, but mostly, he hopes they make a killing selling it. Pickings have been a bit thin lately and the group could use some cash and a little R&R.

Name: Johnny Ferro

Species: Human, Psychic with the powers of Pyrokinesis.

Alignment: Unprincipled.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 10, M.A. 15, P.S. 12, P.P. 14, P.E. 11, P.B. 13, Spd 11.

Size: 5 feet, 11 inches (1.75 m).

Weight: 180 pounds (82 kg).

Hit Points: 39. **S.D.C.:** 30.

M.D.C.: Via M.D.C. body armor, Flame Aura or magic from Moses.

Age: 27

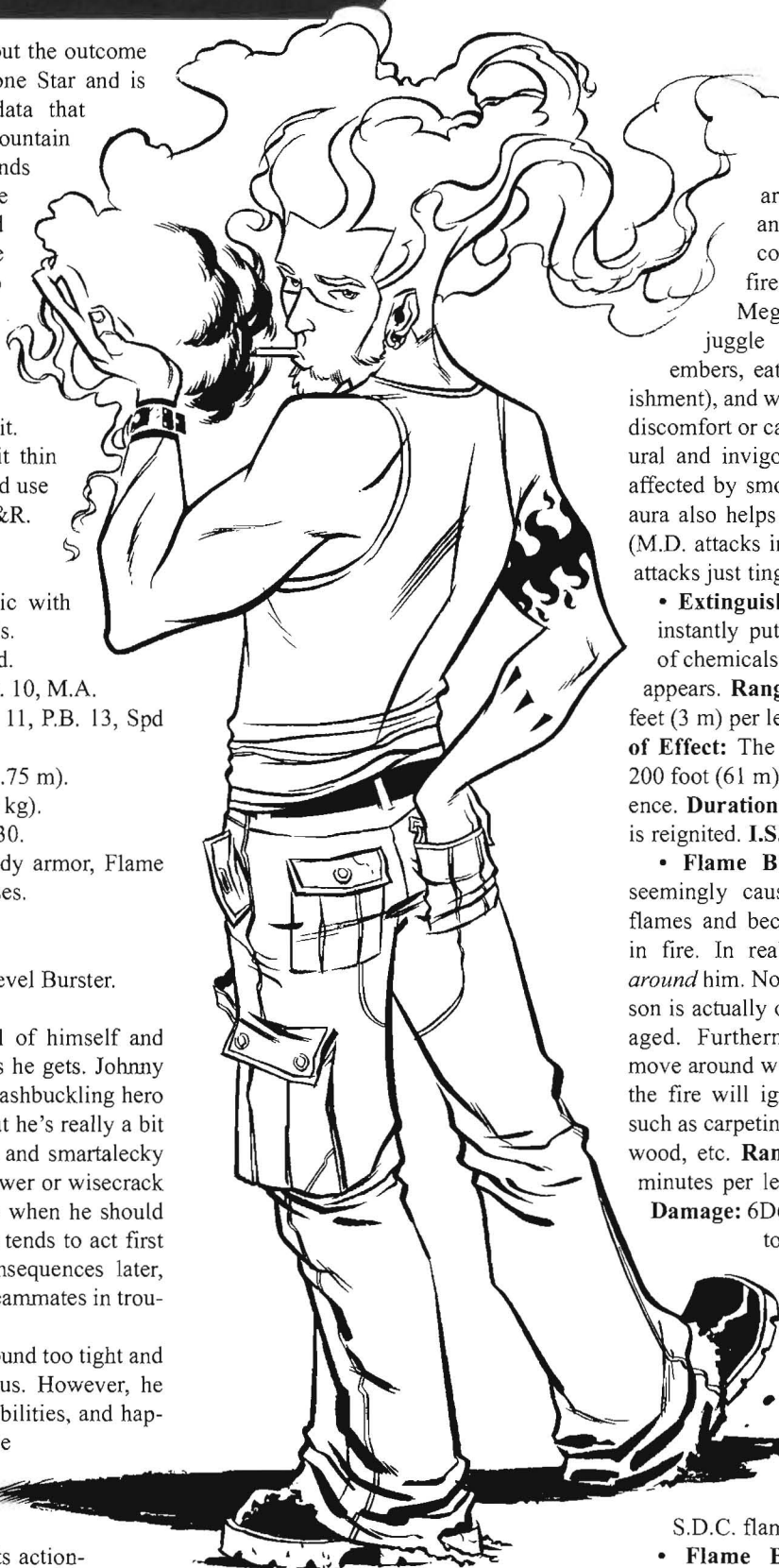
P.P.E.: 5

Experience Level: 7th level Burster.

Disposition: Cocky, full of himself and happy to give as good as he gets. Johnny thinks of himself as a swashbuckling hero and dashing wise guy, but he's really a bit of a childish, impulsive, and smartalecky showboat. He has an answer or wisecrack for every occasion, even when he should keep his mouth shut. He tends to act first and think about the consequences later, which gets him and his teammates in trouble on a regular basis.

He thinks Anika is wound too tight and takes life way too serious. However, he respects her brains and abilities, and happily accepts her in the role of leader.

Johnny and some of the "guys" love old, pre-Rifts action-adventure movies, including old Tarzan flicks, superhero movies, science fiction flicks, comedies and old TV shows of similar themes.



Special Abilities:

• Impervious to Fire and

Heat: A psionic aura around Johnny makes him and what he is wearing, completely impervious to fire and heat, even against Mega-Damage fire. He can juggle hot coals, touch burning embers, eat fire (for show, not nourishment), and walk or stand in fire without discomfort or catching on fire; it feels natural and invigorating. Nor is he hurt or affected by smoke. **Note:** This protective aura also helps protect against electricity (M.D. attacks inflict *half damage*, S.D.C. attacks just tingle), and he never sweats.

• **Extinguish Fires:** The Burster can instantly put out flames without need of chemicals or water. The fire just disappears. **Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) +10 feet (3 m) per level of experience. **Radius of Effect:** The psychic can extinguish a 200 foot (61 m) radius per level of experience. **Duration:** Permanent; until the fire is reignited. **I.S.P. Cost:** 4.

• **Flame Burst (Self):** Johnny can seemingly cause himself to burst into flames and become completely engulfed in fire. In reality, this is a fiery aura *around* him. Nothing on the Burster's person is actually on fire, so nothing is damaged. Furthermore, the character can move around without difficulty. However, the fire will ignite anything he touches, such as carpeting, drapes, furniture, paper, wood, etc. **Range:** Self. **Duration:** Two minutes per level of experience. **S.D.C.**

Damage: 6D6 S.D.C. damage per strike to anyone or thing that he touches. Damage is accumulative. Plus, all combustible articles such as clothing will catch on fire, doing an additional 6D6 S.D.C. damage per melee round until extinguished. These are S.D.C. flames. **I.S.P. Cost:** 4.

• **Flame Burst Body Protection (Special):** The aura of fire also provides a limited M.D.C. field of protection equal to 30 M.D.C. +6 points per level of experience, which renews itself at a rate of 3D6

M.D.C. per melee round (never more than the normal maximum). **Note:** There is no extra I.S.P. cost for this aura of protection; it comes with the Flame Burst.

- **Fire Bolt:** A fiery blast fired from the forehead or hands. **Damage:** Mini-bolt 2D6 S.D.C./Hit Points, medium bolt 4D6 S.D.C., heavy bolt 6D6 S.D.C., or Mega-Damage plasma bolt: 2D6 M.D. **Range:** 200 feet (61 m) +20 feet (6 m) per level of experience. **Duration:** Instant; counts as one melee action/attack. **Bonus to Strike:** +4; line of sight. **I.S.P. Cost:** Two, regardless of the size and damage for an S.D.C. blast, and four points to create an M.D. blast.

- **Fire Eruption:** The pyrokinetic can cause a fire to erupt in front of somebody or an area (never directly on a living creature) instantly and without the need of combustible material. If the Burster is rendered unconscious, blinded or distracted, the flame disappears. **S.D.C. Damage:** Tiny flame 1D4 S.D.C., 1-2 yards/meters fire 4D6 S.D.C., a towering pillar or wall (6 feet/1.8 m tall or bigger) 1D4x10 S.D.C., filling a room or 20 foot (6.1 m) area or larger causes 2D4x10 S.D.C. damage (or one M.D. point) per melee round or whenever somebody attempts to run through it. **Mega-Damage:** The fire can be increased to Mega-Damage destruction by expending *twice as many I.S.P.*; applicable only to the larger fires, walls, pillars, and areas. An M.D. fire wall or pillar inflicts 2D6 M.D., 20 foot (6 m) area does 4D6 M.D. and 40 feet (12.2 m) or bigger does 6D6 M.D. per melee round or whenever somebody tries to run through it. Combustible items burn hotter and the fire spreads four times faster than a normal S.D.C. fire. **Range:** 100 feet (30 m) +20 feet (6 m) per level of experience. A specific target must be visible, while a *target area* does not have to be visible, but its precise location must be known to the Burster, e.g. causing a fire to erupt in the adjoining room or the room directly above him, etc. **Note:** -25% to accurately hit a target he cannot see if it is smaller than 20 feet (6 m) in diameter. **Duration:** 10 minutes or until the Burster cancels the effect. The psychic can keep the fire burning by expending an additional one I.S.P. every 10 minutes, but must stay within range and concentrate on maintaining the fire. **Penalties:** Melee actions of the Burster

are reduced by half and fighting is impossible unless he breaks his concentration, causing the fire to disappear. **Base Skill:** 48% +4% per additional level of experience (roll percentile dice). A failed roll means the eruption happens 2D6 yards/meters off target. The Burster is -25% to accurately hit a target he cannot see if it is smaller than 20 feet (6.1 m) in diameter. Huge targets are easier to hit, but even then the blinded Burster is -5% to strike. **I.S.P. Cost:** 10 for S.D.C. fires regardless of size. 20 I.S.P. to create a Mega-Damage fire. **Maximum Size Limitations:** 20 foot area (6.1 m) +5 feet (1.5 m) per level of experience.

- **Sense Fire:** The Burster can sense if there is a fire as small as a burning candle nearby. To sense the fire, the Burster must stop and concentrate for a moment (15 seconds/one melee round). A moment later, he receives psychic impressions that indicate the approximate size (big, medium, small, tiny) and the approximate distance (near or far), the general direction (north, south, east, west, and, if in a building, up or down) and if it is contained, out of control, or spreading. **Range:** 800 foot (244 m) radius +100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience. Examining ashes or burnt debris requires touching it. **Duration:** Requires 15 seconds of preparatory concentration, but the psychic impressions and being in tune to the fire(s) lasts for four minutes, thus the character can use this ability to track down fires. **Damage:** None. **I.S.P. Cost:** Two. **Note:** If a Burster uses the power of Telepathy, Empathy or See Aura, he can also sense if the target of his psychic probe is a fire bug/arsonist.

- **Super Fuel Flame:** The character can feed a fire with psychic energy, increasing its size by as little as twofold or as much as 10 times. **Range:** 100 feet (30.5 m) per level of experience. **Area of Effect:** 20 foot (6.1 m) area per level of experience. **Damage:** Increased proportional to the size of the fire; G.M. discretion. **I.S.P. Cost:** 8.

The influence of ley line energy: The duration and range of the Burster's pyrokinetic and other psychic powers are increased by 50% whenever on or near (within one mile/1.6 km) a ley line. The duration, range, and damage of his powers are *doubled* when at or near (one mile/1.6

km) a ley line nexus point!

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for more details about these powers.

Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note: Barter 68%, Computer Operation 80%, Computer Programming 70%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Land Navigation 77%, Language: Native Tongue: American 94%, Language: Other: Spanish 80%, Literacy: American 80%, Math: Basic 90%, Pilot: Hovercycle 98%, Pilot: Motorcycles and Snowmobiles 98%, Radio: Basic 85%, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, W.P. Energy Pistols.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Via Pyrokinetic Fire or by weapon.

Bonuses (total): +2 on initiative, +1 on Perception Rolls, +3 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +5 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, +4 to roll with impact, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. Critical Strike on a Natural 18, 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: Johnny is impulsive, takes unnecessary risks, and leaps before he looks. His wisecracks and sarcasm may also get him in trouble. And, not surprisingly, Johnny is a sucker for a pretty face.

Psionics: Mind Block (4), Resist Fatigue (4), Sense Time (2), Suppress Fear (8), and Telekinesis (varies). I.S.P.: 172; Master Psychic. Spent I.S.P. is regained at the rate of 2 points per hour of activity, or 12 per hour of meditation or sleep. The character needs a 10 or higher to save vs psionic attacks.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P., suit of Urban Warrior body armor (50 M.D.C., when he thinks he really needs it), a knife (1D6 S.D.C.) slipped in his boot or in an ankle holster under his pant leg, a set of clothing, pants with deep pockets, a pair of soft leather gloves, belt with holster and pouches, backpack, bedroll, saddlebag, portable language translator, walkie-talkie, wristwatch, 1D6+3 packs of cigarettes, some personal items and a Firefly Hovercycle (loves 'em).

Money: 573 credits on him, 3,131 credits in savings.

MOSES

LEY LINE WALKER

Moses is the mage on the team. He is a skilled and practiced Ley Line Walker, one of the most famous types of practitioners of magic on Rifts Earth. He dresses in dark clothes, robes and capes (typically dark blue or black) and wears a face mask that is also a gas mask and protection for his head and face. The mask has a bit of a demonic or insect appearance due to the bug-like lens over the eyes and the pair of horns.

What nobody – not even the rest of the gang – knows, is that Moses is an alien from beyond the Rifts. The horns are not part of the mask, but they and the braided hair are his. They're real. He carefully guards this secret, and fears his friends' reaction should they learn the truth. He's not a demon, though he resembles one, and he knows how people on Rifts Earth fear demons and magic.

Despite Moses' dark and ominous appearance, he is an idealist and hero with dreams of helping people and making the world a better place. Thus, he uses his magic to help and heal, liberate people from oppression and right injustice. Well, at least whenever he can. As a group of freelance adventurers and guns for hire, the group sometimes finds itself taking jobs just to make ends meet. And sometimes, they end up on the wrong side – always a troubling matter.

Moses is one of the three de facto group leaders, along with Anika and O.J. He tends to defer to Anika or O.J. in matters involving combat, but he is nearly as capable and trusted as Anika in team matters and his voice holds a lot of weight. Ultimately, the group dynamics boil down to the fact that they all care about one another and function supremely well together. They are a well-oiled fighting and adventuring machine – and most of all, friends.

Moses is convinced that their Lone Star adventure has only just begun, and that the escape from the genetics complex is just the first chapter in what is certainly going to be an epic adventure. He just hopes they all live through it to tell the tale. He has no doubt that they are being used as pawns in one of Desmond Bradford's mad schemes. Ironically, he doesn't think the data they carry and the plot that is unfolding has anything to do with Emperor Prosek, Chi-Town or Lone Star directly.

Moses can't shake the feeling this is something different. Bigger. More insidious and earth shattering than anyone of them yet realize. And he's not sure any of them are going to make a penny on this information. Part of this comes from sensations he felt while inside the monster. Somehow he felt linked to it. Felt its primal desires and knows that it hungered for magic. Or more to the point, people of magic. It feeds and procreates using the energy of the mages it swallows. But what would the CS want with a creature that eats magic unless . . .

Could Bradford be preparing a legion of monsters to wage war upon the Federation of Magic? First Tolkeen, next the Federation? Could the Emperor, or at least Bradford, be considering creating a legion of magic devouring monsters so that the human casualty count won't be so high next time? Is the Emperor part of this scheme? Have they nipped it in the bud by killing the one creature Bradford had created? What impact will selling this information have on the world? And who should they sell it to? The CS? The Federation? Lazlo? Will going public stop what could be the next Coalition War?

Moses has yet to share his speculation and fears with the group, but he will before they reach Chi-Town.

Name: Moses

Real name: Ghaza Mos Esto'tchal

Species: Unknown.

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 18, M.A. 15, P.S. 15, P.P. 11, P.E. 21, P.B. 12, Spd 10.

Size: 6 foot, 3 inches (1.9 m).

Weight: 180 pounds (81 kg).

Hit Points: 50. **S.D.C.:** 35.

M.D.C.: Wears light Mage body armor under his robes; M.D.C. 48, as well as uses various spells for additional M.D.C. protection.

Age: 227 years old.

P.P.E.: 192

Experience Level: 6th level Ley Line Walker. Had different life before coming to Rifts Earth.

Disposition: Intelligent, educated, civilized, and serious. Talks mainly when he has something to say, but also has a sly sense of humor and a dry wit. He is good at seeing the big picture and the potential

ramifications of the group's actions even a little better than Anika, though he is not as good at military strategies and tactics. He is a hero through and through and considers the group his second family.

Special Abilities: All Ley Line Walker O.C.C. Abilities. See Magic Knowledge.

Skills of Note: Climbing 75%/65%, Cook 70%, Computer Operation 75%, Dowsing 50%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Land Navigation (56%), Language: Speaks Native Language: Demongolian at 98%, Language: Other: American, Spanish and Dragonese/Elven all at 88%, Literacy: American 60%, Lore: Demon & Monster 70%, Lore: Faeries and Creatures of Magic 65%, Lore: Magic 65%, Lore: Psychics and Psionics 65%, Intelligence 52%, Math: Basic 85%, Physical Labor, Pilot: Hovercycle 93%, Research 70%, Wilderness Survival 70%, and W.P. Energy Pistol at 6th level.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: As per Hand to Hand Combat, weapons or magic.

Bonuses (total): +2 on Perception Rolls, +1 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punch, +1 to disarm, +2 to roll with impact, +4 to save vs possession and mind control, +3 to save vs curses, +2 to save vs psionic attack, +5 to save vs magic, +3 to save vs poison, +12% to save vs coma/death, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor. +1 to Spell Strength.

Vulnerabilities: None per se.

Psionics: None.

Magic Knowledge: As per Ley Line Walker O.C.C.

- **Sense Ley Line:** Feels whether there is a ley line within the area of his sensing abilities. For Moses that's 60 miles (96 km). Follow the feeling to the location of the ley line is 55%.

- **Sense Ley Line Nexus:** Once found, Moses can follow the ley line to as many nexus points as it may have. Base Skill: 65%.

- **Sense a Rift:** Automatically feels when a Rift opens or closes anywhere within 75 miles (120 km) of him.

- **Sense Magic in Use:** Can feel when spells are cast or magic used within 600 feet (183 m) of him. **Note:** This does not include the use of psionic powers.

- **See Magic Energy:** The mage sees magic energy/P.P.E. radiating from peo-

ple, creatures, enchanted objects, and areas, as a faint aura whenever more than 20 P.P.E. points are present. **Note:**

Does not work on the spell, *Invisibility Superior*.

Range: Line of sight, about 1000 feet (305 m).

• **Read Ley**

Lines: Moses knows information about the ley line in a matter of moments.

Data includes its length and direction, number of Nexus points, if there is an active Rift, and if there are any major natural disasters currently happening along the line, such as a forest fire, flooding, hurricane, or earthquake. War and magic are not natural disasters. The power is automatic and does not require the expenditure of personal P.P.E.

• **Ley Line Transmission:**

Moses can send a verbal and/or visual message directly along a ley line to another person so long as that person is also located somewhere on that ley line. The message takes only a matter of seconds. The message can be sent to one specific person or several people (one person per level of the sender's experience), or several people at different locations on the line. There is no way for the sender to know if others have eavesdropped on his message. Nor is there any way to scramble the message. This power is an automatic ability for the Ley Line Walker and does not require the expenditure of personal P.P.E.

• **Ley Line Phasing (Teleportation):**

Moses can instantly *teleport* from one place to another, *FLAWLESSLY* anywhere on the same ley line. The teleport is always on target, because the

Ley Line

Walker is *one* with the ley line. Of course, unless he can see his destination, he can't know who or what might also be present in that area and he could appear in the middle of an armed camp (but not inside one of them or a tree, etc., as is the danger with the Teleportation spell).

• **Ley Line Walking or Line**

Drifting: Moses can open himself to the ley line energies and walk or *float* through the air along the length of the ley line. The speed factor is a mere Speed of 10, but it is relaxing and requires absolutely no exertion or even physical movement of the feet or body if drifting afloat. NO

P.P.E. is necessary for the Ley Line Walker to do this, because he's drawing on the ambient energy of the line. He can even meditate while drifting down a ley line. Height is typically 1-5 feet (0.3 to 1.5 m) above the ground, but if he concentrates he can reach a height as great as the line

itself.

• **Ley Line Rejuvenation:** Moses can use the ley line energy to *double* the rate of natural healing by concentrating to do so. The mage can also perform an *instant rejuvenation* on a ley line *once every 24*

hours, in which after about ten minutes of concentration, he is completely rested, alert, and healed of 20 Hit Points and 20 S.D.C. +6D6 additional Hit Points and 1D6x10+12 S.D.C. Again, at no P.P.E. cost, but only possible *on* a ley line.

Note: No P.P.E. or I.S.P. can be restored this way, only Hit Points and S.D.C.

• **Ley Line**

Observation Ball: A globe of light, about the size of a soccer ball, can be conjured out of thin air and linked to the Ley Line Walker like a third eye.

Moses' Observation Ball (the size of a soccer ball) has



OSWALD 'OJ' JAMES

JUICER

six M.D.C., a range of 3,000 feet (914 m), and a Spd of 44 (30 mph/48 km). It is +3 to dodge and cannot attack. Everything it sees, Moses sees.

• **Ley Line Force Field:** Moses can erect an energy field reminiscent of the Armor of Ithan around himself whenever he's on a ley line. It has 26 M.D.C. and costs the mage 10 P.P.E. to create/summon it initially, but once it is in place it remains up for the entire time he remains on the ley line or until he dispels it. If the Ley Line Force Field is destroyed, it regenerates at full strength at the start of the next melee round!

• **Spells of Note:** Armor of Ithan (10), Ballistic Fire (25), Befuddle (6), Blinding Flash (1), Breathe Without Air (5), Call Lightning (15), Cleanse (6), Cloud of Smoke (2), Globe of Daylight (2), Electric Arc (8), Energy Bolt (5), Energy Disruption (12), Energy Field (10), Extinguish Fire (4), Float in Air (5), Force Bonds (25), Fuel Flame (5), Heal Wounds (10), Impervious to Fire (5), Levitation (5), Ley Line Fade (20), Ley Line Phantom (40), Ley Line Tendril Bolts (26), Ley Line Time Capsule (15), Magic Net (7), Magic Pigeon (20), Magic Shield (6), Manipulate Objects (2+), Purification (20), See the Invisible (4), Sense Magic (4), Shadow Meld (10), Sheltering Force (20), Rift Teleportation (200), Teleport: Lesser (15), Teleport: Superior (600), Tongues (12), Turn Dead (6), Wall of Defense (55), Wall of Wind (40), and Words of Truth (15). **Note, for hundreds of spells,** different types of magic, magic items, magic weapons, herbs and other magic related info, check out *Rifts® Book of Magic*.

P.P.E.: 192. The Ley Line Walker can also draw an extra 20 P.P.E. per melee round when on a ley line and 30 when at a ley lines nexus point! P.P.E. recovers at a rate of seven points per hour of sleep or rest or 15 P.P.E. per hour of meditation.

Bionics: None.

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P., light body armor (48 M.D.C.) under the robe, Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), set of clothing, belt with pouches, black, hooded robe, protective face plate and gas mask with holes for his horns to stick out from the forehead, backpack, portable translator, walkie-talkie, note pad and 1D4 pens and markers, pocket mirror, silver cross (for fighting vampires), 1D6 wooden stakes, a wooden mallet, and some personal items.

Money: 4,300 credits on him, with 54,800 credits stashed away in savings.

O.J. is dying. He is a Juicer in the early stages of "Last Call," meaning he has 3D6+8 months left to live.

O.J. once worked for the Coalition as a hired mercenary and scout, but that was five years ago, and before he hooked up with "the gang." Since then, he has found friendship and purpose with his fellow adventurers and loves them like his own family. He tried to "kick the juice" and detox two years ago, but he couldn't do it, and went back to being a Juicer even though he knew it was a death sentence. Juicer augmentation turns the recipient into a superman with lightning reflexes, Augmented Strength equal to most cyborgs, and an energy that defies description. Problem is, the human body can't handle the "juice" – the chemicals – that provide the super abilities and quickly burn the body out. The life expectancy of the average Juicer is 5-7 years, and Oswald is coming into his sixth year. Once "Last Call" starts, it can't be stopped or reversed. O.J. and all Juicers know that. This means O.J. is looking for a couple big scores before he dies, leaving the proceeds to his pals in the group (he doesn't have any family left), and going out in a blaze of glory.

O.J. hopes that the information retrieved from Lone Star may be the big score he's looking for, but like Anika, he wonders if the group isn't in over their heads. He agrees with her that they were *allowed to escape* the Lone Star Complex, and he's, personally, convinced that Doctor Desmond Bradford *must* be the one responsible. That means they are playing into somebody's hands and O.J. doesn't like being anybody's henchman one bit. All he can do is pray that in the end, things turn out in their favor and something good comes of the information.

Having been so healthy and powerful for so many years, the Juicer is surprised how quickly and profound the intermittent tremors, nosebleeds and power swings (great surges and low ebbs) have set in. It worries him, as he doesn't want to become a liability for his friends and teammates. Nobody has noticed his illness yet, and he'd like to keep it that way. He knows he should

have at least six months to a year left, and he'd like to enjoy that time without pity and tears from his friends.

Name: Oswald "OJ" James

Species: Human, augmented through chemicals that are killing him.

Alignment: Scrupulous (started out Anarchist, but hanging out with this group has made him a better man).

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 12, M.A. 10, P.S. 32 (Augmented), P.P. 20, P.E. 21, P.B. 10, Spd 89 (60 mph/96 km).

Size: 5 feet, 11 inches (1.79 m).

Weight: 178 pounds (80.1 kg).

Hit Points: 78. **S.D.C.:** 379.

Age: 25

P.P.E.: 7

Experience Level: 8th level Juicer.

Disposition: Being old for a Juicer and knowing death is coming, O.J. has become much more reserved, compassionate and introspective. He's not afraid to die, but he hates the idea of leaving his friends to fend for themselves and knows his passing will affect them all. He'd like to help the group make some big cash before he dies so that, maybe, they can retire from being mercenaries and enjoy a more peaceful and safe life.

Special Abilities: Can leap 30 feet (9.1 m) across and 20 feet (6.1 m) high after a short run; half that distance from a dead stop. Lasts 10 times longer before feeling the effects of exhaustion (actually, with Last Call in swing, it's only 7x longer). Can remain alert and operate at full efficiency for up to five days (120 hours) without sleep. Normally needs only three hours of sleep per day.

• **Enhanced Healing** (special): Heals four times faster than normal. +20% to save vs coma and death. Virtually impervious to pain, no amount of physical pain will impair the Juicer until he is down to 5 Hit Points or less. At this point the warrior will collapse, falling into a trance/coma, which is really a Bio-Comp-induced state of accelerated healing.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for more details about Juicer abilities.



Skills of Note: Acrobatics (+15%), Barter 72%, Boxing, Climbing 98%/90%, Demolitions 94%, Find Contraband 68%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Intelligence 69%, Land Navigation 75%, Language: Native Tongue: American 94%, Language: Other: Spanish 90%, Language: Other: Gobblely 90%, Math: Basic 90%, Military Etiquette 80%, Pilot: Hovercycle 98%, Pilot: Hover Craft 90%, Pilot: Jump Bike 90%, Prowl 80%, Radio: Basic 98%, Recognize Weapon Quality 70%, Running, Surveillance 70%, Swimming 95%, Wrestling, Wilderness Survival 70%, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Heavy M.D. Weapons all at 8th level.

Attacks per Melee: Eight.

Damage: As per Augmented P.S. or by weapon. Does 2D4 M.D. with a Power Punch (but counts as two attacks), and does +17 points of damage with S.D.C. punch, kick and other physical attacks.

Bonuses (total): +4 on initiative, +2 on Perception Rolls, +6 to strike, +8 to parry, +8 to automatic dodge (roll to dodge, but the act of dodging does not use up an attack), +7 to a normal dodge, +4 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, +6 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs psionics, +6 to save vs mind control (psionic and chemical), +8 to save vs toxic gases, poisons, and other drugs, and +18% to save vs coma/death. Critical Strike on a

Natural
18, 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: O.J. is in last call, sick and dying. That means over the months to come, his abilities will ebb at times, supercharge other times (that's how he was able to turn the ATV from its side to back on its wheels all by himself), he'll suffer from nosebleeds, tremor and eventually die.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: One weapon for each W.P., a German-made WR-19 Plasma Rifle (5D6 M.D. per single blast, 10 shot payload, 1600 feet/488 m range), Juicer Assassin's JA-11 energy rifle, a Coalition C-20 Laser Pistol (2D6 M.D., 21 shot clip, 800 feet/244 m range), and C-29 Hellfire Heavy Plasma Cannon (1D6x10 M.D., 8 blast clip, and 1400 feet/427 m range), plus 1D4+6 E-Clips for each.

Other equipment includes a suit of heavy Juicer body armor (60 M.D.C.), Juicer harness and drug dispenser, Juicer Jump Bike, two Vibro-Knives (1D6 M.D.; one on the left hip, one in the left boot), survival knife (1D6 S.D.C. right boot), clothing, belt with holster and pouches, backpack, bedroll, saddlebag, portable language translator, walkie-talkie, wristwatch, cigarette lighter, optic helmet, portable IRMSS kit, camouflage fatigues and armor, extra set of grey fatigues, boots with knife holster, gloves, backpack, utility belt, sunglasses, tinted goggles, canteen, compass, and personal items.

Money: 5,000 credits on him, 32,000 credits in savings.

SHAKES

CRAZY

The group is more like a family than a military outfit, and they have ridden together for the last five years, in some cases, seven or eight years. That's why they put up with Shakes' strange idiosyncrasies and crazy antics. They remember when he had most of his mental faculties and was an important member of the team.

Nowadays, Shakes is an oddball who has to be watched and kept in line to make sure he doesn't do anything foolish, inappropriate or dangerous to the group. A third of the time Shakes is *oblivious* to the trouble or danger going on around him. A third of the time he is aware, but *a nut job and loose cannon* who might take extreme, unnecessary, silly or deadly action in answer to any given situation. The rest of the time Shakes has his faculties, and is aware and ready to do whatever is necessary to get the job done.

Shakes is *crazy*, as well as being a Crazy. Crazies are warriors who have voluntarily gotten M.O.M. brain implants to turn themselves into superhumans. Indeed, Shakes' reflexes are so good, he can catch a bird in mid-flight with his bare hand without hurting it. He is fast, nimble and deadly in combat, doing flips and somersaults while shooting a weapon or throwing grenades. He's also a whack job who laughs in the face of death and finds humor in almost every situation, even deadly ones.

Like the rest of his crew, Shakes is a hero through and through. It's just that the brain implants that make him superhuman have also made him mentally disturbed. He was pleased to be able to rescue Moses from the belly of the monster and is aware that the group has valuable information for sale. However, the Crazy has no idea what the information is or what's done with it. He's just along for the ride and to lend a helping hand when necessary. He's heard Anika, O.J. and Johnny talking about secret plots, setups and being used as pawns, but it all sounds too complicated and boring for him to deal with. He's ready for action whenever and wherever it comes. He does hope the group is heading for the Chi-Town 'Burbs, because there's always opportunities and action in that town.

Name: Real name unknown, goes by the nickname 'Shakes.'

Species: Human, augmented by M.O.M. brain implants.

Alignment: Unprincipled (was Scrupulous).

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 7, M.A. 9, P.S. 25 (Augmented), P.P. 22, P.E. 13, P.B. 8, Spd 43 (30 mph/48 km).

Size: 6 feet, 6 inches (1.9 m).

Weight: 150 pounds (67.5 kg).

Hit Points: 73. **S.D.C.:** 182.

Age: 34

P.P.E.: 10

Experience Level: 9th level Crazy.

Disposition: Good natured and seems perpetually happy. He enjoys making jokes, quips and bad puns even in desperate situations. As Bodakhan would say, "Shakes ain't right in the head, you know, but he's a good guy in a fight." Also see Insanities.

He likes everyone on the team, but especially Anika (who he regards as the team leader), Bowie and O.J. Of course, this is also a guy who likes to chew on feathers and hand grenade pins, and juggle live birds or explosives.

Special Abilities: Shakes can leap 20 feet (6 m) across and 15 feet (4.6 m) high after a short run (half that distance from a dead stop). He can also lift and carry twice as much as a normal person of equivalent strength and endurance, and can last 10 times longer before feeling the effects of exhaustion. He remains alert and operates at full efficiency for up to three days (72 hours) without sleep, and needs only four hours of sleep per day to function at full capacity.

- **Enhanced vision** provides the character with perfect 20/20 vision and exceptional long-range, hawk-like vision; can read a small sign or recognize a face from up to two miles (3.2 km) away when he concentrates; must have line of sight.

- **Enhanced hearing** can hear a whisper or a twig snap under someone's boot up to 300 feet (91.5 m) away. The acute hearing gives the Crazy an *automatic dodge* on all attacks, even from behind and surprise attacks.

- **Enhanced sense of smell** enables the character to instantly recognize

odors (01-65% chance), recognize a person by scent like a dog (01-25% chance), and even track by smell (01-30%), provided the scent is not more than two hours old.

- **Enhanced sense of taste** is so acute the character can taste for a specific flavor, discern specific ingredients, and tell if a drink or food has been poisoned, drugged or is spoiled. Chance for detection is 01-55%, +20% if the chemical has a telltale taste or odor to begin with.

- **Enhanced sense of touch** enables the character to recognize very slight differences in textures by touch.

- **Enhanced Healing.** Heals two times faster than normal humans and is virtually impervious to pain. No amount of physical pain impairs the Crazy until he is down to 10 Hit Points or less. At that point he suddenly realizes his condition and starts to feel the effects of his injuries.

- **Crazies' Bio-Regeneration.** This ability is a little different from the psionic power, although related. Shakes must stop what he's doing to slip into a meditative trance. While in the trance, he is completely helpless and cannot move or take any action. All of his concentration is focused into an accelerated, bio-feedback program that restores 2D6 Hit Points and 3D6 S.D.C., stops bleeding, and closes wounds in *2D4 minutes*. An extended period of Crazies' Bio-Regeneration, over a period of six hours, restores all S.D.C. and an additional 4D6 Hit Points!

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for more details about these powers.

Skills of Note: Barter 72%, Begging 53%, Cardsharp 60%, Climbing 98%/95%, Dance 80%, Detect Ambush 75%, Electronic Countermeasures 60%, Escape Artist 85%, Gambling (Standard) 60%, Gymnastics (+20%), Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Interrogation 64%, Juggling 85%, Land Navigation 80%, Language: Native Tongue: American 95%, Language: Other: Spanish 85%, Math: Basic 95%, Pilot: Hovercycle 98%, Pilot: Hover Vehicle 90%, Pilot: Sail Boats 85%, Prowl 80%, Radio: Basic 95%, Sing 60%, Swimming 98%, Rope Works 65%, Tailing 80%, and W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife, W.P. Handguns, W.P.

Energy Pistol, and W.P. Energy Rifle, all a 9th level. Plus W.P. Paired Weapons at 3rd level proficiency.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Damage: As per Augmented P.S. or by weapon. Does 1D4 M.D. on a Power Punch, but that counts as two melee attacks; +9 S.D.C. damage from punches, kicks and other physical attacks.

Bonuses (total): +3 on initiative, +3 on Perception Rolls, +6 to strike, +7 to parry and dodge (normal), +9 to automatic dodge, +3 to pull punch, +6 to disarm, +11 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs psionic attack, +2 to save vs possession, +6 to save vs mind control, +4 to save vs poisons and toxic gas, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, and +15% to save vs coma and death. Critical Strike on a Natural 18, 19 or 20.

Vulnerabilities: Shakes' mind is not all there. The brain implants and physical and mental trauma have taken their toll. He still functions, especially with supervision from his friends, but Shakes isn't playing with a full deck. This has also affected his skill performance, which is why some skills don't reflect his level of experience and his skill range is limited more than usual.

Insanities: The following are in addition to his disassociation (lack of awareness) noted in Shakes' opening description.

- He is not afraid to die, making him a thrill seeker who is willing to take risks and behave like a daredevil.

- Finds most people, situations and the things people say and do to be funny, and he may make jokes, quips or odd comments in response to them.

- Likes the taste of feathers and enjoys watching, petting, licking and playing with "birdies."

- Likes to use hand grenades, fusion blocks and other explosives in combat, but has no Demolitions skills.

- Gets bored easily and likes to be in the action or doing something. If he gets too bored he'll act silly or obnoxious and tease and annoy the rest of the group.

- Phobia: Worms (they scare the bejezus outta him).

- Obsession: Bowler hats. Loves 'em and is never seen without one.

Psionics: Intuitive Combat (10),

Meditation (0), and Sixth Sense (2). I.S.P.: 90; Minor Psychic. Spent I.S.P. is regained at the rate of 2 points per hour of activity, or 8 per hour of meditation or sleep. The character needs a 12 or higher (before bonuses) to save vs psionic attacks.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Just the M.O.M. brain implants that make him a Crazy.

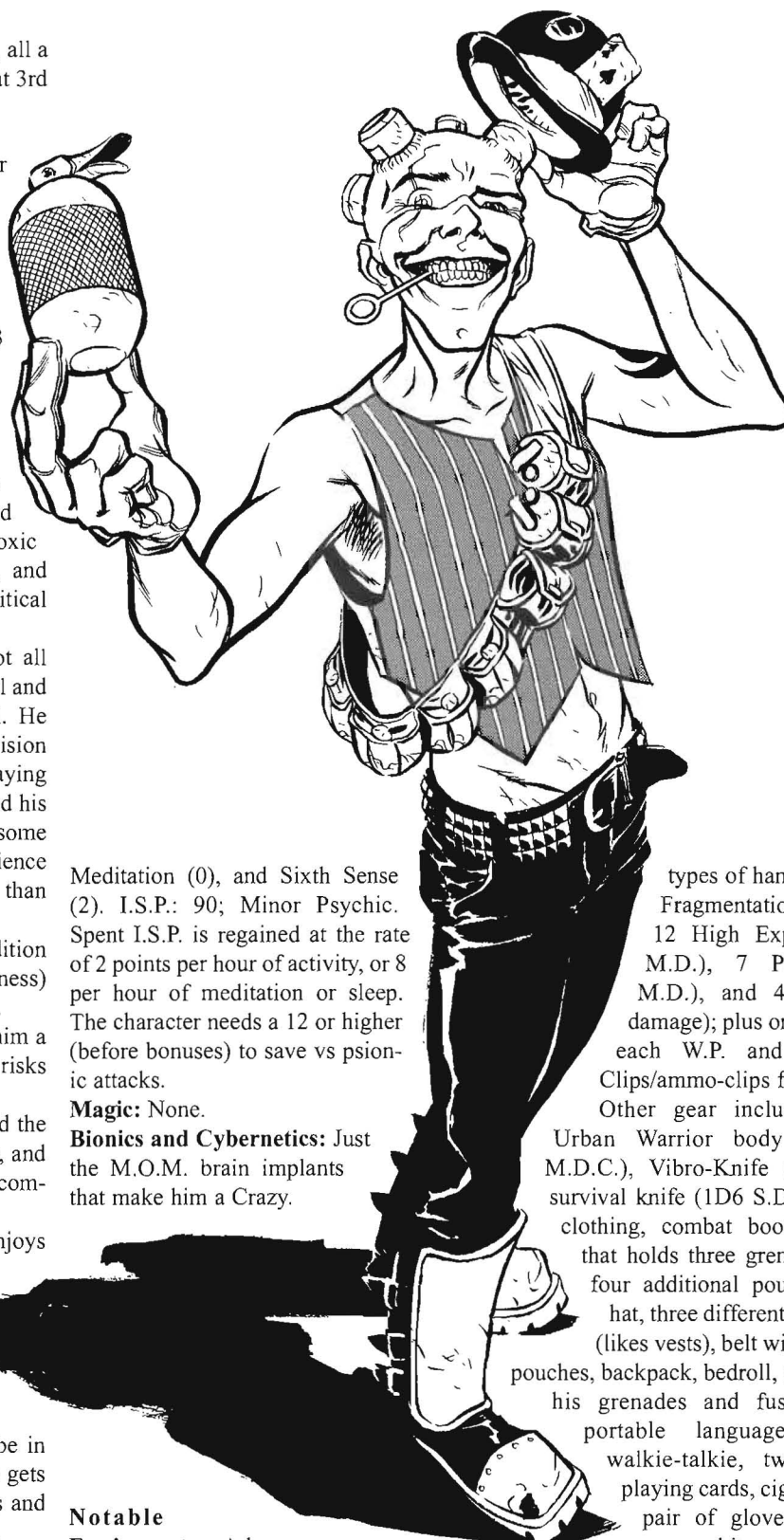
Notable

Equipment: Adores using hand grenades and Fusion Blocks! Has four Type One Fusion Blocks (1D4x10 M.D.) and six Type Two Fusion Blocks (2D6x10 M.D.), and the following

types of hand grenades: 2 Fragmentation (2D6 M.D.), 12 High Explosive (4D6 M.D.), 7 Plasma (6D6 M.D.), and 4 smoke (no damage); plus one weapon for each W.P. and 1D4+2 E-Clips/ammo-clips for each.

Other gear includes: suit of Urban Warrior body armor (50 M.D.C.), Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), a set of clothing, combat boots, bandoleer that holds three grenades and has four additional pouches, bowler hat, three different colored vests (likes vests), belt with holster and pouches, backpack, bedroll, satchel (holds his grenades and fusion blocks), portable language translator, walkie-talkie, two decks of playing cards, cigarette lighter, pair of gloves, and some personal items.

Money: 157 credits on him. 739 credits in savings. Tends to spend money freely when he can lay his hands on it.



MAGALI

RAT COLONY LEADER

Magali is the leader of the Mutant Rats living beneath the Lone Star Complex, in the sewers and catacombs of the subterranean military compound. Several years ago, when the Mutant Rats made their mass escape, Magali was one of the rats who managed to take command of the situation. Through virtue of her higher intelligence and aided by her psychic abilities, she managed to convince a number of her fellow rats to follow her instructions.

These proved to be well thought out plans and the rats who did Magali's bidding managed to stave off destruction from the Lone Star extermination squads and containment patrols, while many of the other rats were exterminated en masse. The Mutant Rats decided that they had a capable leader and have followed Magali for years.

As word spread through the catacombs about the *She-Rat* who actually looks after the well-being of her pack, more rats joined. Now, other than small, scattered rat packs who still maintain their precarious independence, Magali is the undisputed leader of the Lone Star free rat population. Their colony is quite large and dangerous, to the point that even the extermination squads try to give them a wide berth unless they have a couple of Kill Cat platoons at their disposal.

Name: Magali

Species: Mutant Rat.

Alignment: A aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 10, M.A. 11, P.S. 12, P.P. 19, P.E. 13, P.B. 6, Spd 28.

Size: 5 feet, 5 inches (1.52 m).

Weight: 127 lbs (57 kg).

Hit Points: 25. **S.D.C.:** 29.

M.D.C.: None, relies on her agility and knowledge of the catacombs for protection. Wears stolen "Dead Boy" body armor when necessary.

P.P.E.: 8

Age: 12

Experience Level: 5th level Mutant Rat.

Disposition: Magali is a true leader. Her two goals are (in order of priority), to protect her people, and to undermine the Coalition forces at Lone Star (or anywhere, for that matter). More intelligent and far-sighted than her people, Magali will readily ally herself and her Mutant Rats with anyone (such

as a group of adventurers trying to reach Project Omega) who can assist her in her goals. Although a passionate individual, she is willing to put aside her personal feelings to accomplish her goals or for the greater good of her people (for which Dr. Heston is extremely grateful).

Special Abilities: Climb 87/82%, Swim 77%, Prowl 77%, Identify scents 54%, Track by scent 50%, can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) up and 10 feet (3 m) across, double jointed and ambidextrous.

Skills of Note: Camouflage 47%, Detect Ambush 62%, Escape Artist 72%, Hand to Hand: Assassin, Intelligence 56%, Jury-Rig 57%, Land Navigation 74%, Language: American 90%, Pick Locks 67%, Pick Pockets 62%, Radio: Basic 77%, Running, Sniper, Tailing 57%, Tracking (people) 57%, Wilderness Survival 62%, and W.P. Knife (Vibro-Blade), W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Handguns, and W.P. Paired Weapons, all at 5th level.

Attacks per Melee: Eight!

Damage: As per hand to hand combat or weapon.

Bonuses (total): +5 on initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to strike with a thrown weapon, +1 to dodge, +4 to damage, +4 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +4 to pull punch, Karate Punch (2D4 damage), Karate Kick (2D6 damage).

Vulnerabilities: Her overprotectiveness toward her tribe could work against her. Threaten her people and you have

her attention.

Psionics: A Major Psychic who needs a 12 or better to save vs psionic attacks. Her abilities are Empathy (4), Presence Sense (4), See Aura (6), and Sixth Sense (2). **I.S.P.:** 32

Magic: None.

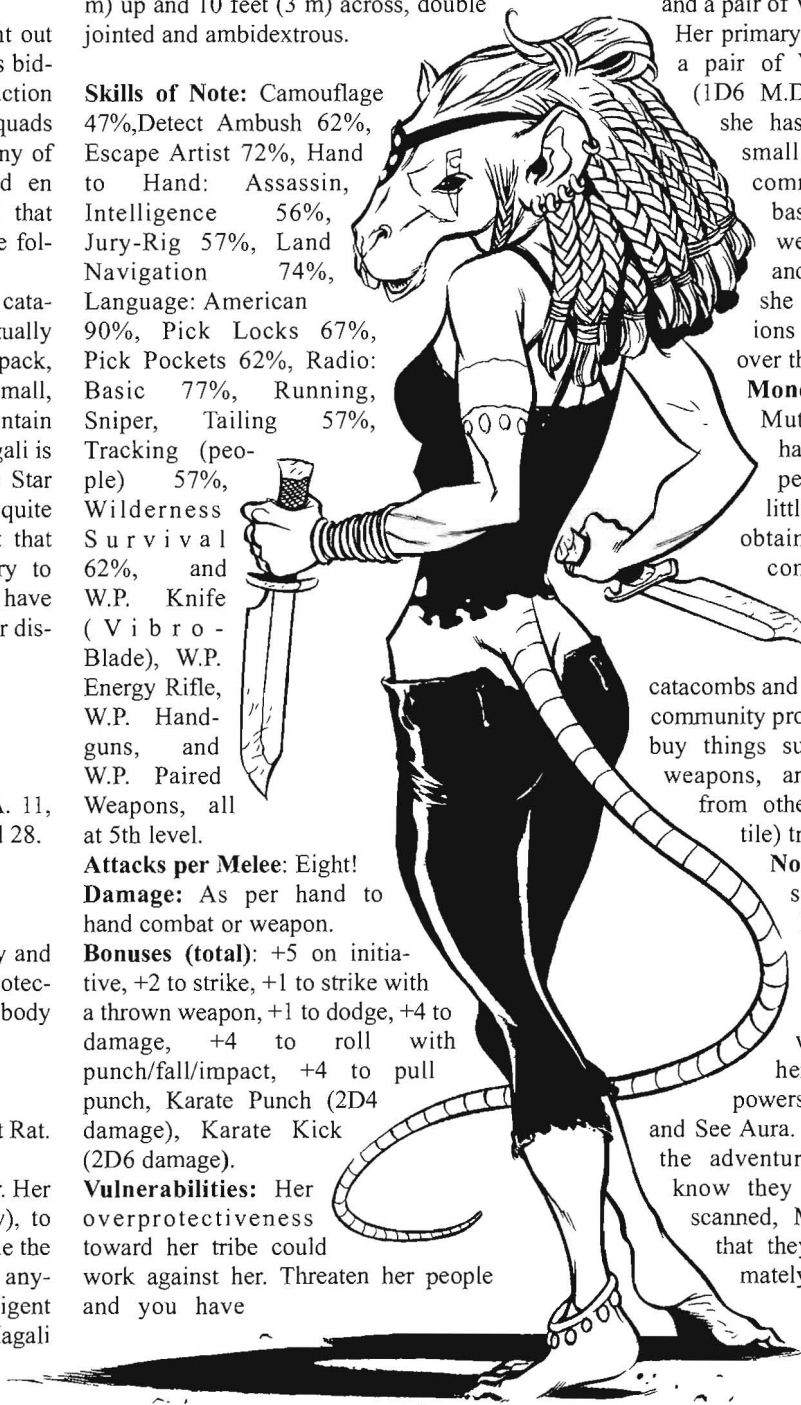
Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: Magali travels light with only the clothes on her back and a pair of Vibro-Knives.

Her primary weapons are a pair of Vibro-Knives (1D6 M.D. each), but she has collected a small arsenal of common and basic Coalition weapons, gear and body armor she and her minions have stolen over the years.

Money: The Mutant Rats have no money per se. What little money they obtain mainly comes from unwar y travellers in their catacombs and is considered community property used to buy things such as food, weapons, and medicine from other (less hostile) travelers.

Note: The reason that Magali trusted the adventurers so quickly was due to her psychic powers of Empathy and See Aura. Even though the adventurers did not know they were being scanned, Magali knew that they could ultimately be trusted.



TYPICAL MUTANT RAT

The Coalition has experimented with turning a variety of animals into humanoid mutants for military use, i.e. non-human soldiers. Rats seemed like a logical choice because of their cunning natures. However, rats, unlike canines, have proven to retain too much of an independent spirit and are not obedient or loyal enough to make reliable CS soldiers. To make matters worse, rodents, especially rats, seem to be Anarchist by nature, and their new, large, humanoid bodies and intelligence seem to make them more aggressive than the ordinary animal. The experiment was declared a terrible failure and the mutants were marked for termination. In an inexplicable incident, a random Rift appeared in the middle of a mutant rat containment area, allowing around 1200 to escape. A few hundred reappeared within the sewers, and lower, secret and unfinished levels the Lone Star Complex, where they have multiplied and made new lives living in the underbelly of the Lone Star Complex. These are the mutants led by Magali.

General humanoid appearance, bipedal body with a pair of humanoid arms, legs and hands. They have a long, hairless rat tail and their bodies are covered in a light grey, black or white fur. Their fingers and toes have claws and the head looks very much like that of a rat. Most are thin and wiry. Hands are fully articulated with a human-like opposable thumb with long, sharp, nails. Bipedal stance and walk upright. Speech is human-like but a bit guttural and they have a tendency to hiss, growl, and squeal when excited, angry or scared.

Player Character Note: Player characters who are *not* CS agents (spy, infiltrator, scout, soldier, etc.) must either be "feral" renegades (runaway mutants/deserters) or the offspring of runaway mutants. In the first case, they are considered dangerous traitors in need of termination. In the latter case, the mutant is considered to be a hopelessly corrupt and dangerous "feral free-born" and destroyed whenever encountered.

Alignment: Any, but typically Anarchist (30%), Miscreant (30%) and Diabolic (30%).

Attributes: I.Q. 2D6+6, M.E. 2D6, M.A. 2D6, P.S. 3D6, P.P. 2D6+8, P.E. 3D6, P.B. 2D6, Spd 4D6+6 running (reduce by 30% when climbing).

Height: 5 feet to 5 feet, 6 inches (1.5 to 1.7 m).

Weight: 120-160 pounds (54 to 72 kg).

Average Hit Points: 21 (P.E. attribute number plus 1D6 per level of experience.)

Average S.D.C.: 30 (P.E. attribute number +4D6, plus those gained from physical skills.)

M.D.C.: Via body armor. Patchwork armor has 4D6+30 M.D.C., stolen CS "Dead Boy" armor and most other heavy suits of armor stolen from adventurers have 70-100 M.D.C.

P.P.E.: 3D6

Disposition: Curious, selfish, and enjoy instant gratification. Tend to look out only for themselves.

Average Life Span: 4D4+24 years. Mutant Rats reach physical maturity at the age of six. Females give birth to 1D4+1 young after a 6 month pregnancy and can bear young till the age of 30.

Natural Abilities: Ambidextrous, double jointed, also have soft, joined, collapsible bones to squeeze through openings one third the size of their body, fatigue at 10% the rate of humans, can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) high and 10 feet (3 m) across from a standing position, increase height and distance 30% with a running start. Identify scents: 44% +2% per level of experience, Track by scent: 40% +2% per level of experience.

The tail is *not* prehensile. Rats, including Mutant Rats, chew on wood, bone, concrete, metal, etc. to wear down their constantly growing teeth, otherwise their fangs will grow through their jaw!

R.C.C. Skills: Regardless of the O.C.C. selected, all Mutant Rats have the following Skills, *Climb* (+20%), *Escape Artist* (+20%), *Prowl* (+15%), *Land Navigation* (+20%), *Swim* (+20%), *Wilderness Survival* (+10%).

O.C.C. & Skills: As per O.C.C. Theoretically, a Mutant Rat could be any Occupational Character Class (O.C.C.), even a practitioner of magic. However, most of those living under the Lone Star Complex are uneducated and are one of the following O.C.C.s: *Bandit*, *Saddle Tramp*, *Saloon Bum*, *Vagabond*, or

Wilderness Scout. Those O.C.C.s not found in *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* are found in *Rifts® World Book 14: New West*. Lean toward criminal and violent professions.

Skills of Note for a Third Level

Vagabond Rat Thief: Barter 58%, Begging 56%, Cook 65%, two Domestic skills of choice (+15%), General Repair and Maintenance 55%, I.D. Undercover Agent 52%, Language: Native Tongue: America at 88%, Language: Other: Spanish 74%, Language: Other of Choice (+15%), Palming 39%, Pick Locks 49%, Salvage 55%, Tailing 49%, Pilot Automobile or Motorcycle 86%, Radio: Basic 65%, and W.P. Blunt, W.P. Knife or Sword, and W.P. Energy Pistol or Energy Rifle, all at 3rd level. Plus R.C.C. Skills noted previously.

Experience Level: 1D6 or as set by the Game Master for NPCs. Player Characters should start a level one.

Attacks per Melee: As per Hand to Hand Skill; typically 5-7.

Damage: Bite does 2D6 S.D.C./H.P., claw strike (with finger nails) does 2D4 S.D.C. damage, punch 1D6, kick 2D6.

Bonuses (in addition to those acquired from attributes and skills): +1 attack per melee per round, +3 on initiative, +1 to dodge, +1 to pull punch, +2 to roll with fall or impact.

Magic: None, as a rule. The study of magic doesn't appeal to Mutant Rats, although they like magic items and weapons.

Psionics: 01-25% are minor psionics; select four Sensitive powers.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Common Equipment: Whatever they can scrounge or steal. One weapon for each W.P., Vibro-Blade (45% Vibro-Knife 1D6 M.D., 30% Vibro-Short Sword 2D4 M.D., 10% Dog Boy Vibro-Claws 2D6 M.D., 10% large Vibro-Sword 2D6 M.D. and 5% Neural Mace), survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), patchwork armor (4D6+30 M.D.C.), flashlight, comb, 30 feet (9.1 m) of lightweight rope, utility belt, air filter, a canteen or waterskin, 1D4 small sacks, 1D4 large sacks, some clothes, and a backpack or satchel.

Money: None to start, typically will have some tradable goods (weapons, food, etc.).

'PETUNIA'

MODIFIED MOUNTAINEER ATV

NOTABLE VEHICLES

The Mountaineer is an extremely popular armored, all-terrain vehicle. It has a pilot's compartment that can seat five and a large, enclosed cargo bay (10x8x8 foot/3x2.4x2.4 m cargo area) that can be used to haul salvage or cargo or be converted into a living area with bunks and sitting area for six, and still have a small area for cargo. That's exactly what our heroes have done. Plus, Bowie has *souped it up* a bit, increasing the normal M.D.C. and range by 20% and speed by 10%.

Vehicle Type: Three wheeled armored ATV transport vehicle.

Crew: One pilot and can accommodate 4-5 passengers comfortably in the front and has a living and sleeping arrangement for six in the cargo area (can sleep 10 under crowded conditions).

Maximum Speed: 132 mph (211 km).

Engine: Combustion or electric engine or nuclear.

Maximum Range: 720 miles (1152 km), has an extra large tank for liquid fuel and battery backup (another 400 miles/640 km).

Size: 25 feet (7.6 m) long, 18 feet (5.4 m) tall, 6 tons.

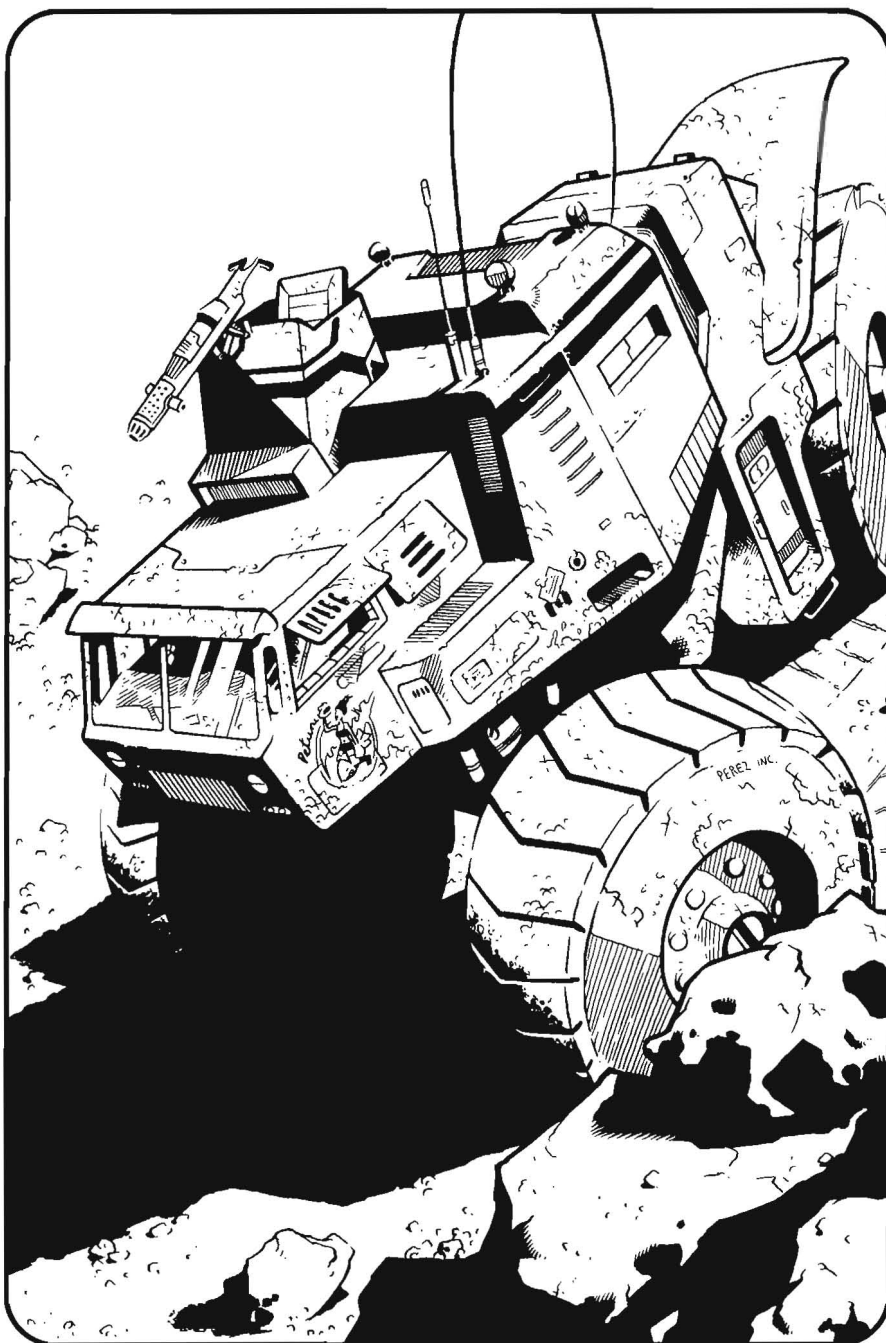
M.D.C. by Location:

- Main Body: 252
- Super Tires (3): 25 each
- Reinforced Pilot's Compartment: 60.

Black Market Cost: 76,000 credits for the basic vehicle (gasoline engine). Other features such as radar, radio, rail gun, etc. cost separately. 70,000 credits for electric engine and 500,000 for nuclear with a 20 year life. Additional armor can also be added at a cost of 10,000 credits per 30 M.D.C.

Weapons: None are standard, but Moses convinced Bowie to hook up a *Techno-Wizard Starfire Pulse Cannon* a few years ago when the team was flush with money.

• **TW Starfire Pulse Cannon:** This is a large, heavy weapon mounted on top of Petunia, our heroes' ATV, and is its main gun. The Starfire Pulse Cannon fires powerful, long range bolts of blue-white energy capable of gutting an enemy vehicle with a few shots. The weapon is a Techno-Wizard creation that has several P.P.E. energy cells to power it. Eight TW E-Clips are inserted into slots inside the top canister. The cannon is extremely popular



among practitioners of magic and adventurers looking for something to match for anything the Coalition Army has. The cannon is usually mounted on ATVs to give these light vehicles a surprising degree of firepower. The main drawback to the weapon is its expense and the team needs to have a mage available to recharge it. For our heroes, that's where Moses comes in.

- **Weight:** 124 lbs (55.8 kg).
- **Mega-Damage:** 2D6x10 M.D.

• **Rate of Fire:** Single shots only. Each blast counts as one of the gunner's attacks per melee round.

• **Effective Range:** 2000 feet (610 m).

• **Bonus:** +1 to strike

• **Payload:** Two shots per clip, which means eight P.P.E. clips provide a total of 16 shots. Plus, Moses can recharge a TW-Clip by channeling 70 P.P.E. points into it.

• **Black Market Cost:** 520,000 credits for the cannon. 40,000 credits per each P.P.E. clip; 320,000 credits for eight.

JOHNNY'S RIDE

MI-1010 DESERT FOX

NOTABLE VEHICLES

The Desert Fox hovercycle is Johnny Ferro's favorite vehicle on the planet. He likes that it is so small, yet does not sacrifice maneuverability or speed. It is one versatile hot-rod that can handle any terrain the New West can throw at it. In fact, it may be the Manistique Imperium's best design in 30 years, or so he believes.

The vehicle is specifically designed for desert and prairie travel, with engines that can take a beating from the heat, sand and dust without fear of clogging or overheating. The hovercycle is reliable, low maintenance and extremely popular (along with the NG-300 Speedster) in Lone Star and the Western Wilderness, especially among the Pecos Empire, bandits, and adventurers. Its disadvantages, if any, are its light armor and that fact that you can't seat a second person, or build in more than one weapon (most have none). However, its small size enables the Desert Fox to fit in small places and through narrow passages, and is it easy to conceal.

Vehicle Type: Hovercycle.

Crew: One rider, one passenger can sit behind the driver, but it makes for a cramped ride and is not comfortable even on short trips and imposes a -5% piloting skill penalty.

Special Bonus: The MI-1010 handles so well that the driver gets a +10% bonus to

his piloting skill.

Maximum Speed: 170 mph (272 km).

Maximum Altitude: 80 feet (24.4 m) and can handle drops of up to 600 feet (183 m).

Maximum Range: 700 miles (1120 km).

Engine: Combustion or electric engine.

Length: 6 feet (1.8 m).

Weight: 400 lbs (180 kg).

M.D.C. by Location:

- Rear Hover Jets* (2; upper): 30 each
- Main Jet* (1; lower body): 55
- Large Lower Directional Jets* (2): 15 each
- Forward Headlights* (2): 2 each
- Small Windshield* (1): 5
- Main Body: 65

Add 30% to all M.D.C. for the deluxe, armored model, but also add 30% to the cost.

A single asterisk (*) indicates a small and/or difficult target to hit and requires the attacker to make a "Called Shot," but even then the attacker is -4 to strike. The driver, hunched down, low to the body of the hovercycle is equally difficult to hit.

Cost: 90,000 credits for gasoline combustion engine or 105,000 for electric. Nuclear not available. Weapons are extra.

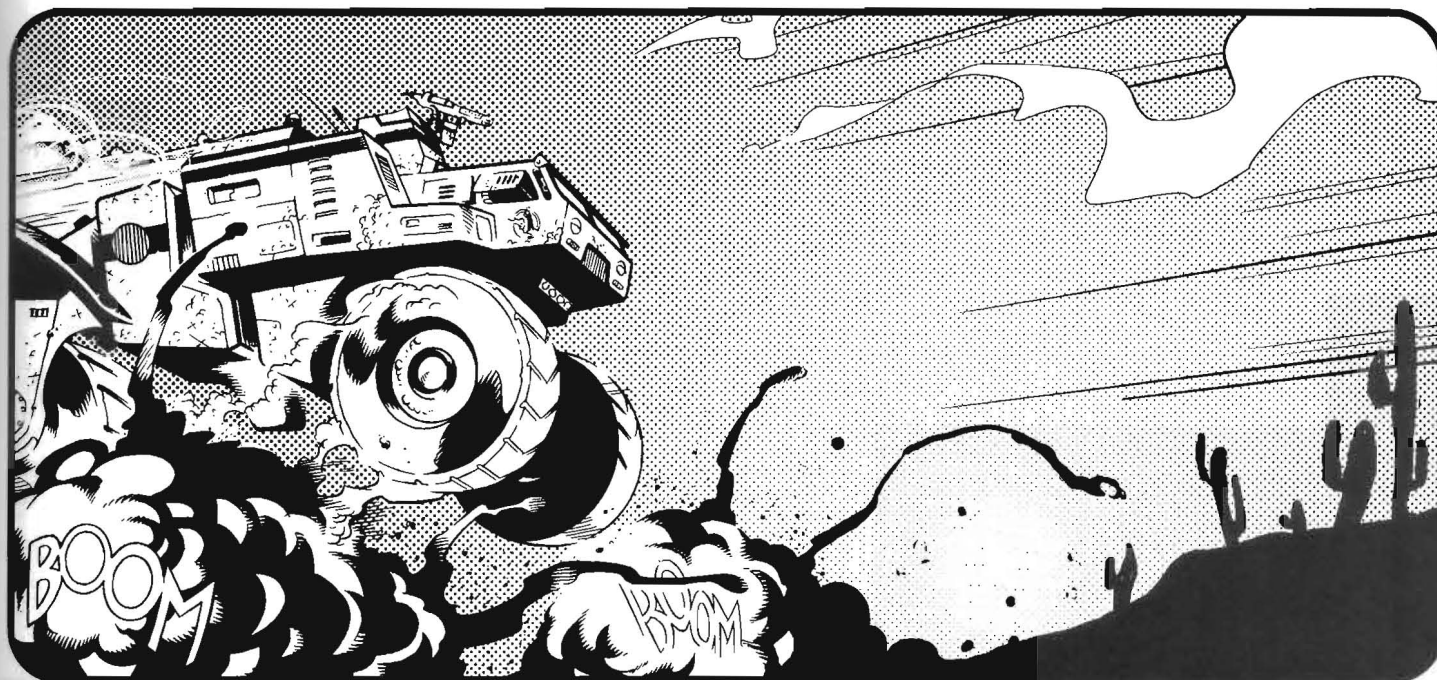
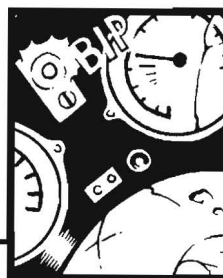
Weapons (optional): Weapon extras are full price even during sales.

• **Light Laser:** 1D6 M.D., range, is 1200 feet (366 m), payload is 20 shots. Cost: 11,000 credits.

• **Heavy Laser:** 2D6 M.D., range, is 2000 feet (610 m), payload is 20 shots. Cost: 25,000 credits.

• **Dual Mini-Missile Launchers:** As many as two launcher can be added; one on each side or undercarriage. The small launchers fire two mini-missiles each, payload is two each; manual reloading (not possible while moving). Cost: 55,000 credits.

Note: This vehicle is never purchased or used by the CS.



DR. DESMOND BRADFORD



PERSONNEL FILE CLSCA0DR1

Here's the short lowdown on Doctor Desmond Bradford. He is part genius, part visionary, part enigma and part madman. It is hard to say just how insane and dangerous Desmond Bradford is, really, or to whom he is a threat. Although he frequently ignores the rules, laws and commands of the Coalition States, right up to Emperor Prosek, the Emperor has refused to remove the man from his post.

As **Administrator of the Lone Star Complex, Doctor of Genetic Engineering and Cybernetics, and Head of the Genetics Engineering Division (GED) at Lone Star**, Doctor Bradford wields more power than anyone short of the Emperor Prosek, Joseph Prosek II and a tiny handful of military leaders.

Bradford claims to be a patriot and thinks of himself as one of the unseen and unsung heroes of the Coalition States. Indeed, he is quite literally the father of the Psi-Hounds, and other mutants, and has had his hand in perfecting the CS Juicer conversion process. He shares the Emperor's dreams of human supremacy and reclaiming North America exclusively for humanity. However, the two men depart on exactly how that can be accomplished, and that's where Doctor Bradford goes too far. He frequently engages in top secret genetics experimentation and projects that are illegal and immoral by Coalition standards.

Bradford assumes that if his results are as productive as he imagines they will be, the Emperor and his staff will, ultimately, forgive any improprieties or bending (shattering in most cases) of the law. So far, he's been right, and even when scores of CS leaders scream for his head, Emperor Prosek refuses.

If Emperor Prosek is a smarter, more patient and conniving Adolf Hitler, then Bradford is a more brilliant, ruthless and driven Doctor Mengele.

Name: Doctor Desmond Bradford

Species: Human.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 27, M.E. 21, M.A. 18, P.S. 19, P.P. 15, P.E. 14, P.B. 11, Spd 15.

Hit Points: 71.

S.D.C.: 20.

Height: 6 feet, 2 inches (1.9 m).

Weight: 210 lbs (95 kg).

Age: 73 by 109 P.A., but still looks to be in his late thirties or early forties.

P.P.E.: 15

Horror Factor: 14, increase that to 18 if he's about to operate or experiment on you!

Experience Level: 20th level Cyber-Doc and Genetic Engineer, 10th level Administrator.

Disposition: Doctor Bradford is a genius who has little tolerance for ignorance or stupidity in others. He demands the utmost from all who work under him and tends to belittle those who fail him more than once. He rides his people hard and expects them to possess the same intense (insane) drive, dedication and endurance that he possesses; most do not, which annoys him. He is constantly frustrated by the limitations, small minds and lack of vision in the supposedly "best minds" in science. All this helps to create Bradford's feeling of detachment from and superiority over mere mortals.

He believes he is a god who can give and take life without consequences, and that he and Emperor Prosek are humankind's saviors. It is only Bradford's delusion that the Emperor is a fellow god (and perhaps even as a slightly more powerful god) that keeps him in check (at least to some degree). If that bond is ever severed, there can only be disaster.

Ninety percent of the troops and personnel at the Lone Star facility are loyal to their Emperor and Country, and fear Administrator Bradford, so they will not join the madman in any action of defiance against the CS. However, Bradford knows the secret complex better than anybody else and knows things that only a tiny handful of others know.

Desmond Bradford is himself a human aberration with a brilliant mind and imagination the likes of which the world sees only once every thousand years.

Skills of Note: Language: American, Spanish and Gobblely at 98%, literate in American and Spanish at 98%, knows all Medical and Science skills as well as Swimming, S.C.U.B.A., Pilot Hover Craft (Ground), Computer Operation, Computer Programming, Computer Hacking, and Radio: Basic all at 98%. He also knows the following skills, all at approximately 85%



skill proficiency: Interrogation Techniques, Intelligence, Streetwise, Find Contraband, Palming, Computer Repair, Horsemanship, Land Navigation, and Wilderness Survival. W.P. Knife/surgeon skill is at 20th level, W.P. Energy Pistol 10th level, W.P. Energy Rifle at 6th level. Hand to Hand: Expert, 10th level. **Number of Attacks:** Seven.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +11 to S.D.C. damage, +3 to pull/roll with punch, fall or impact, kick attack (1D6 damage), critical strike on 18-20, judo-style body throw/flip, paired weapons.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Clock Calendar, Gyro-Compass, Universal Headjack and Ear Implant.

Notable Equipment: Has access to virtually anything he needs or wants from the CS Government and Military. Has the highest security clearance and has access to all levels and facilities at the Lone Star Complex.

Favorite weapons include laser scalpels, Vibro-Knives and

Dog Boy Vambraces, two claws and/or double sabers, Electro-Stun hand prod and spear, as well as a variety of drugs and implants (used in others to control them). Wears heavy, old-style Dead Boy armor in the field.

¢ Clock Calendar, Gyro-Compass, and Universal Headjack and Ear Implant.

Money: As the Administrator of the Lone Star Complex, Desmond Bradford has access to billions of credits for research and access to hundreds of trillions of credits worth of equipment and facilities.

Personal Resources: Always one to plan ahead, Bradford has six million Universal Credits, 24 million credits worth of pre-Rifts artifacts (most looted from the Complex), and over 50 million credits worth of genetics, medical and lab equipment at an underground hideout in Ciudad Juarez. He also has caches of basic travel and medical equipment (vehicle, armor, weapons, medical bag) and debit cards of 100,000 Universal Credits scattered at a half dozen secret locations in the State of Lone Star.



SPECIAL AGENT REYNER KRIEGHOFF



PERSONNEL FILE CLSC00SA1

Although Reyner Krieghoff began his military career as just another Psi-Stalker, his ruthless efficiency, and willingness to do whatever was necessary to get the job done, soon brought him to the attention of his superiors. As luck would have it, just as he was being recommended for a promotion, Doctor Bradford had a need for soldiers with psychic abilities for an important clandestine mission. Agent Krieghoff was one of those selected for this assignment.

Although details are sketchy (in fact, Lone Star has no official record of this so-called "mission"), Krieghoff was one of the few survivors to return. Bradford learned that the mission succeeded only because Krieghoff took charge, rallied the rest of the men, and completed the assignment after their commander was killed.

Doctor Bradford quickly realized he had a very determined warrior in Krieghoff and sent him on a few more covert assignments, all of which were successful thanks to Krieghoff's leadership. Krieghoff was happy to become Doctor Bradford's personal agent.

To further improve Agent Krieghoff's capabilities to serve Lone Star, Krieghoff (who is now a Captain) was put in charge of a special unit that answers only to Doctor Bradford. This unit consisted of mutant animals who sometimes went beyond the

parameters of CS protocol. All were handpicked by Doctor Bradford, himself, and completely loyal to him and their squad leader, Agent Krieghoff.

The reputation of the Krieghoff Pack is rooted in terror and fear. Even suggesting that Krieghoff's Pack might be investigating you or supervising an operation sends chill down the spines of those involved. The Pack is infamous for its cleverness, treachery, and ruthless resolve. All its members are cold-blooded killers and skilled espionage agents.

Name: Reyner Krieghoff (and god help anyone who tries to address him on a first name basis.)

Species: Mutant, Civilized Psi-Stalker.

Rank: Captain and Squad Leader of an elite mutant pack.

Alignment: Miscreant.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 17, M.A. 14, P.S. 14, P.P. 11, P.E. 17, P.B. 10, Spd 21.

Size: 6 feet, 2 inches (1.95 m).

Weight: 220 lbs (99.7 kg).

Hit Points: 30. **S.D.C.:** 58.

M.D.C.: Wears Dead Boy armor (main body 100 M.D.C.) but can also become a Mega-Damage being himself in certain combat situations.

P.P.E.: 7

Experience Level: 9th level Coalition Psi-Stalker.

Disposition: Krieghoff is competent, ruthless, and dedicated to serving Lone Star. He prefers the company of mutant animals to that of humans, other than Dr. Bradford (whom Krieghoff considers an honorary mutant), but can not claim to have any friends (which is fine by him). Although Krieghoff is rather fond of his animals, it is a fondness based on respect instead of affection. Should any of them go rogue, he would not hesitate to put them down.

Special Powers & Abilities:

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** Track a specific psychic scent is 60%. Track an active scent is 98%.

- **Sense Supernatural Beings:** 80%; Tracking by psychic scent alone 70%, but 94% if psychic or magic energy is being expended at that moment.

- **Energy Vampire:** Subsists on P.P.E. or I.S.P. energy alone.

- **Psionic Empathy with Animals:** They don't fear the Psi-Stalker or react to his presence.

- **Becomes a Mega-Damage Being** in certain combat situations. Namely when facing supernatural enemies and M.D.C. opponents.

- **Highly Developed Physical Traits:** Quick reflexes, ambidextrous and can leap 6 feet (1.8 m) up and 10 feet (3 m) across.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about these powers. Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note: Language: American 96%, Language Other: Spanish 94%, Body Building, Camouflage 70%, Climbing 85/75%, Find Contraband 68%, Hand to Hand: Assassin, Hunting, Land Navigation 78%, Military Etiquette 85%, Military Fortification 80%, Navigation 80%, Outdoorsmanship, Pilot Hovercraft 98%, Pilot Tanks & APCs 78%, Prowl 77%,

Radio: Basic 95%, Recognize Weapon Quality 75%, Running, Sensory Equipment 80%, Streetwise 57%, Tracking (people) 65%, Trap/Mine Detection 70%, Weapon Systems 90%, Wilderness Survival 75%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Sword, W.P. Knife, W.P. Handguns, and W.P. Paired Weapons, all at 9th level.

Attacks per Melee: Eight.

Damage: As per Hand to Hand Combat or by weapon.

Bonuses (total): +4 on initiative, +2 to strike, +1 to strike with a thrown weapon, +1 to strike with guns, +3 to parry, +3 to dodge, +4 to damage, +2 to roll with impact, +2 to pull punch, +2 to entangle, Karate Punch (2D4 damage), Karate Kick (2D6 damage), backhand strike (1D6), knockout/stun on a roll of 17-20, leap kick (3D8 damage, but counts as 2 melee attacks), can back flip, +4 on Perception Rolls, +5 to save vs mind control and mind altering drugs, +3 to save vs possession, +6 to save vs Horror Factor, +1 to save vs insanity, +1 to save vs poison, +3 to save vs magic, +5% to save vs coma/death.

Vulnerabilities: None per se.

Psionics: A Master Psychic who only needs a 5 or better to save vs psionic attacks. His psionic abilities are Mind Block (4), Object Read (6), Presence Sense (4), See the Invisible (4), Sixth Sense (2), and Telepathy (4). **I.S.P.:** 137.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: Unlike the vast majority of Coalition troops, who are dependent upon their commanding officer to decide what equipment they will be allowed to have, Agent Krieghoff has carte blanche to equip himself and his unit however he sees fit. Although he is guided by the parameters of the specific mission, he generally prefers to use the following: Coalition CA-4 "Dead Boy" armor (100 M.D.C.), a C-14 "Fire Breather" laser rifle and grenade launcher (Laser: 3D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 m range; grenades 2D6 M.D., 1200 foot/365 m range), a C-20 laser pistol (2D6 M.D., 800 foot/244 m range), lots of extra E-Clips for each, several grenades (of various types), a Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), a survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), an S.D.C. pistol (5D6 S.D.C. damage per shot) with extra ammunition, 1D4+6 signal flares, utility belt, gas mask, walkie-talkie, flashlight, and a canteen.

Money: Krieghoff has 145,000 credits saved up in a bank in the Coalition State of Lone Star earning interest so that Krieghoff can retire in style when he is too old for active duty. If Krieghoff is killed before that happens (as Krieghoff assumes will be the case), a memorial fund will be set up and the money is to go to support mutant animals. None of Agent Krieghoff's animals know about this and he will soundly thrash anyone who reveals this to them; the man has an image as a hard case to uphold.



KREIGHOFF'S PACK

This team of Coalition Mutants are more than another squad of Dog Boys, they are a mixed group of experimental mutant animals in service to Lone Star. Each has been *designed and created* by Doctor Bradford to serve him as his trusted, personal hatchet men and clean-up crew. Whenever a situation reaches a point where regular Lone Star troops cannot deal with it (or if the situation involves top secret operations best not to involve sol-

diers loyal to Chi-Town), **Krieghoff's Pack** is called in.

If it becomes necessary to split their forces, the team can be divided into two squads. These squads are respectively led by Arquebus and Khola. Both of these squad leaders (along with anyone else assigned to the team) ultimately answer to *Agent Krieghoff*. Only Krieghoff is not a mutant animal. He's a Psi-Stalker, a member of a race of human mutants who evolved with monster hunting powers in the centuries after the Great Cataclysm and the Coming of the Rifts.

THE PACK • PSI-HOUND

ARQUEBUS



PERSONNEL FILE CLSC000P1

This hunter-killer is a mutant timber wolf and Krieghoff's second in command. During his formative years, Arquebus was nearly destroyed by the authorities at Lone Star for being too violent and defiant. Although the scientists who created mutant wolves expected them to be aggressive and fierce, Arquebus was too aggressive. When this was brought to the attention of Dr. Bradford, instead of destroying the animal, he took the creature under his wing and placed him under Agent Krieghoff to teach him self-control and some measure of humility. After some initial conflicts, primarily over which of them was the Alpha male, Arquebus settled down to become a valuable member of the Pack. He eventually worked his way up to second-in-command of the team and has been a valued member ever since.

Name: Arquebus

Species: Mutant Timber Wolf.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 11, M.E. 10, M.A. 9, P.S. 33 (Augmented), P.P. 19, P.E. 27, P.B. 7, Spd 34.

Size: 5 feet, 5 inches (1.65 m).

Weight: 252 lbs (113 kg).

Hit Points: 48. **S.D.C.:** 82.

M.D.C.: Wears modified CA-1 "Dead Boy" armor (main body of 80 M.D.C.).

P.P.E.: 14

Experience Level: 5th level Coalition Dog Boy (Psi-Hound)

Disposition: Just as Krieghoff is Dr. Bradford's go to guy, Arquebus is the go to guy for Krieghoff. He is the best tracker on the team, as well as one of the fiercest fighters. Arquebus will generally lead the way on Search & Destroy missions. He is aggressive and brooks no challenges to his position as the number one member of Krieghoff's Pack. Although the wolf is loyal to his teammates and will risk his life for them without hesitation, he will hurt them if they get out of line or feels they are disrespecting him, or threatening his position within the team. Arquebus is respected and feared as a ruthless and brutal leader and fighter. He is not well-liked, and doesn't care.

Special Abilities:

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** 60%.

- **Recognize Psychic Scent:** General: 26%, Specific Scent: 16%.

- **Sense Supernatural Being:** Identify type/race is 70%, Track by scent is 55%.

- **Superior Sense of Smell:** Recognize common and strong scents is 82%, Identify specific odors is 62%. Track by smell alone is 56%.

- **Keen Sense of Hearing and Good Sight:** Superior to humans, reflected in bonuses.

- **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** Fouls his senses.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about these powers.

Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note: Languages: American 88% and Spanish 60%, Boxing, Climbing 70/60%, Detect Ambush 55%, Detect Concealment 50%, Forced March, Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Hunting, Intelligence 54%, Land Navigation 62%, Military Etiquette 55%, Outdoorsmanship, Pilot Hovercraft 80%, Prowl 47%, Radio: Basic 75%, Running, Sensory Equipment 50%, Swimming 70%, Track & Trap Animals 50/60%, Tracking (people) 50%, Trap/Mine Detection 55%, Wilderness Survival 65%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Knife, all at 5th level.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: As per Augmented P.S. or weapon. Punch does 2D6+16 S.D.C. damage, a Power Punch does 2D4 M.D. but counts as two attacks. Also has a Bite attack: Nip does 2D6+4 S.D.C. damage, while a full strength bite does 5D6+8 S.D.C.

Bonuses (total): +3 on initiative, +2 on Perception Rolls, +5 to strike, +8 to parry and dodge, +16 to damage, +4 to roll with impact, +5 to pull punch, +3 to disarm, +2 to entangle, can perform a body flip/throw, Karate and any hand strike/punch, any type of foot strike including Leap Kick (3D8 damage, but counts as 2 melee attacks), +8 on Perception Rolls, +2 to save vs disease, +6 to save vs magic and poison, +2 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs illusions, +2 to save vs possession and curses, and +24% to save vs coma/death.

Vulnerabilities: In the heat of combat, Arquebus sometimes loses his cool and fights in a frenzy. Although this usually stops short of becoming a berserker rage, Arquebus gets careless and is so caught up with inflicting harm that he does not worry about protecting himself as much as he should.

Psionics: Master Psychic who needs an 8 or better to save vs psionic attacks. His abilities are Presence Sense (4), Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), Sixth Sense (2), and Empathy (4; receiver only, not transmission). **I.S.P.:** 70.

Magic: None. Dog Boys tend to distrust and avoid magic and magic items, including weapons.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Bionic eye (left) with multi-optics.

Notable Equipment: Arquebus takes whatever equipment he is assigned for the mission. As a rule, he has modified CA-1 Dead Boy armor (80 M.D.C.), a C-10 laser rifle with telescopic sight and nightvision scope (2D6 M.D., 2000 foot/610 m range), a C-18 laser pistol (2D4 M.D., 800 foot/244 m range), 1D4+4 extra E-Clips for each, a survival knife, a pair of Vibro-Claws (3D4 M.D. each pair), utility belt, gas mask, walkie-talkie, uniform, canteen, tinted goggles, PDD pocket audio recorder, pocket laser distancer, flashlight, pocket mirror, cigarette lighter, 100 feet



(30.5 m) of lightweight rope, small hammer, 4 spikes, 3 animal snares, infrared distancing binoculars, portable language translator, a knapsack, and a backpack

Even before her full conversion into a combat cyborg, Khola was an anomaly. There are many diversities among the Dog Boys, especially when taking into account the different breeds of dogs that the Lone Star geneticists had to work with. Pit Bulls are usually one of the smaller breeds of Dog Boys, rarely reaching 5 feet (1.5 m) tall. At six feet tall, Khola stood out like a giant, topping her comrades at almost a head taller. Her size, power and speed caught the eye of Doctor Bradford and she became another one of his private, unauthorized experiments. Psi-Hounds aren't supposed to get bionic conversion, but rules never seem to bother the good Doctor, and he finagled authorization for full bionic conversion under the auspices of one of his unique, top secret experiments.

Being treated as a freak by other Psi-Hounds in the past has made Khola determined to prove herself. When Doctor Bradford promised her new machine body would make her the most powerful Psi-Hound in the CS, she welcomed the opportunity. When he was done with her, he had Khola assigned to Krieghoff's Pack, where she has served with distinction. Khola has become an integral part of the team, adding power, speed, and the element of surprise to the unit, as nobody expects a Psi-Hound cyborg. Opponents assume her cyborg body is a new style of body armor, at least until she runs them down at 90 mph (144 km) or sprays them with a barrage of rocket grenades from her concealed shoulder launchers. Khola also brings loyalty and stability to the unit. She considers her fellow misfits on the team to be her best friends, and she would sacrifice herself to protect any one of them.

Name: Khola

Species: Experimental Psi-Hound

Alignment: Scrupulous.

Species: Mutant Pit Bull turned into a Combat Cyborg.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 13, M.A. 12, P.S. 28 (Bionic), P.P. 17 (Bionic), P.E. not applicable, P.B. 10, Spd 132 (90 mph/144 km; Bionic).

Size: 6 feet, 10 inches (2 m).

Weight: 500 lbs (225 kg).

M.D.C.: See Bionics for full details, below.

P.P.E.: 3

Experience Level: 6th level Psi-Hound turned Combat Cyborg

Disposition: Less aggressive than Arquebus, but just as determined, Khola commands the second squad if the pack splits up. Although the pit bull is lower than Arquebus in the team hierarchy, Khola is smarter than the Timber Wolf and Krieghoff gives her more opportunities for independent operation and command of the second unit. Khola is both respected and liked by her teammates.

Special Abilities: Only Khola's head is natural, the rest of her is a full conversion cyborg with bionic attributes and power.

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** Gone due to bionics.
- **Recognize Psychic Scent:** Gone due to bionics.
- **Sense Supernatural Being:** Gone due to bionics.
- **Superior Sense of Smell:** Recognize common and strong scents is 55%. Identify specific odors is 34%. Track by smell



THE PACK • EXP. PSI-HOUND KHOLA



PERSONNEL FILE CLSC000P2

alone is 30%.

• **Keen Sense of Hearing and Good Sight:** Reflected in bonuses.

• **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** Not applicable.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about Dog Boy powers and Combat Cyborgs.

Also see Bionics.

Skills of Note: Languages: American 88% and Techno-Can 65%, Basic Mechanics 60%, Climbing 75/65%, Detect Ambush 60%, Detect Concealment 55%, Forced March, Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Intelligence 58%, Land Navigation 66%, Military Etiquette 60%, Outdoorsmanship, Pilot Hovercraft 85%, Pilot Truck 65%, Prowl 50%, Radio: Basic 80%, Running, Sensory Equipment 55%, Swimming 75%, Tracking (people) 55%, Trap/Mine Detection 60%, Wilderness Survival 75%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Knife, all at 6th level.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: As per Bionic P.S. or weapon. Punch does 2D6+13 S.D.C. damage, a Power Punch does 1D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks. Bite attack: Nip does 2D6 S.D.C., Full Strength Bite does 4D6 S.D.C.

Bonuses (all): +3 on initiative, +4 to strike, +5 to parry, +6 to dodge, +3 to roll with impact, +5 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, +2 to entangle, can perform a body flip/throw, Karate and any hand

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strike/punch, any type of foot strike including Leap Kick (3D8 damage, but counts as 2 melee attacks), Critical Strike on an unmodified roll of 18-20, +5 on Perception Rolls, +2 to save vs disease, +6 to save vs magic and poison, +2 to save vs mind control, +2 to save vs illusions, +2 to save vs possession and curses, +24% to save vs coma/death.

Vulnerabilities: Sometimes Khola overcompensates for what she considers to be weaknesses in herself. When that happens, she is likely to push herself and her comrades a bit too far, especially when taking a step back may be a better course of action.

Psionics: Psychic powers were lost due to full bionic conversion.

Magic: None.

Bionic Body: Combat Cyborg, only her head is flesh and blood, but even the skull has been reinforced with bionics.

• **M.D.C. by Location:** Hands (2): 40 each, Forearms (2): 68 each, Upper Arms (2): 80 each, Shoulder Grenade Launchers (2): 50 each, Legs (2): 105 each, Feet (2): 28 each, Head (reinforced): 35, a helmet adds 70 M.D.C. when it is worn, and *main body* has a total of 410 M.D.C., including MI-B2 Medium Combat Cyborg Body Armor.

Bionic Weapons and Features: Bionic Speed, Bionic/Augmented P.S. of 28, Amplified Hearing, Clock Calendar, Fingerjack, Gyro-Compass, Radio Ear, Climb Cord in left bionic forearm, Forearm Medium Laser Blaster (right arm; 3D6 M.D. per blast, 2000 feet/609 m range, unlimited payload as it is tied into the cyborg's power supply) and armor.

• **Shoulder Grenade Launchers (2; special):** Mini-missiles were too large for the payload Doctor Bradford wanted, so he had tech-support whip up shoulder launchers that fire rifle-style micro-fusion grenades (same as fired by the CP-50 Assault Rifle). The launch system is much less accurate and has a much shorter range than the rifle, but Khola uses it to great effectiveness. For one thing, nobody sees this attack coming as Dog Boys aren't supposed to be bionic or have access to such armaments. **M.D.C.:** 2D6 M.D. per grenade with a blast area of 12 feet (3.6 m), but typically fired in volleys of 4-8 for accumulative damage and greater area effect. 2 grenades does 4D6 M.D., 4 does 1D4x10 M.D. to a 24 foot (7.3 m) blast area; 6 does 1D6x10 M.D. to a 30 foot (9.1 m) blast area and 8 does 2D4x10 M.D. to a 35 foot (10.6 m) area. **Range:** 400 feet (122 m). **Payload:** 24 per shoulder launcher, 48 total payload.

Notable Equipment: Khola takes whatever equipment she is assigned for the mission. As a rule, she uses a C-12 laser rifle (4D6 M.D. plus two lower settings, 2000 foot/610 m range, and has a telescopic sight and nightvision scope), a C-18 laser pistol (2D4 M.D. 800 foot/244 m range), 1D4+3 extra E-Clips for each, a survival knife (1D6 S.D.C.), a Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D.), utility belt, air filter, gas mask, walkie-talkie, uniform, canteen, tinted goggles, PDD pocket audio recorder, pocket laser distancer, flashlight, pocket mirror, cigarette lighter, 100 feet (30.5 m) of lightweight rope, small hammer, 4 spikes, infrared distancing binoculars, portable language translator, a portable tool kit, a knapsack, and a backpack.

THE PACK • URSA WARRIOR OSO



PERSONNEL FILE CLSC000P3

Years ago, some scientists at Lone Star were attempting to create an Ursa-Warrior from Black Bear DNA. However, this Ursa-Warrior would be larger and stronger than the norm. Oso is the successful result of this experiment. So, when the Pack needed a powerful creature for a mission, Oso was selected. The mission went well and Agent Krieghoff was impressed enough with Oso to request that he be assigned to the team on a full-time basis. Oso has served with the Pack ever since.

Name: Oso

Species: Mutant Black Bear with a bionic arm (left).

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 10, M.A. 8, P.S. 36 (Robot Strength), P.P. 10, P.E. 23, P.B. 5, Spd 41 (29 mph/46.4 km).

Size: 7 feet, 7 inches (2.3 m).

Weight: 1043 lbs (470 kg).

Hit Points: 138. **S.D.C.:** 75. **Natural S.D.C. Armor Rating:** 15.

M.D.C.: Wears modified Dog Pack DPM Riot armor (main body of 65 M.D.C.).

P.P.E.: 8

Experience Level: 3rd level Coalition Ursa-Warrior.

Disposition: Oso is a loyal team member who prides himself on being the strongman of the group. He realizes that he is not as

AGENTS OF THE COALITION

smart as his comrades and has no problem with that. As long as someone else is on hand to make the decisions and give the orders, Oso will do his part.

Special Abilities:

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** 30%.

- **Sense Supernatural Being:** To identify type/race is 44%. Track by scent is 25%.

- **Good Senses of Smell, Taste, and Hearing:** Recognize common and strong scents is 49%. Identify specific odors is 30%. Track by smell alone is 28%.

- **Nightvision:** 200 feet (61 m).

- **Natural Climber:** 80%/60%.

- **Natural Swimmer:** 60%.

- **Sprinter:** Can run at double normal speed for 1D4 minutes before dropping back to normal speed.

- **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** Fouls special senses.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about these powers.

Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note: Language: American 80%, Cook 50%, Forced March, Hand to Hand: Expert, Hunting, Identify Plants & Fruits 50%, Land Navigation 54%, Outdoorsmanship, Physical Labor, Radio: Basic 65%, Running, Trap/Mine Detection 30%, Wilderness Survival 60%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Heavy Military Weapons, and W.P. Blunt, all at 3rd level.

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Damage: As per Robot Strength or weapon. *Restrained Punch* does 1D4x10+8 S.D.C., or 1D6x10+21 S.D.C., or 1D4 M.D. *A Full Strength Punch:* 2D6 M.D., *Claw Strike:* 3D6+2 M.D., *Power Punch:* 4D6 M.D. but counts as two attacks. *Bite attack:* Nip does 5D6 S.D.C., Full Strength Bite does 1D6 M.D.! **Note:** Bionic left arm does 2D4+21 S.D.C. damage on normal full strength punch and 2D4 M.D. on a Power Punch only. The bionic arm is not as powerful as Oso's natural P.S. which is equal to Robotic P.S.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry, +3 to dodge, +2 to roll with impact, +3 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, kick attack (1D8 damage), Karate Punch, +3 to save vs Horror Factor, +3 to save vs disease, +4 to save vs magic and poison, +1 to save vs mind control, +16% to save vs coma/death.

Vulnerabilities: Oso is only efficient when someone is supervising him. If left on his own, he is lazy and lacks personal initiative. Also, unfamiliar situations sometimes throw him for a loop.

Psionics: Major Psychic who needs a 12 or better to save vs psionic attacks. His abilities are Impervious to Cold (2) and Resist Thirst (6). **I.S.P.:** 32.

Magic: None. Ursa-Warriors tend to distrust and avoid magic and magic items, including weapons.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Bionic right eye with multi-optics and a bionic left arm (Bionic P.S. of 36, 65 M.D.C.).

Notable Equipment: Oso will take whatever equipment he is assigned for the mission. As a rule, he has modified Dog Pack DPM Riot armor (65 M.D.C.), a non-environmental helmet with a visor, radio, flashlight, pocket mirror, comb, 100 feet (30.5 m) of lightweight rope, small hammer, 4 spikes, portable language translator, survival knife, Neuro-Mace, utility belt, air filter, gas mask, 2 gallon-sized canteens, a knapsack, and a backpack.

THE PACK • BATTLE CAT BYSS



PERSONAL FILE CLSC000P4

Since joining the Lone Star military, Byss had a hard time following orders, particularly if she disagreed with it or found it to be pointless. After skirting orders one time too often, Byss was arrested and faced a possible court martial.

Fortunately for her, Dr. Bradford interceded, saying he had a mission that required the feline's special skills. Given the choice of either joining the Pack or being cashiered and probably put down, Byss took the assignment. The mission was a success and Byss found herself with comrades she could trust and a commanding officer she could respect. With her solitary nature she enjoys the flexibility and independence given to Krieghoff's Pack. Not to mention the skullduggery, treachery, torture and killing.

Name: Byss

Species: Mutant Cat (Abyssinian).

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 8, M.A. 24, P.S. 15, P.P. 18, P.E. 17, P.B. 15, Spd 35 (23 mph/36.8 km).

Size: 5 feet, 4 inches (1.5 m).

Weight: 216 lbs (97 kg) of muscle.

Hit Points: 60. **S.D.C.:** 39.

Natural S.D.C. Armor Rating: 11.

M.D.C.: Sometimes wears modified Dog Pack DPM Riot armor

(main body of 50 M.D.C.).

P.P.E.: 11

Experience Level: 4th level Coalition Battle Cat.

Disposition: Although Byss is loyal to her teammates, she still values her independence. Except for orders from Krieghoff himself, Byss has been known to ignore orders that she feels are pointless, or at the very least, do them in a manner more to her liking than what Lone Star considers as regulation.

Special Abilities:

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** 45%.

- **Sense Supernatural Being:** To identify type/race is 60%, To track by scent is 16%.

- **Excellent Vision and Passive Nightvision:** 1000 feet (305 m).

- **Excellent Sense of Hearing:** The ability to judge distance and precise location of the source of the sound is 86%. Recognize & identify prey by sounds is 78%.

- **Fair to Good Sense of Smell:** Better than a human's.

- **Natural Climber:** 60/40%, and can leap 12 feet (3.6 m) high and 16 feet (4.9 m) across, 50% greater with a running start.

- **Natural Swimmer:** 50%, but dislikes getting wet.

- **Sprinter:** Can run at double normal speed for 1D4 minutes before dropping back to normal speed.

- **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** Fouls special senses.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about these powers. Also see Psionics.

Skills of Note: Acrobatics (+10% where applicable), Athletics (general), Basic Math 60%, Camouflage 40%, Climbing 70/60%, Detect Ambush 55%, Escape Artist 55%, Fishing 55%, Hand to Hand: Assassin, Land Navigation 68%, Language: American 90%, Palming 40%, Prowl 45%, Radio: Basic 70%, Recognize Weapon Quality 45%, Running, Seduction 42%, Streetwise 46%, Tailing 60%, Track & Trap Animals 45/55%, Tracking (people) 50%, Wardrobe & Grooming 62%, Wilderness Survival 60%, and W.P. Knife (Vibro-Blade), W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Handguns, and W.P. Paired Weapons, all at 4th level.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: As per hand to hand combat or weapon. Also has a Bite attack (nip - 3D6 damage, full strength bite - 6D6 damage).

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to parry, +4 to dodge, +4 to damage, +5 to roll with impact, +3 to pull punch, Karate Punch (2D4 damage), Karate Kick (2D6 damage), +1 to save vs magic and poison, +2 to save vs psionics and mind control, +4% to save vs coma/death, Acrobat (sense of balance 75%, walk tightrope/high wire 69%, climb rope 86%, back flip 75%), and 80% to evoke trust or intimidation.

Vulnerabilities: Byss's independent nature sometimes leads her into situations that are beyond her ability to handle on her own. Also, she often prefers to rely on her agility and will not wear armor unless she is ordered to by Krieghoff.

Psionics: A Major Psychic, needs a 12 or better to save vs psionic attacks. Her abilities are Presence Sense (4) and Sixth Sense (2). **I.S.P.:** 50.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Bionic eye with multi-optics.

Notable Equipment: Byss will take whatever equipment she is assigned for the mission in addition to standard soldier issue.

DR. FREDERICK ALEXANDER



PERSONNEL FILE CLSC00DR7

Doctor Alexander is a brilliant surgeon, Cyber-Doc and genetic engineer. He is also one of Doctor Bradford's unwilling slaves, forced to create what he considers to be "horrible abominations." Doctor Alexander "knows" what they are doing is morally reprehensible, against the laws of the CS, and immensely dangerous. He believes that Doctor Bradford and the others are playing with forces that they do not completely understand and may unleash terrible genetic mutations into the world. He is never allowed outside the top secret GED facilities (he hasn't seen the sky in 13 years), and is believed to have died in a freak accident. Doctor Bradford personally handled the autopsy and informed the family of this great tragedy.

Doctor Alexander is controlled by threats and an explosive implant at the base of his skull. The good doctor has made it his mission to try to keep the Bradford's madmen from straying into areas that he thinks are far too dangerous, and has secretly sabotaged a few creation experiments. So far, these acts of subtle sabotage have gone unnoticed. In the meanwhile, he maintains a level of work that seems reasonable and tries to work slowly on things he feels are dangerous or morally wrong. He knows that Bradford has never been satisfied with his performance and suspects that he may soon be a candidate for the experimental personality modifying implants.

AGENTS OF THE COALITION

Under the right circumstances, Doctor Alexander could become a useful ally to any character trying to stop the horror. He can tell people about many of the dark places and secret projects that go on at Lone Star, as well as warn them about monsters and minions, and even about Bradford. His greatest fear is being subjected to brain implants and losing his sense of identity and willpower.

Name: Frederick Phillip Alexander, Jr.

Species: Human.

Alignment: Scrupulous, although a human supremacist and loyal servant of the CS Military.

Attributes: I.Q. 22, M.E. 17, M.A. 12, P.S. 11, P.P. 20, P.E. 10, P.B. 9, Spd 10.

Hit Points: 62; **S.D.C.:** 42.

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.65 m).

Weight: 160 lbs (72 kg).

Age: 57

P.P.E.: 7

Experience Level: 12th level Cyber-Doc and Genetic Engineer.

Disposition: A sanguine individual whose spirit is diminished but far from broken. He is an unhappy slave of a madman with little hope for escape. He's been informed that his family thinks him dead these past 14 years, so he knows they have moved on with their lives without him. This, combined with his slavery and loathing for what he is made to do, ravages the Doctor's spirits. He has contemplated suicide several times, and suffers from bouts of depression frequently. He'd drink or take pills if his keepers would let him.

He hates Doctors Bradford, Cunningham and Santiago and longs for the day he can see their madness put to an end. He hates them so much that if he *knew* he could destroy them in some way, he'd sacrifice his life to do so.

Skills of Note: Language and Literacy: American at 98%, knows Criminal Science & Forensics, Medical Doctor, M.D. in Cybernetics, Pathology, Genetics (Special), Chemistry, Chemistry: Analytical, Biology, Botany, Anthropology, Basic and Advanced Math, Computer Operation, Computer Programming, Pilot Hovercraft (Ground), and Radio: Basic, all at 98%. He also knows W.P. Knife/surgeon skill at 12th level, and W.P. Energy Pistol 9th level.

Number of Attacks: Five; Hand to Hand: Basic, 6th level.

Bonuses: +4 to strike, +6 to parry and dodge, +2 to S.D.C. damage, +2 to pull/roll with punch, fall or impact, kick attack (1D6 damage), Critical Strike on 19-20, judo-style body throw/flip, and +1 to save vs psionic attack.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: Clock Calendar, Gyro-Compass, and Universal Headjack and Ear Implant.

Notable Equipment: Only has access to the genetic and lab facilities and basic medical equipment allowed by his keepers.

Money: None, a captive. All his basic needs are provided for by Bradford and the others.

DR. RODRIGUEZ 'RODDY' HESTON

A.W.O.L.



PERSONNEL FILE CLSCODR23

Doctor Rodriguez Heston is a monkey boy tech who surpassed his genetic expectations and rose above his companions. Roddy, as he is known to his friends has a natural aptitude towards genetic research and development. His forward thinking and ability to achieve unbelievable results quickly caught Dr. Bradford's attention who then promoted Dr. Heston to Sector 7.

• In Sector 7 Dr. Heston moved up in the hierarchy to become the secondary lead on the Alpha-4 project working closely with Dr. Alexander, who he enjoys a good game of chess with from time to time.

Name: Rodriguez Heston, Roddy to his friends.

Species: Mutant Chimpanzee

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 20, M.E. 15, M.A. 16, P.S. 9, P.P. 17, P.E. 13, P.B. 8, Spd 11.

Species: Mutant Monkey.

Size: 3 feet, 11 inches (1.2 m).

Weight: 82 lbs (37 kg).

Hit Points: 42. S.D.C.: 26.

P.P.E.: 22

Experience Level: 7th level Monkey Boy Tech.

AGENTS OF THE COALITION

Disposition: Doctor Heston may be educated and have book smarts, but he is completely ignorant to the ways of the world and the prejudice of the Coalition States. He has minimal social skills and zero worldly experiences, so everything is new and a bit scary. Being a "brain," the good doctor will try to reason and talk his way out of trouble. When reason fails and a fight ensues, he resigns himself to the fact that he is living among barbarians. His naivete is obvious by the very fact that he believes Emperor Prosek and others high up in the Coalition will embrace him and put him in charge of scientific duties in the halls of science at Chi-Town. Roddy Heston has a lot to learn, and he's not likely to appreciate the lessons.

Special Abilities: Climb 75/65%, Gymnastics 60%, Sense of smell is 50% better than humans, can leap 4 feet (1.2 m) up and 8 feet (2.4 m) across (increase lengthwise leaps by 20% with a running or swing start), can run, leap, and swing through trees at double normal running speed, and identify "edible (for apes)" plants, fruits, nuts, leaves, and roots 70%.

• **Prehensile Feet (no tail):** Like all great apes, Doctor Heston has prehensile feet that are nearly as articulated as his hands. He can use them to climb, hang upside down and to hold, carry and use tools and equipment, work a keyboard or even drive a vehicle (except he doesn't know how to drive). Roddy is also double jointed.

Skills of Note: Artificial Intelligence 78%, Basic Electronics 65%, Biology 85%, Bioware Mechanics 75%, Botany 55%, Chemistry 85%, Chemistry: Analytical 75%, Computer Operation 90%, Computer Programming 75%, Computer Repair 65%, Electronic Countermeasures 65%, Forensics 65%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Jury-Rig 55%, Math: Basic 98%, Math: Advanced 95%, Mechanical Engineering 70%, Medical Doctor 90/80%, Pathology 70%, Radio: Basic 85%, Xenology 75%, Zoology 75%, and W.P. Handguns at 7th level.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: As per Hand to Hand combat or with a weapon.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to parry, +4 to dodge while on the ground or in trees, +2 to S.D.C. damage, +5 to roll with punch, fall, or impact, +2 to pull punch, +1 to disarm, Kick attack (1D8 damage), Critical Strike on an unmodified roll of 19-20.

Vulnerabilities: Dr. Heston was very naive about Lone Star and Dr. Bradford's agenda. Even now, he is still reluctant to fight. It is not that he is a pacifist per se; he just relies too much on reasoning even when physically overcoming someone is the better option.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Notable Equipment: Only has access to the genetic and lab facilities and basic medical equipment allowed by his keepers.

Money: None, a captive. All his basic needs are provided for by Bradford and the others.

Doctor Rodriguez Heston is the group's newest and most unlikely member, a *Monkey Boy* from the **Lone Star Genetics Complex**. He was a loyal Coalition scientist in the service of *Desmond Bradford* until our heroes broke into the Lone Star Complex and stepped into his lab. Suddenly, the Mutant Chimpanzee discovered he was not a highly valued colleague, but a highly expendable commodity. It was a revelation that has changed his life in an instant. Doctor Heston no longer believes that Dr. Bradford is a savior, but a monster who only cares about his own skin. Doctor Heston still has a great deal of faith in the Coalition States and Emperor Prosek, but that may be crashing down soon, too.

Roddy is still reeling from the unexpected changes in his life. Suddenly, he is without a home, a job or a purpose. He is inside a big ATV with people he doesn't know, traveling through a wilderness he's only read about. As a Monkey Boy mutant, the only home he has ever known is the laboratories of the Lone Star Complex. Doctor Heston had never even set foot outdoors before yesterday. Now, he's headed for *Chi-Town* and an uncertain future.

He can't imagine why Doctor Bradford would let him and the group escape, let alone escape with the knowledge in the pirated computer files and the data inside his head. The Monkey Boy knows a lot about many illegal and dangerous projects, including the **Omega Project**. Why on earth would Doctor Bradford want that information leaked to the outside world, or even to Emperor Prosek?

It's all more than

Roddy Heston can handle at the moment. He prays his mind and talents will be welcomed at the great fortress city of Chi-Town. There, he hopes to make his new home. Maybe even meet the Emperor, himself. Wouldn't that be grand?

For now he's working with our heroes and much to their chagrin, he's kinda growing on them. He's a bit stuffy for their taste. The team has taken to calling him 'Doc' despite his constant reminders that they should address him as Dr. Heston. The good doctor has also taken to enjoying playing a good game of chess with Shakes from time to time.

Doctor Heston is still in a bit of shock and trying to figure out his future. Until he's been with the group a while (6 months or a year), his loyalty has to be suspect. Even he doesn't know where his loyalties lie anymore.

Name: Rodriguez Heston, Doc to his to his newfound teammates.

Notable Equipment: Except for the clothes on his back, Dr. Heston left everything he had behind in Lone Star. Since joining our heroes, it is safe to assume that he may have picked up a few useful

items, but until he can help them sell the computer files and get an even share, he must rely on our heroes' kindness. Whether he stays with the group as its newest member or leaves them in Chi-Town, is yet to be determined. He is certainly welcomed among the group.

Money: Zero at the moment. Could be rich after selling information in the Chi-Town 'Burbs.

Note: Despite his limited combat training (which was mandatory for Lone Star technical personnel), Roddy does not want to arm himself. He never was armed at Lone Star (that's what those guys in the Dead Boy armor were for) and still feels that the people best trained for combat should handle such matters and leave thinking to the educated and rational people – like him.



THE COALITION ARMY

TYPICAL COALITION SOLDIER

The Coalition Army is, arguably, the most advanced in North America. The stats that follow are for the typical **Third Level CS Grunt** also known as "Dead Boys." They are armor clad infantry soldiers.

Alignment: Any.

Required Attributes of Soldier: P.S. 11, P.P. 9, P.E. 11, Spd 15, all other attributes are average.

Species: Human

Hit Points: 20. **S.D.C.:** 35.

M.D.C.: Standard CA-4 "Dead Boy" Armor (100 M.D.C. main body).

P.P.E.: 6

Experience Level: 2nd to 5th level Coalition Grunts (Dead Boys).

Skills of Note*: Language: American 92%, Basic Mechanics 40%, Body Building, Camouflage 45%, Climbing 55/45%, Demolitions 66%, Demolitions Disposal 66%, Find Contraband 34%, First Aid 55%, Forced March, Hand to Hand: Expert**, Land Navigation 44%, Math: Basic 55%, Military Etiquette 60%, Pilot Hovercraft 70%, Pilot Tanks & APCs 58%, Radio: Basic 65%, Robot Combat: Basic, Running, Sensory Equipment 50%, Weapon Systems 60%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Knife, W.P. Targeting (specializing in grenade throwing), and W.P. Rifle.

* With the exception of American, the skills shown above are listed at 3rd level proficiency and may be adjusted either higher or lower by as much as 10% to reflect characters of varying experience.

** A minority are trained in Hand to Hand: Martial Arts or Assassin.

Attacks per Melee: 4 (5 for the more experienced Grunts).

Bonuses (total)*: +2 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +2 to roll with punch, fall, or impact, +3 to pull punch, +2 to disarm, kick attack (1D8 damage), can perform a Karate Punch.

* Bonuses will vary with the experience and the training of the individual soldier.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None. Outlawed by the Coalition States.

Notable Equipment: Coalition "Dead Boy" body armor, a C-12 or C-14 laser rifle, a C-20 laser pistol, 4 extra E-Clips for each, 2 fragmentation grenades, 3 sig-

nal flares, a survival knife, utility belt, air filter & gas mask, walkie-talkie, uniform, combat boots, canteen, and an S.D.C. military assault rifle are more or less standard issue. The specific assignment (and what the commanding officer feels is needed) will determine what other gear will be issued.

TYPICAL CS SAMAS

The "SAMAS," also known as "Sam," is the Coalition's elite flying power armor. The SAMAS is a complete environmental power armor with enhanced robotics and flight/air to ground capabilities. The SAMAS, like all power armor, is basically a robot exoskeleton with M.D.C. plating, superhuman strength, and weapon systems. The pilot fits inside the exoskeleton. The SAMAS is a significant element of the Coalition's armored troops, designed for assault and defense in all environments.

Alignment: Any.

Required Attributes of Pilot: I.Q. 10, P.S. 10, P.P. 11, P.E. 10, Spd 14, all other attributes are average.

Species: Human.

Hit Points: 25. **S.D.C.:** 25.

P.P.E.: 6

Experience Level of Pilot: 2nd to 7th level Coalition Elite RPA (Robot Power Armor).

M.D.C. of SAMAS Armor by Location:

- Shoulder Wings (2): 30 each
- Main Rear Jets (2): 60 each
- Lower Maneuvering Jets: 25 each
- Ammo Drum (rear) - 25
- Rail Gun - 50
- Forearm Mini-Missile Launcher:
(1, left): 50
- Head - 70
- Main Body - 250

Speed:

Running: 60 mph (96 km) maximum. Note that the act of running does tire out its operator, but at 10% of the usual fatigue rate thanks to the robot exoskeleton.

Leaping: The powerful robot legs can leap up to 15 feet (4.6 m) high or across unassisted by the thrusters. A jet thruster assisted leap can propel the unit up to 100 feet (30.5 m) high and 200 feet (61 m) across without actually attaining flight.

Flying: The rocket propulsion system

enables the SAMAS to hover stationary up to 200 feet (61 m) or fly. Maximum flying speed is 300 mph (480 km), but cruising speed is considered to be 150 mph (240 km). Maximum altitude is limited to about 500 feet (152 m).

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 30.

Main Gun: C-40R SAMAS Rail Gun

(1): This is standard equipment for the SAMAS and is considered to be one of the most versatile, accurate, and lightweight rail guns in the world. Other heavier rail guns can be substituted in an emergency or for special missions. There is no separate power pack. The unit is hooked directly to the armor's nuclear power supply.

Weight: Gun: 92 lbs (41.4 kg), One SAMAS Ammo-Drum: 190 lbs (85.5 kg).

Mega-Damage: A burst is 40 rounds and inflicts 1D4x10 M.D., one round does 1D4 M.D.

Rate of Fire: Each burst counts as one melee attack.

Range: 4000 feet (1219 m).

Payload: 2000 round drum, that's 50 bursts. A second drum can be hooked to the undercarriage of the rocket jets, but must be manually removed by another SAMAS or a character with a strength of 26 or higher to replace the used drum. Reloading a drum will take about 5 minutes for those not trained, but a mere one minute by somebody trained in the use of SAMAS power armor.

Secondary Weapon: CM-2 Rocket

Launcher: The forearm not used to operate the rail gun, usually left, is armed with a mini-missile rocket launcher.

Mega-Damage: Varies with missile type, but any mini-missile can be used. Standard issue is armor piercing (1D4x10 M.D.) or plasma (1D6x10).

Range: One mile (1.6 km).

Rate of Fire: One at a time or two simultaneous; either counts as one melee attack.

Payload: Two mini-missiles.

Note: See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about this power armor.

Skills of Note (Pilot)*: Language: American 94%, Astronomy & Navigation 45%, Basic Mechanics 45%, Demolitions 69%, Demolitions Disposal 69%, Electronic Countermeasures 55%, First Aid 60%, Find Contraband 38%, Hand to Hand: Expert**, Land Navigation 48%,

Math: Basic 70%, Military Etiquette 65%, Pilot: Automobile 77%, Pilot: Hovercraft 80%, Pilot: Robots & Power Armor 80%, Pilot Jet Aircraft 52% or Jet Pack 54% or Tanks & APCs 48%, Radio: Basic 70%, Robot Combat: Basic, Robot Combat: Elite: SAMAS, Running, Sensory Equipment 60%, Weapon Systems 70%, Wilderness Survival 45%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, W.P. Knife, W.P. Targeting (specializing in grenade throwing), and W.P. Submachine-Gun.

* With the exception of Speak American, the skills shown above are listed at 4th level proficiency and may be adjusted either higher or lower by as much as 15% to reflect characters of varying experience.

** A minority are trained in Hand to Hand: Martial Arts or Assassin).

Attacks per Melee: 5(7***) (less one for the less experienced Sammies).

Bonuses:** +2(+4***) to strike, +3(+6***) to parry, +3(****) to dodge, +2(+6***) to roll with punch, fall, or impact, +3(+6***) to pull punch, +2(+4***) to disarm, kick attack (1D8 damage), can perform a Karate Punch, +2*** on initiative, +2*** to strike with energy and long-range weapons.

** Bonuses will vary with the experience and the training of the individual soldier.

*** Increased or additional bonuses while in SAMAS armor.

**** Dodge bonuses while in SAMAS armor: +5 on ground, +8 when flying or leaping.

Psionics: None.

Magic: None. Magic is outlawed by the Coalition.

Notable Equipment: In addition to the SAMAS armor, they have a suit of Standard, CA-4 Coalition "Dead Boy" body armor, a C-12 or C-14 laser rifle, a C-20 laser pistol, 4 extra E-Clips for each, 2 grenades (of various types), 3 signal flares, a survival knife, utility belt, air filter & gas mask, walkie-talkie, uniform, combat boots, canteen, and an S.D.C. sub-machine-gun are more or less standard issue. When on an assignment, *PA-06A SAMAS power armor* replaces the standard body armor (above). The specific assignment, and what the commanding officer feels is needed, will determine what other gear will be issued.

TYPICAL CS PSI-HOUND

Psi-Hounds are humanoid, mutant canines genetically engineered to be dedicated and loyal soldiers and protectors of humanity. Dog Boys are second-class citizens, but they don't even seem to notice.

Alignment: Any, but most lean toward good, Unprincipled, or Aberrant.

Required Attributes: IQ 10, PS 13, PE 13, Spd 24, all other attributes are average.

Species: Mutant Canine.

Hit Points: 24. S.D.C.: 45.

P.P.E.: 10

Experience Level: 1st to 5th level Coalition Dog Boy (Psi-Hound).

M.D.C.: Standard half-suit, DPM Dog Boy armor has 50 M.D.C., old style Dead Boy armor (full suit) has 80 M.D.C.

Special Abilities: The following abilities are common to the majority of low level Dog Boys:

- **Sense Psychic & Magic Energy:** 50%.
- **Recognize Psychic Scent:** General is 18%. Specific is 12%.

- **Sense Supernatural Being:** Identify type/race is 66%. Track by scent is 45%.

- **Superior Sense of Smell:** Many times superior to that of a human. Recognize common and strong scents is 76%. Identify specific odors is 58%. Track by smell alone is 48%.

- **Keen Sense of Hearing and Good Sight:** Reflected in bonuses.

- **Sensitivity to Ley Line Energy:** Fouls special senses.

See *Rifts® Ultimate Edition* for much more details about these powers.

Also see Psionics.

Note the following:

- The abilities shown above are listed at 3rd level proficiency and may be adjusted either higher or lower as the case may be to reflect varying degrees of experience.

- Certain breeds of Dog Boy will have special traits, abilities and bonuses, all generally positive.

- Because Dog Boys are mutations, genetic abnormalities do occur. For the most part, however, these abnormalities are benevolent and further affect the Dog Boys' abilities.

- There is a great deal of variety in Dog Boys, so a "typical" Dog Boy is anything but typical of the race.

Skills of Note*: Climbing 60/50%,

Detect Ambush 45%, Detect Concealment 40%, First Aid 60%, Forced March, General Repair & Maintenance 50%, Hand to Hand: Expert**, Hunting, Intelligence 46%, Land Navigation 54%, Language: American 88% (plus one other language, usually Spanish at 61%), Military Etiquette 45%, Pilot Hovercraft 70%, Prowl 37%, Radio: Basic 65%, Running, Sensory Equipment 40%, Tracking 40%, Trap/Mine Detection 45%, Wilderness Survival 50%, and W.P. Energy Pistol, W.P. Energy Rifle, and W.P. Knife or Sword.

* With the exception of Language: American, the skills shown above are listed at 3rd level proficiency and may be adjusted either higher or lower by as much as 10% to reflect characters of varying experience.

** A minority are trained in Hand to Hand: Martial Arts or Assassin.

Attacks per Melee: Four. (Five for the more experienced Dog Boys.)

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +2 to roll with punch, fall, or impact, +5 to pull punch, +4 to disarm, kick attack (1D8 damage), can perform a Karate Punch, and +2 to save vs disease. Bonuses vary with the experience, training and the breed of the individual.

Psionics: Dog Boys are considered Master Psychics and, in addition to the abilities previously mentioned, also get several Psionic Sensitive powers, including Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), Sixth Sense (2), and Empathy (4; receiver only, not transmission). **I.S.P.:** 65.

Magic: None. Outlawed by the Coalition States. Dog Boys tend to distrust and avoid magic in any form.

Notable Equipment: Dog Pack DPM Riot armor, a C-10 or C-12 laser assault rifle (with telescopic sight and nightvision scope), a C-18 laser pistol, 4 extra E-Clips, a survival knife, a pair of Vibro-Knives or Vibro-Claws, utility belt, air filter, gas mask, walkie-talkie, uniform, canteen, tinted goggles or non-environmental helmet (with or without visor), PDD pocket audio recorder, pocket laser distancer, flashlight, pocket mirror, cigarette lighter, 100 feet (30.5 m) of lightweight rope, small hammer, 4 spikes, 3 animal snares, infrared distancing binoculars, portable language translator, and a backpack are standard issue. The specific assignment will determine what other gear will be issued.

AISHWARRA

ALPHA-4



There was only one Aishwarra monster at the Lone Star laboratories and it was destroyed by our heroes. Day saved, right? Wrong.

First, Doctor Desmond Bradford holds the *genetic blueprint* of the monster and can make more, and as many as he'd like, anytime he desires. You'd think then, it is a good thing that our heroes are about to ruin his reputation by releasing information they stole from the Lone Star Complex. With any luck, that information should get Dr. Bradford removed from his post, and put an end to monstrosities like the Aishwarra and whatever mad dreams the Doctor has for his mysterious Project Omega. That's what our heroes are thinking, but Doctor Bradford has other plans. As he put it, they don't know it yet, but "they are working for him now."

Doctor Bradford wants the information leaked, because it will put the Project Omega into motion. That project will include some limited use of the Aishwarra as well, and he already has a dozen of the monsters growing in another lab.

The Aishwarra (pronounced eye-shahr-rah) is a deadly creature from Bodakhan's alien home world, the world of the Grackle Tooth D-Bees (although, on their world, the Grackle Tooth are known as the Jin-Ro). On that planet, the Aishwarra are considered to be demons of destruction and a plague to all life. They are not true demons – supernatural beings – but horrible monsters that eat people and destroy villages and towns.

Aishwarra are nomadic, giant creatures who devour virtually everything in their path. Even worse, the monsters damage their environment by permanently draining their surroundings of ambient magical energy (P.P.E.). These dinosaur-sized predators are constantly on the hunt for food and entire communities have been wiped out by Aishwarra on a rampage. These monsters have no natural predators and indiscriminately kill just about anyone or anything who oppose them or gets in their way. However, some victims are not killed outright. These are the unlucky ones. Those whom the female Aishwarra does not kill at once are stored in feeding sacks located under the creature's abdomen. Soon the slow, painful process of their P.P.E. and life energies being drained away will begin. The victims' P.P.E., indeed, their very life force, is used

to nurture the female's unborn young. The monster swallows practitioners of magic, shamans, and other gifted people whole, and stores them, alive, inside their body, so that the horror may procreate. It needs the P.P.E. batteries of living sorcerers and creatures of magic to spawn young. This also enables the great beasts' numbers to grow quickly and take over.

Once gorged on sufficient magical energy (P.P.E.), the Aishwarra spawn, creating eggs that are batteries of magic. Before these eggs hatch into young Aishwarra, they can be used by practitioners of magic for powering magic spells, rituals, wards, circles, or virtually any other type of mystical enchantment. The eggs can also be tapped into by P.P.E. vampires such as Psi-Stalkers to feed upon.

Some of the P.P.E. used for these purposes ultimately returns to the ambient environment (anywhere around 10% to 30%, depending upon the type of magic employed). However, the P.P.E. from the eggs that hatch is lost forever. Thus, like any natural resource that is exploited without being replenished, the world's level of ambient P.P.E. diminishes over time.

According to Desmond Bradford, the Aishwarra and creatures like them, are exactly what the world *needs* to restore it to normal. Breed enough of these monsters and they will literally eat magical beings into extinction and then drain away the magic from the ley lines. Left alone, to spawn naturally, this process could take centuries, maybe even eons, but to a man like Desmond Bradford, the Aishwarra is just the key to get things started. Bradford can increase the growth process and, if necessary, create hundreds in his labs to unleash on an unsuspecting world. He is not so insane as to be unaware of the obvious dangers. Left unchecked, the creatures would run rampant across the continent and ravage the people and holdings of the Coalition States as well as their enemy. That would never do. One solution is the implantation of a destructive device that can be activated at will. The danger, of course, being that the device could fail. As a double failsafe, Bradford has genetically engineered a germ that can wipe out the population within a single generation. But there are other problems with just letting the dumb beasts loose.

• **Aishwarra are solitary creatures.**

They NEVER team up for any purpose. The only contact they have with each other is either when one Aishwarra encroaches on the hunting grounds of another, resulting in a battle over territory, or when a pair mate. Even then, the male leaves once his work is finished, never to be seen again by the female (if she is lucky; see #2 below). Once the female has laid her eggs, she departs as well, and does not even remain to see them hatch. The eggs are hidden and when they hatch, the young Aishwarra must fend for themselves.

• **Aishwarra are cannibals.** Generally, the Aishwarra who hatch first instinctively run for the hills, otherwise one of their brothers or sisters may kill and devour them. Young Aishwarra, in turn, are prey for adults, particularly adult males. When Aishwarra sense each other, they generally fight, with the result that the stronger feeds on the weaker. Depending upon the hunger of the victor, this can either be a fight for dominance or to the death. In the latter case, the loser serves as a meal for the winner.

• **The Aishwarra are not smart creatures.** With the equivalent of low animal intelligence, Aishwarra are driven by instinct, hunger and the need to procreate. That's it. They kill, eat, spawn and repeat. As dumb animals, they take on fights they cannot win, and often fight to the death. They don't adapt to new environments so much as they bulldoze their way through them. That means the same animal repeatedly falls for the same trap, tricks, or tactics. It is very seldom that a Aishwarra can learn from experience. Immensely formidable and dangerous, the dumb brutes are more like weapons of mass destruction to be unleashed than intelligent agents able to adapt to their environment and hunt and choose their targets.

That's where **Project Omega** comes in. You see, the mad doctor has taken Aishwarra DNA and reshaped it to create a new monster that is smarter and hunts very specific prey: mages, creatures of magic, and supernatural beings. Project Omega is nearing its final stage and is just about operational. Open the gates and let the Omega Beasts loose, and they make a beeline to the Magic Zone and other places of magic to devour the creatures of magic the inhabit that area. When they are

all devoured over, say, the next 6-10 years, the creatures will spread out in search of others. Meanwhile, Doctor Bradford is still working on a superior breed of Aishwarra that don't hunt and eat people, but sit like blobs, soaking in, and using up, the ambient energy of ley lines. That having been said, he thinks it would be wonderful to drop a dozen Aishwarra off in the Magic Zone and/or the Calgary Rift and let them wreak havoc on the magical beings who infest those regions, then destroy any Aishwarra who leave that designated "feeding range."

DATAFILE ALPHA-4

Name: Aishwarra

Pronunciation: eye-sh-wahr-rah

Also known as: Demon or Demon Plague on the Aishwarra's homeworld.

Classification: Anti-Magic Monster

Alignment: Animal predator generally considered Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+2 (low animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+2, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 2D6+38 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+9, P.E. 2D6+21 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D4, Spd 4D6+32 (23-56 mph/36.8 to 89.6 km).

Size: Females: 100-150 feet (30.5 to 45.7 m) tall and about the same length. Males are 20% smaller.

Weight: Females: 2D6+10 tons! Males: 2D4+7 tons.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Antennae* (4; back): 200 each
- Eyes* (2; recessed): 75 each
- Ears* (circles on head and back; 6): 120 each
- Head: 1D4x100+330
- Tri-Beak/Mouth: 1D6x10+200
- Nostril Spikes* (2; extendible): 40 each
- Cheek Tusks (2): 200 each
- Mouth Tentacles* (1D6+4; mouth): 20 each
- Mantis Arms (2): 1D6x100+250 each
- Throat Hands* (2; under neck): 1D4x10+20 each
- Legs (2): 2D4x100+400 each
- Clawed Feet (2): 1D4x100+300 each
- Storage Sacks* (42-62): 2D6+10 each
- Main Body:

Young Aishwarra (size of a bear)

4D6x10+60 M.D.C.

Adult male 2D4x100+500

Adult female 2D6x100+800 M.D.C.

A single asterisk (*) indicates a small or otherwise difficult target to strike. From a distance an opponent is -4 to strike even with a "Called Shot" or careful aim.

Horror Factor: Adult Male: 16. Adult Females: 18. Young: 11-14 depending upon age and size.

P.P.E.: 1D4x50

Experience Level: Not applicable

Disposition: The Aishwarra is a single-minded monstrosity consumed with eating (people!) and devouring *practitioners* and *creatures of magic*, swallowing them whole, as they are needed to bear young.

Enemies: None, per se. All other creatures are regarded as prey.

Allies: None, not even each other.

Habitat: Prefer deserts and arid environments, but can be found anywhere during summer months, migrating south in the winter.

Average Life Span: 3D6+20 years. Reach full, physical maturity in four years.

Females give birth to one young for every *storage sack* that contains a live mage, creature of magic, or other being with great magic energy (70 or more points of P.P.E.). And an Aishwarra has 2D6+30 *storage sacks* located in the underbelly toward the rear. This is the sack-like appendage *Moses*, from the graphic novel, was held inside after he was swallowed whole. Once at least half the sacks are filled with sources of living P.P.E., young start to gestate, feeding on the magical and life energy of the captives to grow strong.

Moreover, a lone female does NOT need a male to bear young. Somehow, the Aishwarra uses the mystic energy of her many captives to fertilize her eggs and generate new life. However, once males are born (usually 60% male, 40% females ratio), they do the work of fertilization. The ability for a lone female to generate new life without a male is unique and amazing.

Young grow to the size of a 15 foot (4.6 m) truck within one month, and double in size every month until they reach 80 feet (24.4 m) tall/long, at which point their growth slows down. They'll reach full size in two years' time, though they don't reach physical maturity till the end of four years.

The Spawning Process: Practitioners of magic, minor creatures of magic like Faerie Folk (dragons and gods are usually

too large and too powerful), Lesser Demons, and other beings with high P.P.E. (70 points or more) are necessary to bear young.

These beings are swallowed whole and unharmed, stored, unconscious, and held in a sort of stasis-sleep inside individual *storage sacks* filled with a protein solution. Victims can be held in stasis inside a sack for up to 10 weeks before the monster will either eat them or use them to bear young.

Once eggs are fertilized by a male, the captives inside stasis sacks are slowly drained of their P.P.E. and life energy over a 1D4+10 week period. At the end of this period, the process kills everyone in each of the 2D6+30 *sacks* and the embryos are released as eggs the size of a 50 gallon drum. The hard, leathery eggs (each has 1D6x10+20 M.D.C.) are buried in a safe place on or near a source of P.P.E. energy (ley line, place of magic, etc.) by the mother. They continue to gestate, buried, for another 2D4+4 weeks. When they hatch, the baby Aishwarra, the size of a black bear, scatter into the surrounding wilderness and immediately begin hunting for humanoid food.

Aishwarra eggs are alive with magic energy. The very growth of the infants within seems to raise the level of magic and keep it generating P.P.E. Each egg contains 1D4x100 P.P.E. that can be drawn upon by practitioners of magic.

Use up all the available P.P.E. and it regenerates within 24 hours, all but at 5% less. Each time more than 50% of the remaining energy is used, it returns 5% weaker the next day. This process will, eventually, permanently whittle the available P.P.E. below 50% of its original amount, at which point the baby inside dies and the remaining P.P.E. slips away into the ether. Use less than half of the egg's original P.P.E. and the mystic energy returns, *in full*, 24 hours later, time and time again. How exactly this can be, is unknown, but that's how it works.

Of course, sooner or later the baby will hatch, though frequent draining of the egg's energy (4 or more times a week) retards the gestation, requiring an extra two weeks per week of draining to grow and hatch. This only occurs when the energy is drained below 50%. Should a baby Aishwarra be born after an extended period of regular drain-offs, it will be half-

starved, half the normal size and half the usual M.D.C. Masters of Runic and Bio-Wizard magic, like the Splugorth, can preserve the eggs, and use them the same way they use other living beings trapped inside their magic weapons and devices.

Natural Abilities: Keen sense of smell and hearing, excellent vision, good speed, Supernatural Strength and Endurance.

- **Nightvision:** 500 feet (152 m).
- **Tunneling:** Aishwarra are natural diggers and burrowers (80% skill) and, on the rare occasions they are frightened, may tunnel underground to elude their pursuer. They also dig their nest into the ground where they lay clutches of 1D4 eggs per burial location, sometimes in caves. Can tunnel at half its running Spd.

- **Sense/Smell & Track P.P.E.** Creatures of Magic and the Supernatural: The monster can literally sniff out P.P.E. Anyone with more than 20 P.P.E. points is on its radar, but it can differentiate between multiple sources of P.P.E. based on the amount each individual possesses.

Range: 10 miles (16 km), x10 if magic is being cast/used. 200 miles (320 km) to sense the location of a ley line.

Track to the specific source (i.e., individual with the P.P.E.) 88% (+10% if the "source" has more than 200 P.P.E.); reduce by half on a ley line as the ambient energy interferes with the senses.

- **Bio-Regeneration:** The creature recovers 1D6 M.D.C. per hour as part of its natural healing process. It also regenerates a lost tentacle, spike, sack, toe, foot, eye, or ear withing 2D6 days, and a leg or arm within 2D6+20 days.

Drawing on the living beings held inside its feeding/storage sacks, every one P.P.E. point the monster drains from one of its victim, restores one M.D.C. point.

Furthermore, similar to the Ley Line Walker ability, the monster can regenerate 1D6x10 M.D.C. per hour by resting on a ley line or at a nexus.

The Hunger Plague: One reason the Jin-Ro/Grackle Tooth consider Aishwarra to be demons is that they eat *people* for food. Lots and lots and lots of people. The monster plows through everything in its path and eats anything that moves or gets in its way. While the monster will eat large dogs, goats, cattle, horses, and other large animals, its main food of choice is *people*, humans and D-Bees. And it attacks entire

towns and cities, cracking open vehicles and tearing down the sides of buildings to get at and devour the people inside. That's the part Bodakhan doesn't think Doctor Bradford fully appreciates. The fiend requires 20-80 people a week to live, and while it can go two weeks between feedings, it typically gorges itself, eating two and three times as many people whenever the opportunity presents itself. Females eat four times as much per week when pregnant!

Vulnerabilities: Fire. Aishwarra suffer double damage from fire. However, its fear of flames is out of proportion to the damage it actually inflicts. Aishwarra have been known to flee in panic from fires no larger than a bonfire. Setting fires to drive away the Aishwarra was a standard Jin-Ro tactic, however, a panicked and stampeding Aishwarra becomes extremely unpredictable and may run in any direction, through buildings, smashing crops and creating carnage. Consequently, fire may be relegated to a last-ditch defense against the monsters if everything else fails. Furthermore, the one thing the monster will brave fire to get at is people with high (70 or greater) P.P.E., gobbling up as many as it can in a few minutes and running away. Also note the monster can smell P.P.E. through fire and it *will return* to swallow up the people with high P.P.E.

Also a terrible swimmer (30% skill) and dislikes deep water, but doesn't mind wading through water.

R.C.C. Skills: None, except as noted above; driven entirely by instinct.

Attacks per Melee: Six (thankfully).

Damage: The Supernatural Strength of the average Aishwarra falls in the P.S. 41-50 range, and the following stats reflect that:

- **Punch/Slap/Jab with Mantis Arms:** 6D6 M.D., 2D4x10 M.D. on a Power Punch, or 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Head Butt or Body Bump/Nudge:** 5D6 M.D., 1D6x10 M.D. on a Power Butt, or 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Punch from Small Throat Arms:** 3D6 M.D., 6D6 M.D. on a Power Punch, or 1D4x10 on restrained punch. And by "small" we mean the hands are only about

the size of a human's entire body!

- **Stomp or Kick:** 1D6x10+12 M.D.

- **Bite with Beak:** 1D4x10 M.D.

- **Gore/Stab with Face/Cheek Tusks:** 2D4x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks. These horns are 10-15 feet (3 to 4.6 m) long.

- **Stab Attack with Nostril Spike (1):** 4D6 M.D. or the spike can unleash an electrical blast that does 1D6x10 S.D.C. damage. This may be used to subdue opponents the creature wants to swallow whole or to zap people and creatures who are minor annoyances.

- **Mouth Tentacle Swallow Attack:** No damage. 1D4+1 tentacles shoot out, grab and pull the snared victim into the mouth and swallowed. The entire attack takes less than 3 seconds and counts as one melee attack.

This attack is designed entirely to grab and swallow prey and opponents whole! People with high P.P.E. are usually funnel around the gullet and into an empty food storage sack. The victim is immediately stunned and once dropped into a sack (takes one melee round/15 seconds), he is completely immobilized in a coma-like stasis. *Food* is channeled into the stomach where the victim, alive and conscious is dropped into a vat of stomach acid that does 1D6x10 M.D. every melee round (15 seconds).

Humanoids as large as 16 feet (4.8 m) tall can be swallowed whole. 20 feet (6.1 m) may be possible by the largest females, nothing bigger.

Bonuses: +4 on Perception Rolls, +3 to strike with bite, feet and arms, +6 to strike when up close with its mouth tentacles, +2 to parry, +4 to pull punch (can regulate the amount of M.D. it inflicts when it wants to, but never in a panic), impervious to Earth diseases. And +4 to save vs magic attacks (*in addition to* other bonuses to save vs magic from a high P.E. attribute).

Magic: None, but is magic resistant.

Psionics: None.

Bionics and Cybernetics: None.

Value: The eggs are worth 1D4 million credits as magic batteries and the Splugorth would love to use them in their Bio-Wizard creations.

OMEGA BEAST

OMEGA-1



The Omegas are Desmond Bradford's solution to the problems with the Aishwarra. He loves the idea of a creature who seeks out practitioners of magic, creatures of magic, demons and other beings who possess high levels of the energy that is magic. The problem with the Aishwarra was that it is just too big and too dumb to do the job without causing a great amount of collateral damage. Bradford's solution, of course, was to build a better *magic-catcher*. To create a smart predator with many of the same traits and abilities as the Aishwarra, but one that was smaller, smarter and a much more efficient hunter. The **Omega Beast** is that creature.

The Omega Beast senses magic energy the same as the Aishwarra and it is also driven by instinct to hunt other living beings with high magic energy. That

makes practitioners of magic and beings with high P.P.E. the Omegas' *food*. This is what they eat, nothing else. And that's the beauty of his Omega Beast's design, the creature won't attack anyone or anything else. They live on people who have magic energy inside them. An Omega could be surrounded by a million people and the beast will die of *starvation*. It cannot attack or kill them because they do not poses the *magic signature* the Omega Beast needs to identify *prey*. Unless it can find a creature of magic or a mage with at least 50 P.P.E., the beast can't find its prey. Perfect.

Reduced dramatically in size, Omega Beasts do not topple buildings, trash farms, trample tanks, kill hundreds of people by accident or create giant paths of destruction in their wake. Furthermore, Omega Beasts are smart. They hunt only

their designated prey and wait, like a jungle cat, for the right moment to pounce. However, where magic energy is great and beings of magic are numerous, Omega Beasts hunt in *packs*. They do so because prey is so plentiful, there is no rivalry between them, and they actually get more food by cooperating and hunting in packs. That's another advantage over the Aishwarra, the giant monster ignored dragons and other powerful beings with massive amounts of P.P.E. because they were too big for the monster to swallow and use for procreation. The Omegas don't need the energy to spawn, they feed on it, like Psi-Stalkers. That means a group of Omega Beasts see a dragon as one big target that a pack of them can bring down and devour: sharing in the meat, blood and feast of P.P.E. left from the kill. Together, they can bring down

any creature of magic or supernatural terror, be it a demon, dragon, god or city of mages. No magic wielding being will be safe from the Omega Beasts.

Omega Beasts are miniature versions of the Aishwarra with a number of obvious differences. They stand 14-16 feet tall, their heads are smaller, their tusks proportionately larger, speed faster, agility superior, and their aptitude for people of magic as great as ever. The hindquarters where the female Aishwarra has her food storage sacks, is replaced with a long, flat tail that ends in a large claw. The prehensile tail can whip around to strike and knock down opponents and prey to the side or behind the beast, as well as slash and claw at them. The claw-tail can cut prey to ribbons in a matter of minutes, and can chop and slash in and up and down motion as well as side to side. Likewise, the wicked looking mantis-arms can bat, strike and impale enemies, the tusks can gore and the mouth can bite and tear flesh out by the chunk. The two-toed feet, with their hooked claws, can also slash adversaries and tear apart meat once the kill is made. The Omegas also retain the small, thin arms and hands located in the chest of the beast near the shoulders. They are used for examining prey, removing armor and putting pieces of food into the mouth. Likewise, the mouth tentacles snatch up pieces of meat, lap up blood and, when necessary, entangle and secure prey. The nose spikes zap and stun prey and are used to warn intruders to back off or be attacked. Although Omega Beasts do not hunt people with low P.P.E. (under 50 points), they will fight back when cornered, threatened or attacked. The zipper nostril spikes are one way the creatures warn other animals and humanoids to back off, or else.

Doctor Desmond Bradford can hardly wait to unleash his army of magic hunters and wipe out magic from the face of the planet. Unlike the Aishwarra, the Omegas cannot store their victims or their energy, they just drain them on the spot. And if he can't figure out a way to eliminate the ley lines and Rifts, he can create the perfect predator to exterminate those who use magic. Of course, the Magic Zone is Bradford's designated target zone for the first Omega Beast strike. Wipe out the Federation of Magic and you strike fear into the hearts of every practitioner of

magic on the continent. Before you know it, the magic users and creatures of magic not under siege by packs of Omega Beasts will be fleeing en masse to get away before they are killed. Combine that effort with new, targeted military campaigns and practitioners of magic and inhuman magic users could be erased from the continent within 10-15 years. He knows, he's done all the computer simulation models. This is not a pipe dream. It is reality and he is ready to initiate Project Omega with 30 days notice. Nine thousand Omega Beasts are already full grown and waiting to be awakened and unleashed.

All that is needed is the spark to set it all into motion, and that spark is already on its way to Chi-Town.

DATAFILE OMEGA-1

Name: Omega Beast

Classification: Anti-Magic Monster

What's in a Name: Omega has traditionally been used to signify *resistance*. In this case, resistance to the encroachment of magic and inhuman creatures of magic and supernatural monsters against humanity.

Alignment: Animal predator, generally considered Diabolic.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4+8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+6, M.A. 1D6, P.S. 2D4+28 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D4+16, P.E. 2D4+20 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6, Spd 3D6+50 (35-46 mph/56 to 73 km).

Size: Females: 15-17 feet (4.6 to 5.2 m) tall and about the same length. Males are 20% smaller. The tail is 1.5 times longer than the body, about 24 feet (7.3 m) on average.

Weight: Females: 1D6+3 tons! Males: 1D4+2 tons.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Eyes* (2; recessed): 15 each
- Ears* (4, concealed behind head plates): 6 each
- Head, Heavily Plated: 3D4x10+130
- Tri-Beak/Mouth: 10
- Nostril Spikes* (2; extendible): 14 each
- Tusks (2): 50 each
- Mouth Tentacles* (1D4+6): 6 each
- Mantis Arms (2): 1D6x10+120 each
- Throat Hands* (2; under neck): 2D6+20 each
- Legs (2): 2D4x10+140 each
- Clawed Feet (2): 1D4x10+50 each
- Claw-Tail (1): 2D6x10+120

• Main Body:

Young (the size of a wolf)
1D6x10+60 M.D.C.

Adult male

1D4x100+200

Adult female

1D6x100+300 M.D.C.

A single asterisk (*) indicates a small or otherwise difficult target to strike. From a distance an opponent is -5 to strike even with a "Called Shot" or careful aim.

Horror Factor: Adult Male: 14. Adult Females: 15. Young: 1D4+8 depending upon age and size, but H.F. applies only to those it hunts; H.F. is half for people with insignificant P.P.E.

P.P.E.: 1D4x10

Experience Level: Not applicable.

Disposition: Omega Beasts are cunning predators who stalk people of magic, demons and creatures of magic. They may hunt alone or pool their resources and hunt large or powerful prey in packs. Likewise, individual packs of Omegas, numbering into the hundreds combined, may run wild through a city of mages creating panic and attacking anyone they get the upper hand on. Such group attacks can be very effective as the hunters do not linger, but feast quickly on the P.P.E. released by their victims, gulp down several pieces of meat and then run off with a dismembered limb or torso in their tentacles or clutched in their small arms to eat in the wild away from those who might retaliate.

Habitat: Anywhere its prey can be found, they are found, be it forest, desert, canyons, mountains or jungle. Dislike cold climates with sustained temperatures below freezing.

Enemies: All creatures and people who use magic.

Allies: None, other than their own kind.

Average Life Span: 2D6+20 years. Reach full, physical maturity in four years. Females lay 1D6 eggs after a three month pregnancy. The eggs are hidden and buried in the ground, often in a cave, under a big rock or fallen tree, amidst city ruins, and other places deemed safe. The eggs gestate for another 2D4+4 weeks before hatching. Young grow to the size of a Great Dane within one month, and double in size every month until they reach 10 feet (3 m) tall/long, at which point their growth slows down. They reach full size

in two years, though they don't reach physical maturity till the end of four years.

The Spawning Process: In the wild, males mate with females, the male leaves, the female lays eggs and she leaves the eggs to hatch and the young to fend for themselves. Unlike the Aishwarra, Omega Beast young often stay together and form packs early to take down man-sized practitioners of magic (anyone with 50 points or more P.P.E.). Although the Omegas feed on the P.P.E., they also feed on the meat and blood of those they slay. The P.P.E. signature of their prey (being a high amount) is what singles out prey from other humanoids. **Note:** Like the Aishwarra, Omega Beast eggs radiate with P.P.E., but only 2D6+6 points, and aren't suitable as P.P.E. batteries.

Natural Abilities: Keen sense of smell and hearing, excellent vision, good speed, Supernatural Strength and Endurance.

- **Prehensile Claw-Tail:** Used primarily as a means of attack and defense, the Claw-Tail can also be used to climb, hang upside down from a tree or the wall or ceiling of a cave or tunnel, chop meat and dig.

- **Climbers:** Scale rocks, debris, caves and mountainous terrain reasonably well and can even climb trees. Climbing skill is 80%/65%.

- **Fair Swimmers:** Swimming skill is 60%, but don't care for water.

- **Increased Burst of Speed:** Can run at speeds 50% greater than normal in a short burst lasting two minutes. Such a burst can be done three times any hour.

- **Nightvision:** 500 feet (152 m).

- **Tunneling:** Omegas are natural diggers and burrowers (80% skill) and, on the rare occasions they are frightened, may tunnel underground to elude their pursuer. They also dig their nests into the ground where they lay clutches of 1D4 eggs per burial location, sometimes in caves. Can tunnel at half its running Spd.

- **Sense/Smell & Track P.P.E., Creatures of Magic and the Supernatural:** The monster can literally sniff out P.P.E. Anyone with more than 20 P.P.E. points is on its radar, but it can differentiate between multiple sources of P.P.E. based on the amount each individual possesses.

Range: 10 miles (16 km), x5 if magic is being cast/used. 200 miles (320 km) to sense the location of a ley line.

Track to the specific source (i.e., individual with the P.P.E.) 88% (+10% if the "source" has more than 200 P.P.E.); reduce by half on a ley line, as the ambient energy interferes with the senses.

- **Bio-Regeneration:** The creature recovers 1D6 M.D.C. per hour as part of its natural healing process. It also regenerates a lost tentacle, spike, toe, foot, eye, or ear within 2D6 days, and a leg, arm or tail within 2D6+20 days.

Furthermore, similar to the Ley Line Walker ability, the beast can regenerate 6D6 M.D.C. per hour by resting on a ley line or at a nexus.

- **The Magic Plague:** Like the Aishwarra, Omega Beasts are driven to hunt and kill. However, they specifically target "people of magic," as Bradford puts it, including mages, dragons, Faerie Folk and other creatures of magic, demons and supernatural beings who usually have a high P.P.E., as well as some D-Bees, priests and shamans who possess more than 50 points of P.P.E. Everyone else is off limits. Never kill animals or livestock. The beast needs to eat 6-10 people a week to live, and while it can go two weeks between feedings, Omega Beasts prefer to eat 2-3 people every two days, especially when prey is plentiful. Pregnant females eat twice as much.

Vulnerabilities: Fire. Like the Aishwarra, Omega Beasts suffer double damage from fire. Its fear of flames, however, is not as extreme as its giant cousin, and the fire has to be large or inflict Mega-Damage to hold it at bay. A cunning predator, an Omega knows a fire will eventually die out and the beast will wait unless it senses other prey nearby.

R.C.C. Skills: None per se. Uses hit and run tactics, ambush, teamwork (or may hunt alone), and cunning. Still, it is a creature of instinct.

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Damage: The Supernatural Strength of the average Omega Beast falls in the P.S. 30-35 range, and the following stats reflect that:

- **Punch/Slap/Jab with Mantis Arms:** 4D6 M.D., 1D4x10 M.D. on a Power Strike, or 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Blunt Attack from Claw Tail:** 4D6 M.D., 1D4x10 M.D. on a Power Strike, or 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Slashing Attack from Claw Tail:** 6D6 M.D., 1D6x10+4 M.D. on a Power Slash, or 1D6x10 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Head Butt or Body Bump/Nudge:** 3D6 M.D., 6D6 M.D. on a Power Punch, or 5D6 S.D.C. on a restrained strike.

- **Punch from Small Throat Arms:** 2D6 M.D., 4D6 M.D. on a Power Punch, or 6D6 S.D.C. on restrained punch. And by "small" we mean the hands are only about the size of a human's.

- **Stomp or Kick or Slash with Clawed Feet:** 6D6 M.D.

- **Bite with Beak:** 4D6 M.D.

- **Gore/Stab with Face/Cheek Horns:** 1D6x10 M.D., but counts as two attacks. These horns are 3-5 feet (0.9 to 1.5 m) long.

- **Stab Attack with Nostril Spike (1):** 1D4 M.D. or the spike can unleash an electrical blast that does 3D6 S.D.C. damage. This is used to chase people away and as a warning.

- **Mouth Tentacle Swallow Attack:** No damage. 1D4+3 tentacles shoot out, grab and pull the snared victim into the mouth to be bitten or held in place and gored or battered by the small arms or clawed at with the feet. Entanglement is likely to be quick and holding onto prey, once ensnared, can be maintained for as long as the Omega desires. Fortunately for those held by the tentacles, the victim may not be pinned and can continue to fight. If the beast loses more than one tentacle or sustains too much damage, it will let the character go and try to kick him away or leap out of harm's way.

Bonuses: +3 on Perception Rolls, +5 to strike, +6 to strike when up close with its mouth tentacles, +2 to parry, +4 to pull punch (can regulate the amount of M.D. it inflicts when it wants to, but never in a panic), impervious to Earth diseases.

Magic: None.

Psionics: None.

Value: 1D4x100,000 credits as a monster in the gladiatorial arena or a zoo attraction from the Splugorth. Few others would have any interest in the monster unless they have problems with "people of magic," also.

MEANWHILE...



FURTHER ADVENTURES

by Kevin Siembieda

MACHINATIONS OF DOOM

Doctor Desmond Bradford is convinced that the Omega Beasts are his crowning achievement to date. Not just their design and creation, but their introduction into the world.

Seeing them released into the wild will be his masterwork in manipulation and life altering accomplishments. He knows that Emperor Prosek could never even “officially” authorize the creation of such a monster, for it uses alien DNA, which is forbidden in Lone Star genetic research. Furthermore, the very creation of the beasts could be construed as a premeditated act of war – no, *genocide*. If word of such a monstrous experiment ever got out, it could provoke a militant group such as the *Federation of Magic* to make a preemptive strike against Chi-Town and/or Lone Star and other Coalition States, triggering a wide scale war the likes of which would dwarf the Siege on Tolkeen. It might even unite mystic forces where the Tolkeen conflict could not. More importantly, a great man such as Emperor Karl Prosek must be spared allegations of *genocide* if he is to continue to reign as the supreme and noble champion of humanity.

Ah, but what if one of the Emperor’s “humble and misguided servants” took it upon himself to initiate such a terrible enterprise? What if that man, operating under the best of intentions, created the organic mechanism to destroy untold millions of enemies of the State? Of course, such a loyal and dedicated servant of the Emperor and humanity would *never* launch such an operation without the Emperor’s direct approval. And a good man like Karl Prosek would never take such drastic action against innocent, if misguided and inhuman people, even if it meant reclaiming North America for millions of humans for generations to come. He is too noble, merciful and good.

The Emperor would rebuke such a mad scheme the very moment he learned about it. Should such a campaign be made *public* it would make the Emperor look bad, and he would condemn it, chastise everyone involved and demand the initiative be shut down at once. Proving to all the world that he was not party to the diabolical plot, that he is above such temptation, and that the Coalition States – the last bastion of humanity – is led by a great and noble man.

Thus, all the more tragic when it is reported that agents of the *Federation of Magic* angered by the reports, or perhaps hate-filled

rebels from fallen *Tolkeen*, seeking revenge, broke into the Lone Star Complex in a daring raid to destroy the beasts and slaughter the men responsible. How terrible that, in the heat of the battle and blinded by rage, these sorcerers and their demonic henchmen accidentally released the very genie they had hoped to keep bottled up. That their ill-advised raid set the *Omega Beasts* loose into the world. The Magic Zone, being the closest and most radiant region of magic, will attract the Omegas like moths to a light, turning the Magic Zone and the Federation of Magic into the creatures’ first target.

How tragically ironic (and poetic) that the very people targeted for extinction would be the ones to unleash the source of their *doom*.

These are the machinations of Desmond Bradford, and his plan has already been put into action. Now, all he has to do is wait for it to all unfold with the public release of the information stolen by *our heroes*. There is no doubt the Emperor will respond as imagined, above, and if real sorcerers and demons don’t attack the complex, Bradford is ready to stage it, complete with the corpses of Brodkil, Daemonix and mages he has held in stasis, plucked from refugees fleeing Tolkeen. Since dead men don’t tell tales, his story will become the official report of the event and his plan to wipe out “people of magic” within a generation will have begun.

THE PLOT THICKENS

Doctor Bradford deliberately let the adventurers escape with the incriminating evidence. Bradford knows that they will probably take it to Chi-Town, where it will become public, enrage Emperor Prosek and ultimately bring the wrath of the Coalition States down upon him and Lone Star. That’s exactly what he wants so he can execute Project Omega.

Doctor Bradford remains loyal to the Coalition and his Emperor, and this is all a ploy to wipe out magic users, if not magic entirely, within a generation. He also assumes that he will receive little more than a public reprimand and a mock punishment, and be left to continue his experiments and project without further interruption. That will include secretly breeding and pumping out tens of thousands of Omega Beasts annually.

Bradford has always believed his experiments and research are too important to be stopped by *regulations and policies*, even those set down by Emperor Karl Prosek him-

self. He realizes that the Emperor must *appear* to follow certain morals and laws in the public eye. However, Doctor Bradford believes this is for show and that Emperor Prosek would like him to secretly do whatever it takes to keep the Coalition States safe and to insure the rise of humanity. That means destroying its enemies. In order to avoid implicating his Emperor in any public wrongdoing, Dr. Bradford is setting things in motion so that Emperor Prosek has plausible deniability and is able to weather any public storm that might arise. Since Project Omega ultimately furthers the Coalition’s agenda, the fallout is likely to be outside the Coalition States.

By sending only the information he wants Chi-Town to have, Bradford is in the perfect position to assuage any future investigations and the handling of “the project.” This is Bradford’s most daring, duplicitous, and aggressive course of action to date. How that might concern Karl Prosek is yet to be determined. Loose cannons, even brilliant ones, can become a liability.

As seen in the last page of the graphic novel, thousands of Omega Beasts are ready to be unleashed.

IN THE CHI-TOWN ‘BURBS

In order to get their payoff (and to set Bradford’s plan in action), our heroes have to get the disk to the Chi-Town ‘Burbs where there are any number of factions who would pay handsomely for this information. That includes Tolkeen Retributionists, the Federation of Magic, Lazlo, New Lazlo, Archie, the Republicans, factions within the Black Market and many other enemies and critics of the CS. Inevitably, they’ll make the information about the Aishwarra and the danger it represents to *everyone* known to the public. This may be done to embarrass the Prosek regime, cause discord for the CS, incite CS enemies to riot or take more aggressive action against the CS and/or Lone Star and Bradford, or as a sincere effort to prevent such creatures from being let loose into the world. Our heroes fall into the latter category.

The Omega Project is only hinted at, but it is clear that it is an even more aggressive and dangerous plot to wipe out practitioners of magic.

As for our heroes, their payoff for selling the information could be anywhere from zero to 1D8 million credits split eight ways! Zero or something in between 1-8 million if they

decide to be good guys and give the info away for the better good. Millions if Johnny, Roddy and O.J. can convince the others that the secret will get out, stop the project, save lives and then make money at the same time. This pitch might fly even better if the buyer is a notorious bad guy group like the Federation of Magic. Certainly the group could use the money, and O.J., facing his own mortality, will push hard for them to make a profit. "Right is right," he'll say, "but who says we can't make a little profit doing the right thing, eh? That's what adventuring and mercenary operations are all about. We've done a heck of a lot worse for less money. This is something good, and we should see something good for us out of it. Come on, Johnny and Moses almost got killed. We all could have gotten killed." It's a convincing argument.

If they decide not to sell the info, or lose or destroy it, Doctor Roddy Heston, seeking fame, glory and a fortune, will leak it deliberately for profit. Or he may leak it by accident, blabbing when he's drunk at his first visit to a 'Burbs bar. Or blab enough that some other villain steals the computer disk or kidnaps Roddy to get the info. All of which could make for some fun adventures in and of themselves.

THE FALLOUT

It's the aftermath of the info going public that *our heroes* have to worry about. It will give Bradford the opportunity he's been looking for to release the Omega Beasts. The fallout from that will be immediate and profound as they infest the Magic Zone.

1. If it was the *Federation of Magic* or some other evil magic faction who bought the info from our gang, they may feel cheated and set up. That means they'll want retribution against our heroes.

2. Others might wrongly conclude our heroes are secretly working for the CS or are in cahoots with Doctor Bradford. After all, they have a Dog Boy in their group, a Grackle Tooth known to live in Lone Star, Anika who sure behaves like an ISS agent or Military Specialist, a Juicer who could easily be a Coalition soldier, and who knows who or what is under that black mask and robe of the group's supposed mage.

This conclusion could lead to all sorts of adventures, from people out to get them, to people trying to get in good with the CS. This could lead to our heroes discovering plots against mages, D-Bees and innocent people in the 'Burbs, to Coalition raids or purges in the 'Burbs, to smuggling opportunities, or the chance to actually work for the Coalition. Or maybe a run-in (good or bad) with the

Vanguard.

3. Moses could be attacked by one or more Omega Beasts during some adventure, soon or in the future.

4. Having served their purpose, Doctor Bradford might send out Krieghoff's Pack (or other mutants, agents or bounty hunters) to do away with them. After all, they did break into the complex and get away alive. Can't have people thinking he's soft. Or, he might want Doctor Heston back. Then again, he might not care about them one way or another, or since they worked out so splendidly as dupes once, why not use them again?

5. Any number of organizations, including the Coalition Military, may want to get their hands on poor Doctor Heston and dig out all the secrets he knows about Bradford and Lone Star – or silence him before he can spill the beans.

6. Now that our heroes are rich, they may hire other adventurers to go on missions to make more money, or to help people in need.

7. Do our heroes feel guilty for playing into Bradford's hands and launching Project Omega? If so, do they and other heroes they contact, enlist or hire (like the Player Characters), try to do something about it? If so what? Take down Bradford? Sabotage the labs? Hunt down Omegas? Help warn and defend innocent practitioners of magic?

8. A chance encounter with Krieghoff's Pack could get ugly under any circumstance.

Note: This can all have an impact on Rifts players because their characters could become entangled in any of these capers and situations. They could be the ones hired to take down our heroes, or kidnap Roddy, or get the computer files, or work to save the group or protect Roddy, or have Roddy run away from our heroes and join them, bringing all of the trouble outlined above to them. Think and be imaginative.

Remember, a journey through Rifts Earth is not a walk in the park, and there can be encounters, detours and adventure with our heroes on the way to and at the Chi-Town 'Burbs. The Player Characters (assuming the players aren't playing the heroes from the graphic novel) could encounter the group at any point, help them, and/or get embroiled with any of the subplots and ideas for future adventures. Furthermore, the player group could be deemed guilty by association or even confused the gang from Lone Star.

MORE POSSIBILITIES

• **What is O.J.'s story?** Might he split off from our heroes to go off adventuring with another group of adventurers, e.g. the Player Characters? Maybe O.J. used to run with the Player Characters in the past and he turns to

them for help or a way to make more money, or to protect his friends when he's gone.

• **What other secrets might our heroes have** in that download from section 7c of the Lone Star Complex? Maybe there is additional data Bradford never meant for them to have and now he wants it back or them silenced. Or maybe it just leads to more adventures in and around the Lone Star Complex involving mutants, monsters and other machinations of Bradford's. This info could be passed along to other characters (the player group) and spun off from there.

• **Shakes has no memory of his previous life** before his M.O.M. conversion and even parts of it afterward. His mind is a wreck. Maybe his past had something to do with the Player Characters. A search for his past?

• **Where did Moses come from?** Moses reveals his true identity to our heroes, or leaves them for a while and turns to another group of heroes (the Player Characters) for help or to go on an adventure or mission of mercy or revenge, or . . .

Could Moses have his own agenda? He certainly has his share of secrets. Hmm, what might they be? Wanted by the Splugorth? Enemy of Mrryln?

• **Doctor Alexander** was erasing the data from the Aishwarra experiment. He doesn't believe in Bradford's vision and could turn against him at any time. Does he turn to our Player Characters for help and protection? Is Krieghoff's Pack dispatched to bring him back or shut him up, permanently?

• **Any run-in with Krieghoff and his pack is trouble.** Use the characters from the graphic novel in all kinds of fun ways.



Unleash your imaginations, build on what we've presented and explore the infinite possibilities. Have fun!

...AND NOW FOR SOMETHING A LITTLE EXTRA.



PINUPS

One of the joys I've had in my years working with Palladium is being able to revisit the characters I created for *Machinations of Doom* and continue their story. As much as I wish I could regale their future adventures in the form of an ongoing comic book, I've had to settle for dropping them into various illustrations, whether in the background or as the main focus.

There's not enough room here to showcase all the times the crew has appeared throughout the Rifts landscape, so I've simply chosen some of my favourites.

To the left is a pin-up from the Rifter Swimsuit Edition. It was a welcome excuse to draw Anika in a Bikini! To the right are my original pencils of Johnny chilling outside the bar where their story begins. This piece was painted over in oils by my good friend Joachim Gmoser and used as the cover to Rifter #6 where *Machinations of Doom* premiered. Below is the B&W art for the gang's appearance in the Rifts CCG as the Pecos Raiders card.

- Ramón.



SKETCHBOOK



"SHAKES"



BOWIE

- handgun
- 'bowie' knife (vibro)
- retractable dual long-blade. (R)



ANIKA

DOODLES

Before starting work on *Machinations of Doom*, I sat down with my sketchbook and took a pass at each of the characters.

The cast of characters was taken, and the story based as well, on a piece I did for the *Lone Star Sourcebook*, which I've included at the beginning of this book. With the template of characters in hand I began to flesh them out.

Shakes was inspired by a rendition of a Crazy I did for the *New West* sourcebook while Bowie was based on one of my favourite breeds of dog; the bulldog. I've always like strong female characters, so making Anika the two gun toting pseudo leader was a given.

Now while some of the characters I lavished attention on, I will be honest and say that OJ got the short end of the stick. Juicers

where never my favourite characters in *Rifts* (I know some fans will hate me for this) but I felt I should include one. So I went with the standard design of the class. However, over the course of the series OJ probably ended up being one of the more rounded out and fleshed out characters of the series!

Bodakhan? He was a D-Bee of my own design that I'd peppered thought previous books. A hulking mass of orange muscle and full of love.

And finally Moses. As you can see from the sketch on the opposite page, he's the character that changed the most. When I began work on the second chapter, where the rest of the cast had their debut, I suddenly had an urge to change up his design. The original look just wasn't clicking. So I redesigned him on the page I drew the comic. I extrapo-

lated some concepts I used in my designs of the Battle Magus from *Federation of Magic* and came up with a Moses that I was much happier with.

But what about Johnny? There's no sketch of my favourite Burster as I pretty much had him pegged in a piece I did years earlier and felt no need to change him up.

As Kevin and the Palladium crew feel like my surrogate family south of the border, Shakes, Bowie, Anika, OJ, Bodakhan, Moses and Johnny feel like my own little family in the world of *Rifts*! I hope you've enjoyed their adventures, and I hope you'll make your own as well... and maybe one day I'll be able to tell a few more!

- Ramón.



D.J.

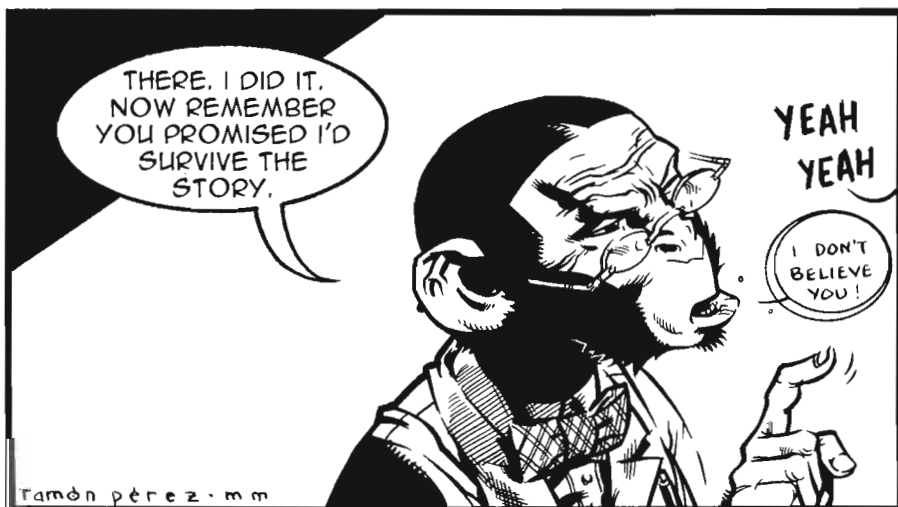


BODAKHAN



**WE INTERRUPT
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BOOK WITH A
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BULLETIN.**

[Originally appeared in
The Rifter® #12 when the
strip was delayed.]



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