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THE

RIFTS

Your Guide to the Megaverse®



Inside this 96 page sourcebook...

Rifts®/Phase World® Elemental Primorda

Splicers® – Adventure and Source Material

Heroes Unlimited™/Ninjas & Superspies™ Adventure

Rifts®/Palladium Fantasy RPG® Elemental Monsters

Rifts® Setting, A Town in the Pecos Badlands

Rifts® for Savage Worlds® preview

Coming Attractions, News, & More

Do you hear the ley lines whispering?

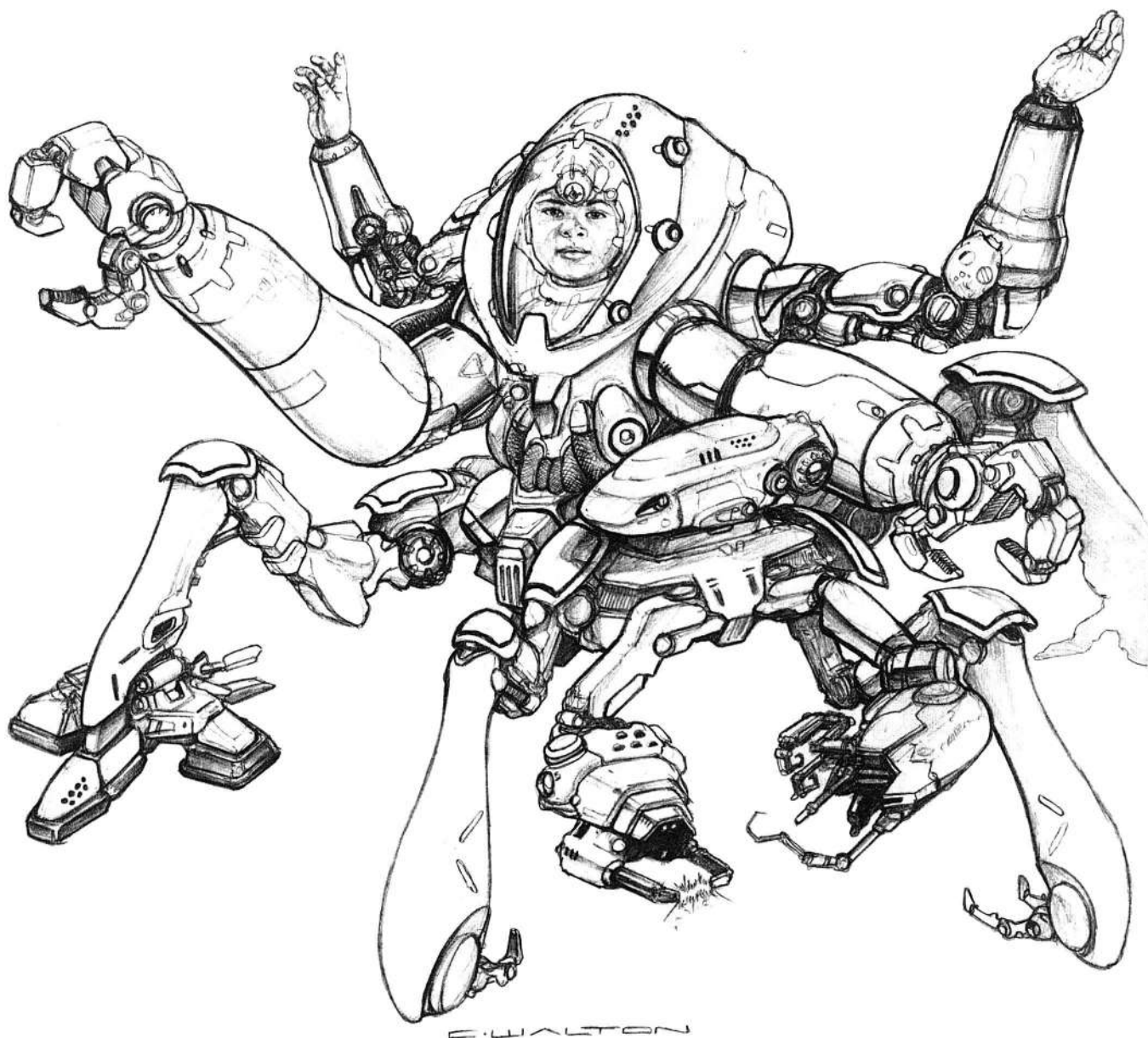
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The Rifter® Number 76

Your Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®!

Dedication

To Wayne Smith for his dedication to *The Rifter*® for nearly 20 years.

– Kevin Siembieda, 2017

First Printing – February, 2017

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Palladium Books® Presents:

THE RIFTER® #76

BRANDT -97

Sourcebook and Guide to the Palladium Megaverse®

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concepts and Megaverse® created by **Kevin Siembieda**.

Special Thanks to all our contributors, writers and artists this issue, especially new contributors. Our apologies to anybody who may have gotten accidentally left out or their name misspelled.

– *Kevin Siembieda, 2017*

Contents – The Rifter® #76 – Autumn, 2016

Page 6 – From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

Publisher Kevin Siembieda pens a heartfelt reflection on the strength, courage and kindness of gamers, particularly role-playing gamers. It is a nice homage to our gamer fans and friends, and reminds us all how special the role-playing game experience is, and the lasting relationships they create. I think we are all proud to be gamers.

Page 7 – Palladium News

There is a lot going on behind the scenes at Palladium Books. New interest from Hollywood and video game companies, big plans for several of Palladium's game lines, the **Rifts® Board Game** under development by *Rogue Heroes LLC*, the **Rifts® for Savage Worlds®** game line hitting stores, being a guest at **CoastCon 40** in Biloxi, Mississippi, March 3-5, 2017 (*Kevin Siembieda* and *Sean Patrick Fannon* are both gaming guests, among others), **Robotech®** and more. Read all about it here.

Page 8 – Coming Attractions

Our focus is getting new product into your hands. **Rifts® CS Heroes of Humanity Arsenal™**, **The Disavowed™**, **Rifts® Secrets of the Atlanteans™**, **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Wave 2**, and **Garden of the Gods™** (for the Palladium Fantasy RPG®) are just some of the things actively being worked upon. And a weekly podcast about gaming, game design, G.M.ing and more with Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton II is coming your way. Probably starting in February.

Page 14 – The Rifter® Super-Subscription Offer

– Offer Ends March 20, 2017

The online offer happened throughout February, as always, but we don't want any of our loyal subscribers to miss out. We know some of you do not have Internet access and wait for this offer in the pages of **The Rifter®** to re-subscribe. Here it is. Offer #232017 ends March 20, 2017, for our Rifter readers.

Page 15 – Rifts® for Savage Worlds® Preview

In case you haven't heard the news, Palladium has licensed **Rifts®** to be adapted to the *Savage Worlds* game rules. We will continue to publish our own **Rifts®** games and books (and we have some big plans for 2017), but we thought it would be fun to expand the Megaverse® by adapting **Rifts®** for another popular game system. Read all about it and then see the sample pages. The actual *Savage World* books will be printed in full color and arrive in stores sometime in February or March 2017. Enjoy.

Page 22 – Elemental Primorda™

– Official source material for *Rifts®*, *Phase*

World®, *Palladium Fantasy RPG®* & other settings

Greg Diaczyk and *Kevin Siembieda* team up to give you four new mysterious people. They all travel the Megaverse® and appear to be benign explorers, or is there something more sinister afoot? Are they champions of Light come to battle the Minions

of Hell, or are they spies for another alien or supernatural force? Little is known about these curious human-Elemental hybrids, except that they possess Elemental powers and ride monstrous beasts from the Elemental Realms. Read and learn more.

Page 22 – Elemental Primorda™ and their origins.

Page 23 – Air Primorda

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Artwork by *Michael Leonard*.

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Page 38 – Water Fin (Water)

Artwork by *Charles Walton II*.

Page 41 – Blood Diamonds

– Adventure, NPCs & source material for *Heroes*

Unlimited™, *Ninjas & Superspies™*, or *Nightbane®*

Writer *Thomas Morrison* presents the story, adventure hooks, and NPC villains for a tale of crime, greed, human slavery, and battle. The coolest thing about this adventure is that it can be used as a one-shot adventure, or a series of related adventures, or even a globe-spanning campaign. Best of all, the story and its continuing arc works equally well for superhumans in **Heroes Unlimited™**, or as a campaign of international intrigue, spies and espionage for **Ninjas and Superspies™**, or a darker tale of the slave trade, human sacrifice and supernatural horror for **Nightbane®**.

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Page 59 – Thinking Outside the Box

Page 59 – Adjustments & Complications

Page 60 – Resolution

Artwork by *Mark Dudley* and *Charles Ferguson-Avery*.

Page 62 – Gohjjunk™ Wilderness Community

– An adventure setting for *Rifts®* in the Pecos Empire

Brett Caron returns with another **Rifts®** town set in the Pecos Badlands. It is part giant junkyard, part town, part catalyst for adventure. Have fun.

Page 66 – People of Note
Page 69 – Pecos Gang Leaders & Other Groups
Page 70 – Hook, Line and Sinker™ Adventures

Page 71 – I am Legion™, Episode Five

– Official adventure & source material for Splicers®

Chris Kluge, Lance Colley, and Charles Walton II team up to present the next chapter of *I am Legion*, an episodic adventure ushering in the new rogue Nexus personality, *Legion*. More adventure, surprises and horror awaits. Special thanks to Jeff Ruiz and Todd Spencley for their assistance and input.

Page 71 – To the Rescue

Page 72 – Random Patrol Table
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Page 73 – Map of the underground complex
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Page 85 – Saber Raptors
Page 88 – Thrasher Squid Combat Beast

Page 90 – New Legion Machines

Page 90 – Highjacker
Page 92 – Mechanic
Page 95 – New Modifications
Artwork by Charles Walton II.

Page 96 – Rifts® Board Game

For the first time, *Rifts*® becomes an action-packed board game for all ages. Created under license by *Rogue Heroes LLC* and game designer *Carmen Bellaire*. Digital sculpts by *Ben Calvert Lee* and others.

The Theme for Issue 76

The theme of *The Rifter*® #76 is adventure, heroes, monsters and travel to exotic places. Game on.

The Rifter® Needs You

We need new writers and artists to fill the next few decades of *The Rifter*®. You do not need to be a professional writer to contribute to *The Rifter*®. This publication is like a “fanzine,” written by fans for fans. A forum in which gamers just like you can submit articles, G.M. advice, player tips, house rules, adventures, new magic, new psionics, new super abilities, monsters, villains, high-tech weapons, vehicles, power armor, short works of fiction and more. So think about writing up something short

(even something as small as 4-6 pages). Newcomers and regular contributors are always welcome.

The Rifter® needs new material, especially when it comes to adventures and source material, for *all* of our game lines, particularly *Rifts*®, *Chaos Earth*®, *Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, *Heroes Unlimited*™, *Ninjas and Superspies*™, *Beyond the Supernatural*™, *Dead Reign*®, *Splicers*® and *Nightbane*®.

Pay is lousy, fame is dubious, but you get to share your ideas and adventures with fellow gamers and get four free copies to show to your friends and family.

The Cover

The cover is by Nick Bradshaw and depicts a pair of unlikely heroes battling a gang of mutants created by the nefarious *Doctor Feral*. The art conjured a cast of characters and adventure ideas from Kevin Siembieda for *Heroes Unlimited*, but we didn’t have space for it in this issue. You can expect it in *The Rifter*® #77.

Optional and Unofficial Rules & Source Material

Most of the material for this issue is “official” source material. As for optional source material, settings and adventures, if they sound cool or fun, use them. If they sound funky, too high-powered or inappropriate for your game, modify them or ignore them completely. We hope all of it ignites your imagination and inspires you to create your own wonders.

www.palladiumbooks.com – Palladium Online

The Rifter® #77

- *Rifts*® source material.
- *Heroes Unlimited*™ “official” source material – by Kevin Siembieda. The story behind the creatures on the cover.
- *Palladium Fantasy RPG*® – city adventure setting and source material – by Ian Herbert.
- *Splicers*® – *I am Legion*™, Part Six, by Charles Walton II, Chris Kluge and Lance Colley – “official” source material. The adventure continues and more secrets and dangers are revealed.
- Source material for other RPG settings (tentative).
- News, coming attractions, product descriptions and more.
- *Palladium Fantasy RPG*® cover by Michael Leonard.
- 96 pages – \$13.95 retail – Cat. No. 177. Winter issue.

**One game system, infinite possibilities
limited only by your imagination™**

Do you hear the ley lines whispering?

From the Desk of Kevin Siembieda

I'm proud to be a gamer

It's funny, gamers are generally considered to be *nerds*. And though being a *gamer geek* or *nerd* does not have the stigma it once did, I think the term generally makes people picture someone who is a bit of wuss.

I find that funny, because I know gamers — especially role-playing gamers — to be some pretty tough customers and badasses.

Over the holiday season, I had the privilege of corresponding with hundreds of gamers via the comment section of the Surprise Packages, emails, and phone calls. Among the most notable were some who were handed some pretty lousy cards in life and going through difficult times. I'm talking role-playing gamers who have faced life-threatening illnesses, debilitating injury, depression and other heavy challenges. Things that might crush the spirit of other people, but they somehow persevere, often with incredible courage and grace.

One gent went through major heart surgery and difficult complications. Another suffered a freak, debilitating accident, his injury leaving him with severe and long-term consequences as well as financial struggles. Another is terminally ill and also suffering financial difficulty. The doctors don't know how long he has. It could be months, weeks or days. He told me he intends to game with his friends and family to the very end, because it brings him joy and peace. To speak with any of these individuals, you would never know what they are going through. In my conversations with the latter two gentlemen, we shared many laughs and fond memories. Leaving me admiring their strength of character and courage.

It made me think about other valiant role-playing gamers I have known, two in particular. My friend and a great artist, *Keith Parkinson*, who battled leukemia with every fiber of his being before it claimed his life, but he remained positive and fought it to the bitter end. And my dear, beautiful friend, *Erick Wujcik*, one of the most brilliant and generous people I have ever known. Erick wasted away and weakened, but he never stopped smiling or living, and that twinkle in his eye never dimmed. When the doctors first discovered his Stage Four pancreatic cancer, they were certain he only had 3-6 weeks to live; emphasis on the "three." A mutual friend, one of the top forensic specialists in the nation, called me to warn that it would be a miracle for Erick to survive past Christmas, and to let everyone know they needed to say their goodbyes immediately.

What did Erick do? Defy the odds, of course. Not only that, but he flew back to Michigan from California with his life-long sweetheart, Kay Kozora, to visit the Palladium office, do a three hour long, epic podcast with me for **Gateway to the Megaverse®** (January 2008), signed something like 150 books for our archives and to sell to fans after he passed, and then rented a hall and coordinated his own *57th birthday bash* scheduled for the end of January. The doctors were surprised he had made it this long, yet Erick planned the celebration several weeks away. He asked me to MC the event, which, of course I did. It was simultaneously one of the most wonderful, joyful and tragic events of my life. I marveled at Erick's courage, grace, and his awareness of the pain the people around him were suffering in anticipation of his passing. Family and friends came from across the USA and Canada. It was a triumphant celebration of life, and a spectacular way to say goodbye to the people he loved, and who loved him back so deeply. Erick kept making his saving throw vs coma/death until the Summer of 2008;

nearly seven months longer than what the doctors had expected of him. He told me the secret was finding and holding onto joy — playing games and having the people he loved be around him.

Like I said, gamer nerds are some tough hombres, and I am proud to count myself among them. You should be, too.

I know plenty of other stories of strength and courage by gamers struggling through illness, facing the specter of death or dealing with some other difficult challenge. Time and again, I am told by many how much my games mean to them, inspire them, and help them through such difficult times. One, kind soul, wrote, "Palladium Books and all of your superb storytelling has been a constant companion that has led to many of the great things in my life ... your writing and craft have had a huge impact on my, and my family's, life."

What he, and many of you may not realize, is that the feeling is completely mutual. Our relationship is a symbiotic one. It is you, the multitude of Palladium fans, who inspire me every single day. I see your courage, your tenacity, your kindness and your bold, creative minds, and it motivates me to keep writing and creating despite my own health scares, issues and other of life's complications. Life can be hard and downright crushing at times. I don't know if I could ever be as brave and generous as Erick and these other people I have had the honor to meet. But I try. I refuse to give in to dark emotions and tragedy. I fight the good fight knowing I have an army of wonderful people like you behind me. I mean it when I tell you Palladium fans are the greatest, and that you mean the world to me. It is you who help provide the wind under my wings and give me the strength and desire to soar higher and higher. Or at least try. Whenever I write a new game or sourcebook, it is you, our fans, who are on my mind. I'm constantly thinking, what would you want or like to see? What new surprise or twist would please you? What can I do to make you say, "Wow." I love making people say wow and smile, and be excited to game with their friends and family.

The gentleman I quoted above, ended his letter to me saying, "And for all this, I give you my most heartfelt gratitude. I look forward to what the future holds. Game on!"

Ditto. I thank him for sharing his deeply personal story with me. And I thank all of you for giving me courage and for inspiring me to strive to reach for new heights. You may not know it, but when I write, your voices are always there with me. Whispering in my ear and encouraging me, offering ideas and challenging me to push the envelope and give you some wow.

I too look forward to what the future holds. I know Palladium's lack of productivity and product releases over the past several years has been disappointing. I hope those days are long behind us. I was forced to face my own mortality and deal with an array of challenges that wore me down and nearly crushed me for awhile. Someday, I may share that story, but for now, I would rather focus on the future.

I have renewed energy and optimism. The entire staff does. And man oh man, do we have exciting plans that are going to rock your gaming world. The handful of people I have shared them with have practically fallen over. Yep, I want to wow you — big time. I want to make you so excited that you cannot wait *to play*, even if you haven't done so in years! It's coming. And it will be a joyride that will set your imaginations on fire. I know, because our imaginations are on fire at Palladium and you are there with

us, whispering ... heck, shouting, in our ears to inspire us. And not just for **Rifts®** or **Robotech®**, but for **Heroes Unlimited™**, **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**, **Splicers®**, **Dead Reign®**, **Nightbane®**, **Beyond the Supernatural™** and everything!

A new era of Palladium Books is about to begin. Strap yourself in and enjoy the ride.

– Kevin Siembieda, Inspired Writer, Artist, Game Designer

Palladium News

By Kevin Siembieda, the guy who should know

Happy New Year! May 2017 bring us all good health, prosperity and joy. We signed and shipped what felt like a zillion books for the 2016 Palladium Christmas Surprise Packages. It was good to see so many people take advantage of that fun, money saving offer.

The Rifter® Super-Subscription offer

We have a new offer for you now, **The Rifter® Super-Subscription offer**. A way to get **The Rifter®** at a discount, delivered right to your doorstep, and get a *free gift* (if you want one) on top of it all. See the description elsewhere in this issue.

Books coming soon

I have divided my time between several projects, and been working away on them all. That includes **Rifts® CS Arsenal™**, **The Disavowed™**, **The Rifter® #77**, **Garden of the Gods™** (for **Palladium Fantasy RPG®**), **Rifts® Secrets of the Atlanteans™** and **Robotech® RPG Tactics™** (Wave II and new releases). When I need a break from one, I do some writing on another. This week I did work on **Rifts® CS Arsenal™**, **Gardens of the Gods™**, **The Rifter® #77**, as well as logistics and planning on **Robotech® RPG Tactics™** and business matters. I want CS Arsenal, The Disavowed and Atlanteans out in quick order. I also recently approved *John Zeleznik's* pencil drawing for the cover of **Rifts® Sovietski™**.

Rifts® Board Game from Rogue Heroes™

I just realized that those of you who don't get our weekly emails, probably do not know about the **Rifts® board game** being developed by *Carmen Bellaire* for his new company, *Rogue Heroes LLC*. He licensed the rights to do an as of yet untitled, **Rifts® board game** and has been diligently working away at it for many months. He intends to fund the **Rifts® board game** via Kickstarter in March or April 2017. Game play is fast, fun, and captures the "Rifts® feel." The game artwork for the character cards is looking fantastic, and the digital sculpts for the game pieces are detailed and gorgeous. Everyone who has seen the card art and digital sculpts for the heroic 28mm scale game pieces has been floored. We've been approving art and sculpts as they come in. We tip our hats to Carmen, his talented crew of sculptors and the artists working on this exciting project.

Rifts® Savage Worlds Game Line

The Kickstarter backers were shipped their rewards in December and now the product will be hitting store shelves in February. Watch for them. Good stuff. I hope you have been enjoying the

sneak previews in **The Rifter®**. The **Savage Worlds® Rifts® Players Handbook**, **Game Master Handbook**, **Savage Foes of North America**, **Game Shield** and three map packages will all be available in stores around the time you read this.

Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Update

I have had a few good conversations with Harmony Gold USA in recent weeks, as we start to move toward new **Robotech® RPG** and **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Wave Two** releases for 2017. Harmony Gold approved our proposal and art concepts for the first **RRT Scenario Book**, and our plans for the **Ghost Fleet Saga™** series. The latter is being designed to create new RRT factions and a new location and time period to game in. It incorporates Shadow Technology and UEEF covert operations against the Regent, Invid, Inorganics, space pirates and renegade Zentraedi. This is a book we have been developing over the last year.

It is starting to look like our manufacturing plans to make **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Wave Two** game pieces with much smaller piece counts are not going to pan out. We should know by the end of January, 2017. Very disappointing for us. We thought we had a huge surprise coming, but we are already making contingency plans for the 2017 release.

CoastCon 40 – March 3-5, 2017

Biloxi, Mississippi – www.coastcon.org

I (Kevin Siembieda) will be attending **CoastCon** along with *Sean Patrick Fannon*, the core writer and architect of **Rifts®** for **Savage Worlds®**, in Mississippi in March, 2017. **CoastCon**, **AdeptiCon**, **Gen Con** and **GrandCon** are the only four conventions we plan to attend in 2017; that's how busy we expect to be banging out new gaming product. I hope to see many fans at **CoastCon**.

Could a Phase World® videogame be in your future?

Maybe. Palladium Books has been talking with a videogame company that seems to be very interested in developing **Phase World®** into a videogame. I cannot disclose more, other than they want us to be involved in developing the world and the narrative. Time will tell.

Pitching Nightbane® for TV

Wonder what's going on behind scenes? Part of it has been working with interested third parties to develop our game worlds into new mediums. One of those efforts has been the possibility of **Nightbane®** as a television series. And **Nightbane®** is not the only intellectual property (I.P.) we would like to see become a film, TV show, video game, comic book, etc. There are at least two other I.P.s we have gotten inquiries for in such mediums. You'd think sooner or later one of them would hit, right? Fingers crossed.

Rifts® Movie Update: I wish I could say there has been movement on the **Rifts® movie**, to be produced by *Jerry Bruckheimer* and *Walt Disney Pictures*, but we have nothing to report. We remain optimistic and appreciate that Bruckheimer is waiting for the right script to make a great movie.

Coming Attractions

Palladium's 2016 Release Checklist

Available Now

- **Hell Followed™**, a **Dead Reign® Sourcebook** – 160 pages.
- **Weapons and Castles of the Orient™** – 48 page, comic book size format.
- **Robotech® The Masters Saga™** – New 8½ x 11 format, 160 pages.
- **Rifts® Heroes of Humanity™**
- **Rifts® Poker Deck #1 (color)**
- **Rifts® Poker Deck #2 (color and b/w illustrations)**
- **The Rifter® #75 – Summer issue** – 96 pages.
- **The Rifter® #76 – Fall issue** – 96 pages.

Coming Soon 2017

- **The Rifter® #77 – Winter issue** – 96 pages – Feb/March, in production now!
- **Rifts® Heroes of Humanity™ ARSENAL** – 96 or 128 pages – Feb/March, in final production right now.
- **Rifts® Secrets of the Atlanteans™** – 192 pages – March/April, in production now.
- **Rifts® The Disavowed™ Sourcebook by Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements** – April/May.
- **Garden of the Gods™, a Palladium Fantasy RPG® Sourcebook by Kevin Siembieda** – March/April.
- **Dead Reign® Sourcebook** – Spring.
- **Others** – we may try to slip in a few small books before Summer.

Coming Later in 2017 and 2018

- **Lopan™, a Palladium Fantasy RPG® Adventure Sourcebook**
- **Lopanic Games™, a Palladium Fantasy RPG® Sourcebook**
- **Robotech® RPG Ghost Fleet Saga™ Sourcebook**
- **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Wave 2 expansion packs**
- **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Scenario Book One and events**
- **Rifts® Sovietski™ World Book**
- **Rifts® Haunted Tech™ Sourcebook** – Rescheduled
- **Chaos Earth® First Responders**
- **Splicers® Sourcebooks**
- **Heroes Unlimited™ Sourcebooks**
- **Nightbane® Sourcebook**
- **Beyond the Supernatural™ Sourcebooks**
- **Rifts® World Books and Sourcebooks, including Rifts® New Navy, Rifts® Antarctica, and others.**
- **And some big surprises coming this Summer and Fall**

Palladium RPGs are available in many hobby and game stores around the world. We encourage people to support their local stores. Going to a store enables you to see the product before purchasing it, and many stores are happy to place special orders for you, provided you pay in advance, enabling you to avoid the cost of shipping and possible damage in the mail.

Ordering from Palladium Books: You can also order directly from Palladium Books, but you will pay extra for shipping. For customers with access to a computer, we highly recommend ordering online. This provides you with information about the most recent releases and Palladium's entire product catalog. It also provides you the most accurate shipping costs and more shipping options. You can also order by telephone: 734-721-2903 (order line only). For customers without such access, use the following "mail order" process.

1. Add up the cost of the books or items being ordered.

2. **In the USA:** Add \$6 for *orders* totaling \$1-\$50 to cover shipping and handling. Add \$12 for *orders* totaling \$51-\$95. Add \$18 for *orders* totaling \$96-\$200. **Note:** For *non-book products*, including the **Robotech® RPG Tactics™** box game and expansion packs, add an extra \$6 per \$50 worth of product, on top of the shipping amounts listed above. This is because *non-book products* cannot ship via Media Mail, and must use a more expensive method of shipping. **Outside the USA:** Double the shipping amount for orders going to Canada, and *quadruple* it for overseas orders. Any and all additional costs incurred as a result of customs fees and taxes are the responsibility of the foreign customer, NOT Palladium Books.

3. Make checks or money orders payable to *Palladium Books*.

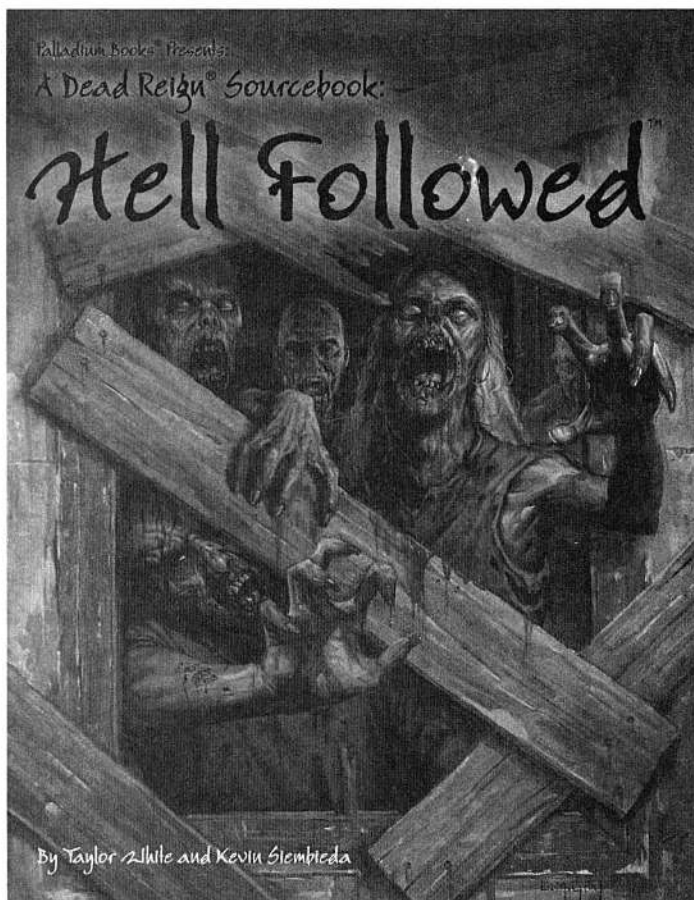
4. Please make sure to send us your complete and correct address, *including* apartment number. **Note:** These costs are for the least expensive and slowest method of shipping only. Allow 2-4 weeks for delivery. Order online or call the office for a superior but more costly shipping method.

Heading into the New Year

Calls from companies and individuals interested in developing some of Palladium's game worlds for television, film and video games are exciting and fun to think about. However, there is no guarantee any of these preliminary efforts will lead to anything. Our focus at Palladium Books is getting new products – lots of them – into your hands, particularly **Robotech® RPG Tactics™**, **Rifts®**, **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** and other titles folks have been anxiously awaiting. We have a couple of big surprises coming, too. Truly big things are brewing at Palladium Books.

Podcast: Secrets of the Megaverse®

It's not a book, but we think many you will want to know about, and listen to, a weekly Palladium podcast with Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton II. This is something we have talked about internally for years, and we have finally decided to take the plunge. It will probably starting in February. **Secrets of the Megaverse®** is the tentative title. It will be about role-playing games, game design, the art of running and playing RPGs, and the history of Palladium Books. Keep an ear out for it.



NEW! Hell Followed™ – available now

A 160 page Dead Reign® Sourcebook

“This book begins to redefine the zombie genre. It broadens the field of possibilities and expands upon the modern zombie mythos. It is full of twists and surprises I had never imagined.” – Alex Marciniszyn, Editor

In the wake of the Zombie Apocalypse, survivors find themselves trapped in a living hell. As everyone struggles to survive against the ravenous dead, some rise up to be heroes fighting for those in need and against all manner of evil – living and dead. Be more than a survivor. Accept the new world and do something about it.

Fans are loving this sourcebook.

- **11 New types of zombies**, including the Armored Brute, Dead Mound Giant, Seeker and more.
- **7 New Apocalyptic Character Classes**.
- **Masked Lunatics** – heroes or madmen?
- **Cults, good and bad, plus other weirdness and dangers**.
- **21 Disasters to complicate survival**. Each described with damage stats, penalties and consequences. The most comprehensive information of this type ever presented! Blizzard, Earthquake, Hurricane, Tornado, Toxic Spill, Wildfire, and more. Suitable for any game world.
- **Government enclaves**. Could the government or its military still exist? If so, where are they? What are they doing?
- **8 Government conspiracy theories**. Each fuel for creating adventures and building different organizations.
- **Tables for creating government enclaves and their purpose**.

- **Abandoned Emergency Relief Centers** and the resources they may still have to offer survivors, if they can get to them. Random tables and ideas for adventure.
- **Take your zombie campaign to the next level!**
- **Cover by E.M. Gist. Interior art by Nick Bradshaw.**
- **Written by Taylor White and Kevin Siembieda**. The biggest Dead Reign® sourcebook yet. Adaptable to other Palladium settings.
- **160 pages – \$20.95 retail – Cat. No. 236. Available now.**

And Don't Forget about . . .

Dead Reign® RPG. It is the aftermath of the *zombie apocalypse*. Civilization is gone, the dead reign, and the living fight to survive against impossible odds. Tales of zombies, human survival and horror as a fast-paced, easy to learn game and sourcebooks.

- **Zombie combat rules, vehicles and equipment.**
- **Six iconic Apocalyptic Character Classes and Ordinary People** with 40+ occupations to choose from.
- **Seven types of zombies, plus the Half-Living.**
- **Secrets of the Dead** and tips on fighting zombies.
- **Death Cults, their Priests, power over zombies and goals.**
- **101 Random Scenarios, Encounters and Settings.**
- **100 Random Corpse Searches and other tables.**
- **Quick Roll Character Creation tables (10 minutes).**
- **A complete role-playing game by Siembieda and others.**
- **\$22.95 retail – 224 pages – Cat. No. 230. Available now.**

Dead Reign® Sourcebook One: Civilization Gone™. It has been months since the dead rose to attack the living. Civilization has crumbled. There is no army, no government, no help coming. You are on your own and things are only getting worse.

- **Madmen and Psychopaths including the Zombie Master, Ghost Walker, Backstabber, Messianic Leader, Zombie Lover, Deathbringer and others.**
- **Bandits and Raiders who prey upon other survivors.**
- **Street Gang Protectors and their mission to save lives.**
- **Phobia and Obsession tables. Many adventure ideas.**
- **House and home resource and encounter tables.**
- **Random encounter and survivor camp creation tables.**
- **Additional world information and survival advice.**
- **\$12.92 retail – 64 pages – Cat. No. 231. Available now.**

Dead Reign® Sourcebook Two: Dark Places™. Secrets of survival, including using railroad tracks and the urban underground to travel unseen and undetected by zombies.

- **Worm Meat, Bug Boy, Sewer Crawler and Impersonator Zombies.**
- **“Live Bait” zombie lures with human beings as bait.**
- **Traveling the rails and boxcar encounter tables.**
- **Traveling sewer tunnels, steam tunnels & other dark places.**
- **The pitfalls and dangers of the urban underground.**
- **Diseases, infection and additional world information.**
- **Random encounter tables, boxcar content tables, and more.**
- **\$12.92 retail – 64 pages – Cat. No. 232. Available now.**

Dead Reign® Sourcebook 3: Endless Dead™. The zombie hordes grow in number and strangeness. Can humankind survive? Where is the military?

- New types of zombies like Fused Zombies and the Walking Mass Grave.
- New O.C.C.s including Wheelman, Zombie Hunter & Zombie Researcher.
- Info & tables for weaponizing vehicles and vehicle combat rules.
- Random encounter tables for military bases, police stations, gun stores, buildings, suburbs, industrial parks, small towns, farmland and wilderness.
- Tables for creating survivor caravans, hideouts, Safe Havens & more.
- Timetable for setting zombie campaigns and many adventure ideas.
- \$16.95 retail – 96 pages – Cat. No. 233. Available now.

Dead Reign® Sourcebook 4: Fear the Reaper™. Everything you could want to know about the heroic Road Reapers. Heroes who, like knights of old, travel the highways and byways to fight zombies and help survivors.

- Comprehensive background on the legendary Road Reapers.
- Their code, missions, strategies and tactics.
- Areas of specialization, notable weapons and gear.
- The Terror Zombie and more.
- \$12.95 retail – 48 pages – Cat. No. 234. Available now.

Dead Reign® Sourcebook 5: Graveyard Earth™. This expansive book takes a look at the Zombie Apocalypse and how survivors are faring around the globe. Every country in the world has been changed by the rise of the dead. This sourcebook gives you that overview of the world.

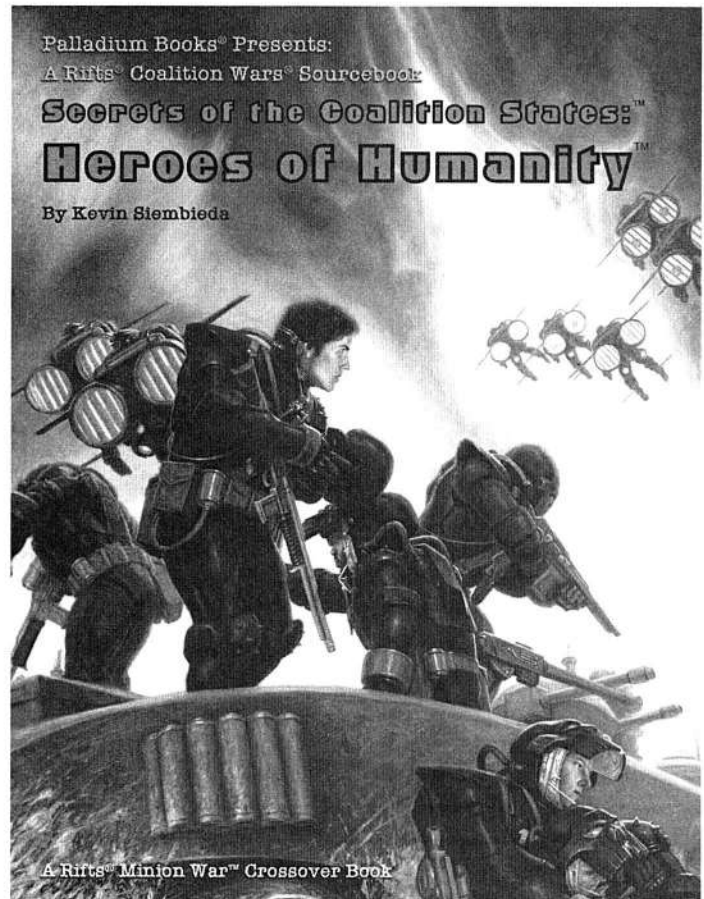
- Many random tables, encounters and adventure ideas set around the world.
- Random Safe Havens by region.
- How to get home from abroad, zombie threat levels and more.
- Timetable for setting zombie campaigns, and many adventure ideas.
- \$12.95 retail – 64 pages – Cat. No. 235. Available now.

Weapons & Castles of the Orient™

Back in print – for all game systems – available now

Weapons, Armor & Castles of the Orient™ is back in print. A 48 page, comic book-sized, lavishly illustrated guide to the major types of weapons, armor and castle fortifications of the East – Japan, China and Malaysia. Includes Samurai body armor, weapons, and several castles complete with floor plan diagrams. Chinese weapons and more. Back in print due to popular request.

- For use with ALL game systems.
- Written by Matthew Valent. Historically accurate.
- Cover by Scott Johnson. Interior art by Kucharski, Kwiatkowski and Siembieda.
- 48 pages – \$9.95 retail – Cat. No. 404. Available now. Weapons and Assassins, Exotic Weapons, and European Castles are coming soon. **Weapons & Armor** (Cat. No. 401, \$8.95 retail) and **Weapons & Castles** (Cat. No. 402, \$8.95 retail) are both available now. **Note:** All books in the *Palladium Weapons Series* are designed for use with any and all game systems. Each is historically accurate. Every weapon and armor illustrated.



Rifts® Heroes of Humanity™

Secrets of the Coalition States™ – Available now

Rifts® CS Heroes of Humanity™ changes the landscape of Rifts North America and beyond, as well as presenting ways to upgrade and improve existing Men-At-Arms characters with Advanced Training, and including new character classes, weapons, equipment, alliances and conflict to inspire epic new adventures. The Minion War™ has spilled onto Rifts Earth. At the epicenter of the invasion is *North America*.

For the first time in history, the Coalition States, Northern Gun, the Manistique Imperium, Lazlo, New Lazlo, Free Quebec, the Cyber-Knights, Lemurians, True Atlanteans, D-Bees, mages, mercs and many, many others stand together against a common enemy. Meanwhile, *the Splugorth of Atlantis*, *Archie Three*, *the Republicans* and *the Vanguard* engage in their own shadow war against the invading demon hordes, and each other.

- **Heroes of Humanity™** lets unprecedented types of characters gather in mixed groups that would otherwise be ideologically opposed. Together they fight side-by-side for the greater good.
- New ways to upgrade your existing Men-at-Arms characters.
- Coalition Demon Hunter school and Advanced Training programs.
- New Coalition O.C.C.s like the Death Knight and Skelebot Specialist.
- Coalition military O.C.C.s expanded such as the CS Juicer and more.
- New CS gear such as the Hellbuster and Falcon Death Wing.

- CS battle plans, world information and many adventure ideas.
- The strategies and tactics of the demons against humanity.
- The strategies and tactics of the Coalition States and its allies.
- Summary of Demon and Deevil vulnerabilities.
- One Xiticix battle plan and who really pays the price.
- Plenty of guidelines, tables and rules to help you run it all.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda, Gleba, Clements and others.
- 160 pages – \$20.95 retail – Cat. No. 889. Available now!



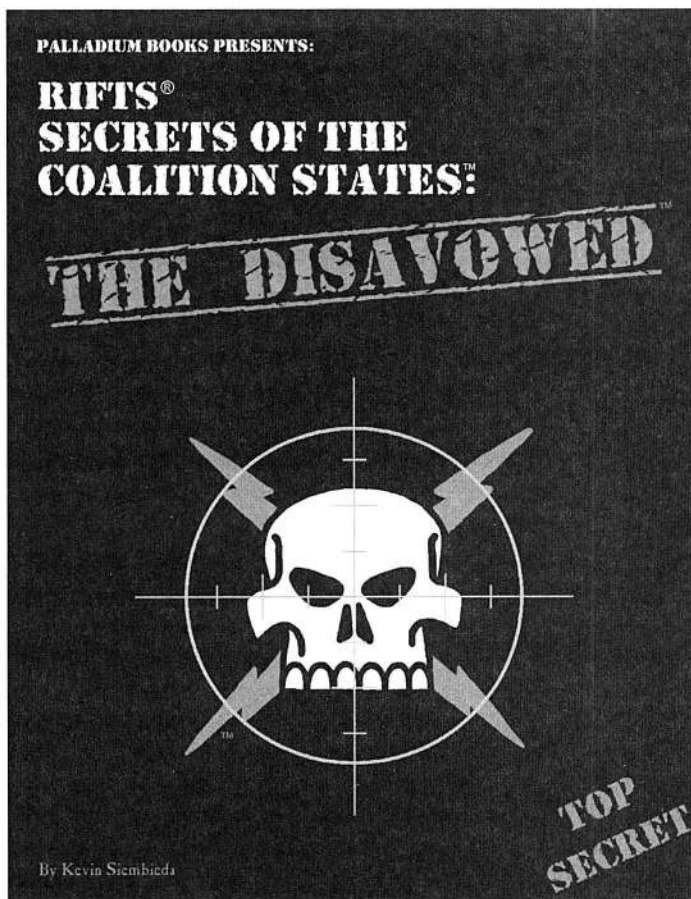
COMING!

Heroes of Humanity™ Arsenal

Rifts® Secrets of the Coalition States™ Sourcebook

Rifts® *Heroes of Humanity* gave you updated Coalition Army O.C.C.s, ways to upgrade men-at-arms, new O.C.C.s, battle plans and strategies and tactics. *CS Heroes of Humanity™ Arsenal* provides an array of new Coalition hardware: weapons, armor, additional SAMAS, other power armor, robots, combat vehicles, gear and info.

- New CS weapons and gear.
- New CS SAMAS and power armor.
- New CS robots and combat vehicles.
- More secrets and information about the Coalition States.
- Wild adventure opportunities, fun and more.
- Part of the *Minion War™* “Crossover” series.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda, Clements, Gleba and others.
- 96 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 893. February or March, 2017.



COMING! Rifts® The Disavowed™

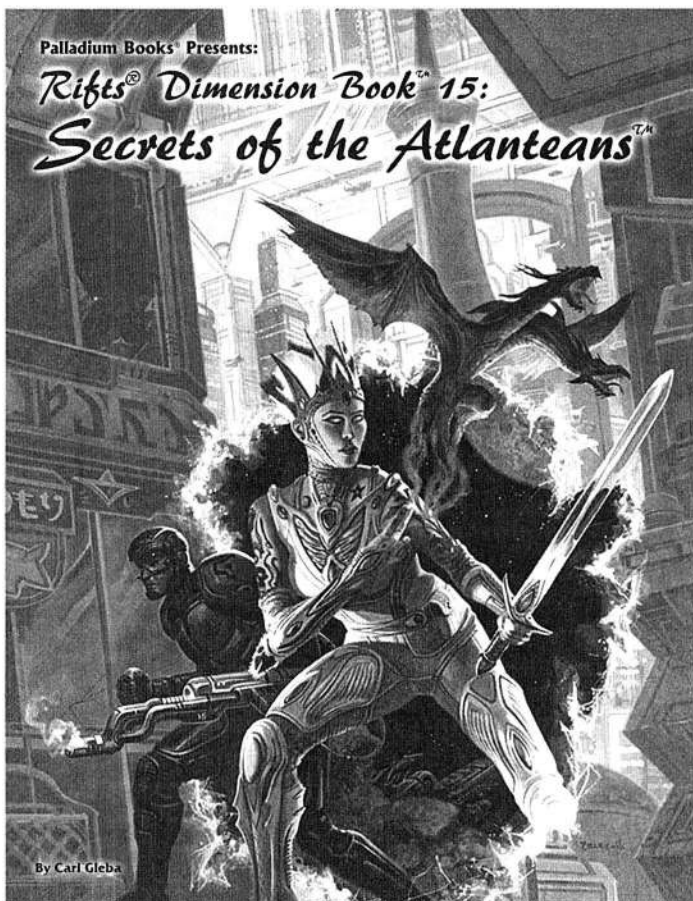
Secrets of the Coalition States™ – Coming Spring

“Desperate times require desperate measures. War has nothing to do with morality or justice. It’s all about winning or dying. We cannot bind our hands with high ideals, even our own, or worry about the laws of renegade nations or the rights of alien people. We must fight fire with fire. And you are the match.” – *Colonel Lyboc addressing a Disavowed team.*

The Disavowed are so Top Secret that their existence is known only to a handful of the Coalition States’ most elite, top echelon, with *Joseph Prosek II* the mastermind behind the Disavowed operation, and *Colonel Lyboc* its shadowy face. Find out who these men and women are. How the Disavowed get away with using magic, traveling to other parts of Rifts Earth and even to other dimensions in pursuit of enemies and strategic information that cannot be had through conventional means. Learn about the secret parameters in which these hard-boiled warriors, secretly hand-picked by *Joseph Prosek II*, operate, why almost every mission is considered a suicide mission, and why they must forever be the Disavowed.

- CS operatives so secret that even the top military and political leaders right up to *Emperor Prosek* *know nothing about them*. And if they did know, would they condone their activity or condemn it?
- Are the Disavowed heroes or renegades? Assassins or soldiers? Madmen or super-patriots? Or a little of them all?
- Unsung heroes who keep the CS safe, or thugs and pawns of a shadow agency within the Coalition government?
- What role does the Vanguard play in this group?

- How do they reward their D-Bee “teammates” when the mission is over?
- What happens to the Disavowed when they have seen or learned too much? Adventure ideas galore and so much more.
- Written by Kevin Siembieda and Matthew Clements.
- 96 pages – \$16.95 retail – Cat. No. 892. Coming March or April.



COMING THIS SPRING!

Rifts® Secrets of the Atlanteans™

True Atlanteans are descendants of Earth's past. The survivors of the sinking of Atlantis (really a dimensional mishap) and travelers of the Megaverse, wielders of Tattoo Magic and other lost mystic arts. Most people regard them as heroes, but are they? The Sunaj Assassins are mythic villains feared by all, yet they too are True Atlanteans who serve dark forces.

For the first time, much of the story behind True Atlanteans and their secrets are revealed.

- True Atlanteans revisited.
- Optional Atlantean character creation tables, including clan heritage and other factors.
- Secrets of the stone pyramids, different types/purposes and powers.
- Many new magic tattoos, magic spells, weapons and armor.
- Atlantean hideouts and secret communities across the Megaverse.
- The Sunaj Assassins, their secrets, history and plans for the future.

- Atlantean Monster Hunter O.C.C., Atlantean Defender O.C.C. and much more.
- Cover by John Zeleznik. Interior art by Walton and others.
- Written by Carl Gleba. Additional material by Kevin Siembieda.
- Final page count and price yet to be determined, but probably 192 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 890. March or April, 2017.



New! Rifts® Sovietski™

The Rifts® Sovietski™ World Book presents background information on the fledgling Sovietski nation, notable cities and people, politics, and its growing army, plus Deadzones, Spetsnaz Special Forces, new bionics, Russian D-Bees, and more.

- New Cyborgs and other O.C.C.s.
- The Sovietski nation and its army.
- Weapons, new bionics, combat vehicles, and gear.
- Bunker creation tables and Deadzone tables.
- Russian D-Bees, adventure ideas and more.
- By Brandon Aten and Matthew Orr.
- 192 pages – \$24.95 retail – Cat. No. 891. Coming Spring/Summer 2017.

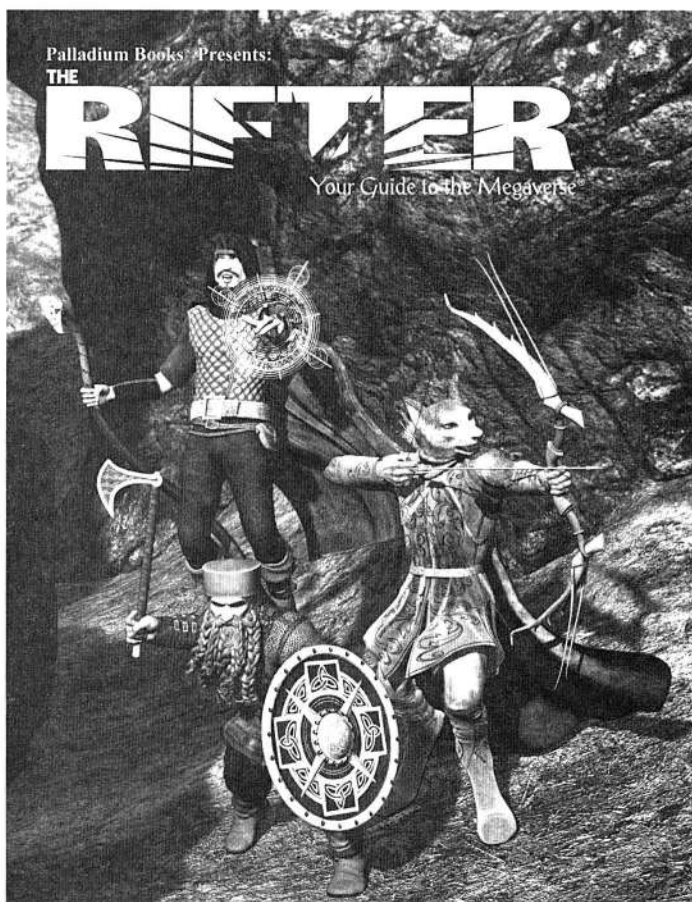
COMING! Garden of the Gods™

A Palladium Fantasy RPG® Sourcebook

This has been a secret project of Kevin Siembieda's that he has been plotting and writing in what little spare time he has. *The Garden of the Gods* is said to be a holy place watched over and even frequented by the avatars of the gods. According to legend,

the god may visit heroes and followers in dreams or in person through an avatar of the god, to be given guidance, inspiration, heroic quests, and gifts of knowledge and magic. More details about this title will follow, but he is actively writing this title, splitting his time between it and the Rifts® titles above.

- **The Garden of the Gods** described in detail.
- **Godly insight and visitations.**
- **Gifts of magic and knowledge.**
- **Sanctuary and more.**
- **The Black Pit, a place of evil and dark secrets. Is it a counterbalance to the good of the Garden, or a trick of the Old Ones?**
- **Written by Kevin Siembieda.**
- **Final page count, price and catalog number yet to be determined, but probably 96 pages – \$16.95 retail. A Fall release.**



COMING! The Rifter® #77

– Ships February or March, 2017

The Rifter® #77 is already in production. The cover is done, articles are being selected and artwork is being assigned.

Every issue of The Rifter® is an *idea factory* for players and Game Masters to generate new ideas and find new avenues of adventure. It provides useful, ready to go source material you can just drop into your ongoing games. A doorway to new possibilities and numerous Palladium role-playing worlds. And the many new characters, O.C.C.s, powers, magic, weapons, villains, monsters, adventures and ideas for one setting can be easily adapted to *any* Palladium setting. Every issue has material for Rifts® and usually 2-3 other Palladium game lines. The focus of this issue is Rifts®,

Splicers® and RPG advice. Don't forget, unofficial material can be easily adapted for use in ANY Palladium game setting.

Rifter® #77 Highlights:

- **Rifts® source material.**
- **Heroes Unlimited™ “official” source material – by Kevin Siembieda.**
- **Palladium Fantasy RPG® – city adventure setting and source material by Ian Herbert.**
- **Splicers® – I am Legion, Part Six, by Charles Walton II, Chris Kluge and Lance Colley – “official” source material.** The adventure continues and more secrets and dangers are revealed as the story approaches its climax.
- **Other – source material for other RPG settings.**
- **News, coming attractions, product descriptions and more.**
- **Rifts® cover by Michael “Madman” Leonard.**
- **96 pages – \$13.95 retail – Cat. No. 177. In production. Ships February or March, 2017.**

Robotech® RPG Tactics™

Wave Two is coming Fall 2017 ... but you can get started with the *core box set & Wave One expansions* – available now

If you love Robotech®, you want to take a look at this game. Beautifully detailed game pieces of your favorite Robotech® mecha, and fast playing rules that capture the Robotech® experience in a new, exciting way. And this is just the beginning. We have so much more planned in the years ahead.

Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Box Set (Main Box Game) – Cat. No. 55100 – \$99.95 retail price. This is the game Robotech® fans have wanted for decades. **Robotech® RPG Tactics™** is a fast-paced, tabletop combat game that captures the action and adventure of the **Robotech®** anime. Two or more players can engage in small squad skirmishes or scale up to massive battles. Relive the clashes of the First Robotech War, engage in stand-alone tactical games, or use the dynamic game pieces to enhance your Robotech® RPG experience. Or simply collect your favorite mecha from an expanding range of top-notch game pieces. Get yours now, so you can build your armies and have them ready when Wave Two is released.

The First Six Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Expansion Packs are available to retail along with the main box game. Here are the SKUs and retail prices.

- **UEDF Valkyrie Wing – Cat. No. 55201 – \$36.95 retail.**
- **UEDF Tomahawk/Defender Destroids – Cat. No. 55202 – \$32.95 retail.**
- **UEDF Spartan/Phalanx Destroids – Cat. No. 55203 – \$32.95 retail.**
- **Zentraedi Regult Battlepods – Cat. No. 55401 – \$36.95 retail.**
- **Zentraedi Artillery Battlepods – Cat. No. 55402 – \$36.95 retail.**
- **Zentraedi Glaug Command – Cat. No. 55403 – \$36.95 retail.**
- **Robotech® RPG Tactics™ Rulebook – Cat. No. 55105 – \$20.00 retail. Note:** This is the same rulebook that is included in the main game box, and is offered separately for those who want an extra copy, or want to check out the rules before buying the whole game.

The Rifter[®]

2017 Super-Subscription Offer

- Free gift(s)
- \$16 savings off cover price
- Free shipping of each issue in the USA
- Each fun issue delivered to your doorstep
- Each is a sourcebook for the Palladium Megaverse[®]
- Must put “Sub Offer #232017” in the *memo area* of your check.

Looking for fresh, bold ideas, adventures or source material for your games? Then **The Rifter**[®] is for you. Every issue of **The Rifter**[®] presents unofficial and/or official source material such as new monsters, magic, powers, weapons, hardware, villains, O.C.C.s, adventure, fiction and new ideas for at least three (often more) adventure settings, from **Rifts**[®] and **Splicers**[®] to **Heroes Unlimited**[™], **Palladium Fantasy RPG**[®] and/or any variety of other Palladium world settings. It also presents the latest news, product release info, and peeks at new game releases. Many out of print issues are coveted *collector's items*. For a while, people were reportedly paying as much as \$70 for *issues #4 and 21*.

Super-Subscription Offer

The cover price of **The Rifter**[®] is **\$13.95** – a steal for 96 pages of RPG source material and adventures. But a subscription gets you **The Rifter**[®] delivered to *your doorstep* for only **\$9.95 an issue**. And you can select a **free gift worth \$20.95 to \$43.85** available *only* during this special offer, for the cost of shipping and handling. All prices are in U.S. dollars. **Offer ends March 20, 2017** only for readers of **The Rifter**[®].

- **\$39.80 – USA.** That's only **\$9.95 each**, a savings of **\$16.00**, and **Palladium pays the shipping!** Plus you get to select a FREE subscriber's gift worth \$20.95-\$43.85 (please include \$7.00 to cover shipping and handling). That's **\$46.80 total** including shipping and handling for the free gift. **Note:** This rate is *limited* to subscribers in the *USA only*. Sorry.
- **\$61.80 – Canada.** That's **\$15.45** for each issue of **The Rifter**[®], plus you get to select a FREE subscriber's gift (please include \$12.00 to cover shipping and handling). That's **\$73.80** including the gift item. That's still not a bad price for *four 96 page sourcebooks*. Our apologies for the higher cost, but Palladium Books cannot cover the cost of postage to other countries. We hope you understand.
- **\$75.80 – Overseas.** That's **\$18.95** for each 96 page issue, plus you get to select a FREE subscriber's gift (please include \$20.00 to cover shipping and handling). That's **\$95.80** including the gift item. We are only passing along the additional postage cost, but it is hefty. Our apologies. Postal rates are out of our hands. Likewise, the purchaser is responsible for any duty or customs fees.

Note: Please indicate if the gift items are NOT wanted. You may decline the gift and get your subscription for the regular price of \$39.80 (USA), \$61.80 (Canada) or \$75.80 (other countries). **Offer #232017 ends March 20, 2017** for Rifter readers only.

A FREE gift worth \$20.95 to \$43.85

You pay only the *cost of shipping and handling* (\$7.00 in the USA, \$12.00 Canada, and \$20.00 overseas) for the FREE gift. Your choices are as follows:

- **Gift choice #1 – Rifter[®] “Collector’s Pack” (3 books; 336 pages):** FREE, out of print issues of **The Rifter**[®] #5 (Rune Weapons, Spatial Magic, Werebeasts, Rifts[®] O.C.C., HU2 Heroes thru the Ages, Rahu-Man[™], and more) and **The Rifter**[®] #6 (HU2 robots, Russian gods, assassins, and more) – plus **The Rifter**[®] #14 (Ninjas & Super-spies, Fadetown[™], Fantasy adventure, and more) – a **\$43.85 value** (we sell #5 and #6 only at conventions for \$15.95 each).
- **Gift choice #2 – Comic Book Fun Pack (2 books):** FREE **A+Plus #5** (Detroit's first comic, 1978, published by *Kevin Siembieda* and *Alex Marciniszyn*, \$15 value), and **Rifts[®] Machinations of Doom** (graphic novel & sourcebook – art by *Ramon K. Perez*) – a **\$33.95 value**.
- **Gift choice #3 – “Down Under” Action Pack (2 books):** FREE **Rifts[®] World Book 19: Australia** and **Mutants Down Under** (an After the Bomb[®] sourcebook by *Erick Wujcik*, easily adapted to **Rifts[®]** or **Heroes Unlimited**[™]) – **\$31.85 value**.
- **Gift choice #4 – Dead of Winter Pack (2 books):** FREE **Dead Reign[®] sourcebooks** for a taste of the Zombie Apocalypse and adventure ideas; **Fear the Reaper**[™] and **Graveyard Earth**[™] – a **\$25.90 value**.
- **Gift choice #5 – Minion War[™] on Rifts Earth (1 book):** FREE **Rifts[®] World Book 35: Megaverse[®] in Flames**[™]. This book, *Heroes of Humanity*, *HoH CS Arsenal* and *Disavowed* are laying the groundwork for something big. Do not miss out – **\$24.95 value**.
- **Gift choice #6 – The Coalition’s response to the Minion War[™] on Rifts Earth (1 book):** FREE **Rifts[®] Sourcebook: Heroes of Humanity**[™]. This book, *Megaverse[®] in Flames*, *HoH CS Arsenal* and *Disavowed* are laying the groundwork for something big – **\$20.95 value**.
- **Gift choice #7 – Land of the Damned One: Chaos Lands (1 book):** FREE **Chaos Lands** for Palladium Fantasy RPG[®] (The Great Rift, monsters, demons, monster generator tables, 200+ adventure hooks and more!) – **\$24.95 value**.

IMPORTANT GIFT NOTE: Please include shipping and handling to receive your FREE gift: \$7.00 in USA, \$12.00 in Canada, \$20.00 overseas. Thank you. **Note:** *Decline* the free gift and pay only the subscription price if you wish.

How to order

To order online, visit www.palladiumbooks.com.

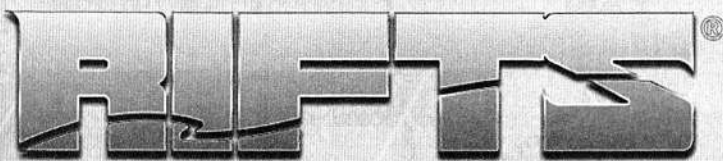
To order by mail: Send a check or money order made out to **Palladium Books** (for \$46.80 – including handling & shipping of free gift in the USA) along with your order to:

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Indicate the issue number you'd like your new subscription to start at: #75 (the past issue), #76 (the current issue in your hands), #77 (next issue, Winter 2017), or the issue when your current subscription ends (please provide the number if you can).

Telephone orders: 734-721-2903 (this is an order line *only*) and have your credit card information ready.

Offer #232017 ENDS March 20, 2017. NOT available online in March. Only mail orders are valid in March.



The following Design Diary by Sean Fannon reflects some details from the upcoming *Savage Rifts*®. It isn't final and some details may change before the book is finally sent to print.

MAKING RIFTS® SAVAGE—MEGA DAMAGE, VAMPIRES, AND JUICER BURN

Fans of both *Rifts*® and *Savage Worlds* have had lots of great questions about how different rules, characters, and monsters are interpreted between the two systems. While there's no way to explain every decision, we thought a few good examples would go a long way toward telling you what we were thinking, how the rules played, and what eventually became game you're about to receive.

This should help you understand how this is both very much *Rifts*® while remaining a very *Savage Worlds* game.

MEGA MATTERS

The Glitter Boy strode onto the field, even as two dozen Skelebots and a squad of Dead Boys fired hundreds of lasers at him. They all bounced harmlessly, and even a couple of grenades did little more than make a couple of scratches on the chrome. Some of the Skelebots dropped their guns and activated their embedded vibro-blades, those being the only weapons they had that could hurt him. His teammates, however, started taking them out with rail guns, lasers, and magic.

The pilot laughed as he drove the pylons into the ground and brought his Boom Gun to bear. One thunderous shot later, scrap metal and shattered bodies flew everywhere as the remaining forces scrambled for cover. It was only when the UAR-1 Enforcer arrived that the Glitter Boy pilot became concerned.

"Now things get interesting," he thought, as the race to see who shot first was on...

This is an actual play experience, repeated often, during the initial play test sessions and demos we've run over the last year all over the country. Folks wanted to know how

Mega-Damage and M.D.C. armor would feel under the *Savage Worlds* version of *Rifts*®, and universally, they've been everything from generally pleased to practically giddy.

It did, however, take us a longer journey than you might expect to get there.

Probably the single most asked question is some variation of "How are you handling the concept of Mega-Damage and M.D.C. (Mega-Damage Capacity) armor from *Rifts*®?" This question entered the wrangling phase for us on the very day that I got Kevin Siembieda's blessing to pursue making this project a reality. Immediately after getting Kevin's approval, I called Pinnacle Core Rules Brand Manager, Clint Black, and we gushed and fan-boyed and just relished in the giddy feeling.

Right there and then, we discussed how Heavy Armor and Heavy Weapons, as per *Savage Worlds* rules, was the way to go. For those new to *Savage Worlds*, having Heavy Armor means a normal pistol or knife has no chance of doing any damage to whatever is protected, no matter how many "Aces" you roll for damage. It takes Heavy Damage to hurt such a thing. In other words, a .45 pistol can't hurt a Tiger Tank, but a rocket launcher can. Boom, we had a nice, clean, easy solution.

And yet...

Years later, as the project finally got seriously underway, we decided to question all assumptions. We dropped the idea that the "Heavy Solution" was the only way to go, and we experimented and discussed many different alternate concepts. It was only after we'd beat up all the other ideas that we finally concluded that "if it walks like a tank and talks like a tank, it's a duck...er, tank."

In this way, we also made a fundamental change that differentiates *Savage Rifts*® from the original *Rifts*®. Not every suit of armor is M.D.C., and not every weapon does Mega-Damage. This was another area of much discussion, wrangling, thinking, and more discussion, but I think I can boil down the moment that solidified it. *Savage Worlds* creator Shane Hensley and I were chatting online and Shane asked what would happen if a Glitter Boy pilot were sitting next to a campfire, wearing normal body armor, and a guy with leather armor and a spear jumped out at him. I explained that, under *Rifts*® rules, the spear-wielder would have no chance of hurting the pilot, who would then blow him into a fine red mist with a laser pistol.

We both agreed that, while that was absolutely *Rifts*® in nature, it wasn't *Savage Worlds*. In this way, we've definitely opted for a shift in game play that makes our game similar, yet different from the core *Rifts*® experience. We brought this to Kevin, who was very supportive of the decision. He liked the idea of a different game system granting a different experience, while at the same time remaining true to the heart of *Rifts*®. This has been the design experience every step of the way, sharing ideas of both fidelity and change with the Palladium team, and coming up with a fantastic new window into that gonzo, incredible world.

So while not everyone will necessarily have a Mega-Damage weapon, neither will everything they face have M.D.C. armor. At the same time, there are solid options for a team to handle both normal and M.D.C. threats; for example, we did decide to make virtually all advanced melee weapons do Mega-Damage, mostly because *Savage Worlds* is a very hand-to-hand friendly game, and we thought bringing the chain sword out to deal with the SAMAS armor was a great thing to support. As well, there's grenades, plasma weapons, and the capacity for spellcasters and psionics to amp up their damage spells to do Mega-Damage as needed. Of course, rail guns in the hands of cyborgs and vehicle weapons on robot armor take care of those threats pretty handily.

A RIFTS® VAMPIRE IS NOT A SAVAGE WORLDS "VAMPIRE"

Some concern exists that we might rely heavily on previously published versions of things to represent monsters, demons, and other antagonists in *Savage Rifts*®. We recognize that the internal truths and consistency of a setting demand attention to the details that make entities in that setting specific to the world they reside within.

Let's look at a vampire as an example, specifically the wild vampire. As with every other monster and antagonist we put into the *Savage Foes of North America* book, we first reread and researched all the details of the *Rifts*® vampires. Translating something in a way that is exciting for new players, yet very recognizable to established fans, drove every design decision. With *Rifts*® vampires, there are some important distinctions that make them the kinds of threats they are to those who face them. This includes making them invulnerable to most weapons and attacks; granting them the ability to change into a wolf or bat; and giving them effective immortality, able to regenerate from nearly all damage in the way that a particularly famous image from Palladium's original *Vampire Kingdoms* depicted.

In truth, much of the abilities and powers of a *Rifts*® vampire are similar to that of a master vampire in core *Savage Worlds* rules. It's the various vulnerabilities of a *Rifts*® vampire that required specific attention. For example, vampires in this setting take damage and can be destroyed by water (not something a standard *Savage Worlds* vampire has to worry about), and that's in there. So are the vulnerabilities to silver, magic, sunlight, etc...

The stat block for a *Rifts*® wild vampire (we'll get into the other ones when we journey further west in later products) is a rather long and involved one. This was necessary in order to preserve what makes a *Rifts*® vampire special to the setting, as well as establishing the kinds of conflicts that traditionally exist between *Rifts*® heroes and vampires. Honestly, I can't imagine a

battle with vampires that doesn't involve water guns and a light with a cross-shaped shadow emanating from it. Well, those and the automatic wooden stake-throwers...

JUICERS BURNING BRIGHT

As I said, fidelity to what makes *Rifts*® the setting it is was and will always be a key concern of ours. At the same time, we do have the advantage of looking back over a quarter century of history with this setting and considering new ideas that might make a certain concept pop in a new, vital way. This is how we came to change the nature of Juicers, and it may be one of the coolest things we've done with this vision of *Rifts*®.

The story begins with Ross Watson—my Evil Beagle partner, co-writer on a number of *Savage Rifts*® products, and the author of *The Garnet Town Gambit*—deciding we should really find a way to do something with the "death arc" of the Juicer, and challenging me to hammer at that idea. We went round-and-round on it, never quite getting what we wanted, but agreeing that we wanted something that reflected the short life/exchange for power as a profound part of the Juicer story.

Cut to a trip to Arizona, where we gathered in Shane's garage with Michael Conn, Jimmy Macias, and John Wick for a play test and design jam session for a couple of days. We brought up the thoughts we had about Juicers over dinner at one of the many awesome restaurants Shane knows, and John essentially demanded that we must make a game mechanic aspect that reflects the Juicer arc—and he suggested some of the core ideas that would eventually become what's in the game. The epic story of the Juicer's short life span just didn't feel right without specific and dire *game mechanics* to back it up.

Pens on bar napkins scribbled furiously as the conversation delved further into the matter, and ultimately we ended up with a game mechanic that John swore he'd steal and make an entire game upon if we didn't use it. We were, however, entirely

determined to use it. The trick would be to see if Kevin would also be comfortable with a new approach to the Juicer's short life span as something that could actually be played with.

Imagine my delight when I discovered that he really, really loved the idea!

Essentially, it works like this. Every Juicer has a Burn Rating; starting Juicers have 8, and there's a Background Edge (which means it's meant to be taken at character creation, which is vital in this case) called Freshly Juiced that can bring that total to 10. Every Juicer also has a Burn Die, which serves two purposes.

First, at the beginning of every session, the player of the Juicer must roll the Burn Die (no Wild Die for this), and compare it to her current Burn Rating. If the result is equal to or greater than that number, the player must make a choice—mark off a point of Burn, permanently (there's no known way to replenish Burn) or die by the end of the session. Naturally, early on, most players will spend the Burn. However, it should be readily apparent that, no matter what, that Burn Rating will decrease over time, simply by mathematical attrition.

However, there's that second use of Burn to consider as well. We wanted Juicer players to have a meaningful choice when it came to their life span being so short, and we wanted them to have a way to spend that precious asset for even more superheroic actions than they normally could perform. As such, a Juicer player may spend a point of Burn at any time to add his Burn Die to a Trait roll or a damage roll! There are also special Edges that Juicers can take that further add to the preternatural things they can accomplish by spending Burn.

While a Juicer player can play it safe and keep their character alive for as long as any other *Savage Rifts*® hero, it should be pretty clear that most will play for the short, glorious career, whereby they can pick their moment and truly go out in a Blaze of Glory.

Which, by the way, there's a Setting Rule for, but we can get into that another time.

Sean Patrick Fannon
April, 2016

Gear: CA-1 Heavy Body Armor (+6 Armor, +2 Toughness, Full Environmental), C-14 "Fire Breather" Laser Rifle (Range 30/60/120, Damage 3d6, RoF 1, AP 2), C-18 Laser Pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2), vibro-knife (Str+d6, AP 4, Mega Damage), 4 × high explosive grenades (Range 5/10/20, Damage 3d8, MBT, Mega Damage), 4 extra clips each firearm.

COALITION SAMAS PILOT

SAMAS stands for Strategic Armor Military Assault Suit, and it's one of the core weapon-and-armor systems in the Coalition military arsenal. It's a one-man high-speed assault vehicle configured as a formidable suit of battle armor. Pilots are one-part fighter jock, one-part heavy assault soldier, and they're among the most iconic and dangerous elements of the Coalition military.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d4, Fighting d8, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Computers) d4, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Repair d4, Shooting d10, Survival d4

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 10; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 17 (10)

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (Minor — Serve the Coalition)

Edges: Ace, Combat Ace, Power Armor Jock, Rock and Roll!

Gear: SAMAS (sidebar), C-18 Laser Pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2), vibro-knife (Str+d6, AP 4, Mega Damage).

COALITION SKY CYCLE PILOT

One of the key components of the Coalition military's air force, the one-man AFC-023 Sky Cycle is an adrenaline junkie's dream and a safety officer's nightmare. As dangerous as it is, the CS has no shortage of volunteers for the duty. Sky Cycle Pilots are brash, daring, and willing to do whatever the mission calls for. There are few vehicles in the air capable of challenging them, but other flying dangers (such as dragons) often spell instant doom for an unlucky squadron.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6

Skills: Driving d6, Fighting d6, Intimidation d6, Knowledge (Computers)

PA-06A COALITION SAMAS

The SAMAS is classified as Power Armor, but with the flight systems (max altitude 500 feet), any serious high-speed or tricky maneuvers still require a Piloting check. With the recent spate of upgrades, a few of these have found their way into the Black Market. Even for the prices they go for, they get snatched up fast. (1.6 million credits)

PA-06A Coalition SAMAS: Size 2, + 10 M.D.C. Armor, +2 Toughness, Strength d12+4, Pace 10 (Run d8).

Notes: Flight System (Pace 25, Climb 2)

Weapons:

- Light Rail Gun (handheld)
- Rocket Launcher

AFC-023 COALITION SKY CYCLE

A longtime mainstay of the Coalition military, a small number of 023s recently came onto the Black Market as newer vehicles slowly replaced them. Fantastic speed and maneuverability make them highly desirable and hard to find, even for the cost. (2 million credits)

AFC-023 Coalition Sky Cycle: Size 2, Acc/TS 30/190, Toughness 16 (6), Crew 1

Notes: Exposed Crew, Handling 2, Sensor Suite, VTOL, M.D.C. Armor

Weapons:

- 2 × Dual Linked Mini-Missile Launchers
- Heavy Laser

d4, Knowledge (Navigation) d6, Notice d6, Piloting d8, Repair d4, Shooting d8, Survival d4

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 11 (6)

Hindrances: Loyal, Vow (Minor — Serve the Coalition)

Edges: Ace, Combat Ace

Gear: Sky Cycle (see sidebar), CA-2 Light Body Armor (+6 Armor, Full Environmental), C-18 Laser Pistol (Range 15/30/60, Damage 2d6, RoF 1, AP 2), vibro-knife (Str+d6, AP 4, Mega Damage).

UAR-ENFORCER PILOT

At nearly 20 feet tall and designed to look like a giant suit of Dead Boy armor striding across the battlefield, the Enforcer robot armor is bound to make anyone think twice about doing battle with the Coalition. Pilots for this vehicle tend to be overconfident, and often arrogant to the point of dismissing anyone not in another robot

COALITION UAR-1 ENFORCER

This venerable robot armor remains in extensive use throughout the Coalition, though more and more are finding their way (repainted and modified, of course) into black market circulation. An artifact of its original design is that much of its sensory enhancement is located external to the main body; the sensor turret can be targeted directly (-4 to hit, 15 damage destroys it), and knocking it out removes the +2 Notice and the radar. (28 million credits)

Coalition UAR-1 Enforcer: Size 6, Crew 1+1, Strength d12+4, Toughness 33 (15), Pace 10

Notes: M.D.C. Armor

Weapons:

- Heavy Grenade Launcher (use WI-GL20 stats)
- Heavy Rail Gun
- Light Missile Launchers (two)
- Medium Lasers (two turrets)
- Medium Missile Launcher
- Mini-Missile Launcher (turret)



COMBAT MAGE

Steeped in magic as it is, the Magic Zone encourages those of arcane inclination to focus their studies and efforts on learning how to manipulate such power to the fullest. But the world is a dangerous place, so many such practitioners concentrate on the combat applications of magic to defend themselves, their families, and their communities.

As well, Lord Dunscon and the authorities of the Federation of Magic greatly encourage the training and fielding of Combat Mages, both to defend the territories and to prepare for war against the Federation's foes. In many other small kingdoms and communities, combat magic training is undertaken with great zeal and effort.



Combat Mages eschew such areas as alchemy, rituals, and enchantments, instead focusing on rapid invocations and maximizing their spells' attack and defense potential. They are Masters of Magic, granting them Mega Power versions of all powers they know.

Combat Mages train to fight in small units, accompanied by soldiers of more mundane capabilities. Many who serve the Federation are seen in the field with squads of lesser demons (like Brodkil), Mystic Knights, or worse.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d8, Spirit d8, Strength d8, Vigor d8

Skills: Climbing d4, Fighting d8, Healing d4, Intimidation d8, Knowledge (Arcana) d8, Notice d8, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d6, Survival d4

Cha: 0; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6; **Toughness:** 15 (7)

Hindrances: Loyal, Overconfident, Vow (Serve lord or community, Minor)

Edges: Arcane Background (Magic), Extraction, First Strike, Marksman, Master of Magic, Soul Drain, Wizard

Powers: *Arcane Background (Magic), Armor, barrier, bolt, burst, deflection, dispel, fly, quickness, pummel, smite, warrior's gift.* **PPE:** 20

Gear: TW Combat Mage Armor (+7 Armor, +1 Strength die type, *darksight, farsight*, Rapid Recharge, Full Environmental Protection), TK Machine Gun (Range 30/60/120, Damage 2d8+4, RoF 4, AP 2), flaming sword (Str+d10, AP 4, Mega Damage).

Special Abilities:

- **Arcane Marksman:** Similar to the Marksman Edge, grants the Aim bonus of +2 to any ranged spells if the caster doesn't move on the round. As with Marksman, this doesn't apply to any attack with a Rate of Fire greater than 1 (so it won't work when throwing multiple *bolt* spells, for example).

CORRUPT

Some forms of evil spawn from anger, vengeance, where a being was born, a series of poor life choices, or one really bad day. Other forms, such as the

Corrupt, come from something deeper and far more vile. No one knows for certain what terrible force of the cosmos the Corrupt give their lives and their souls to, but there can be little doubt it is an ancient evil seeking only malevolence and destructive chaos. It offers enormous power and a freedom from weakness and emotional pain in exchange for committing murderous atrocities across the globe.

Whatever the being truly is, the Corrupt call it the Liberator: it frees them from all emotions causing them pain, guilt, or empathy. Instead, they are driven to destroy, torture, and terrorize with abandon. The only time they feel joy is when they serve their own worst instincts. Corrupt are also physically transformed, becoming larger, bulkier, and horrifying. They gain scaly dark skin, glowing eyes, and vicious talons. They are covered in a black armor covered in spikes and straps — the latter actually a part of them, rather than the armor it appears to be!

Though the Corrupt venerate no gods or masters other than the Liberator, they are permitted to work with those who grant them opportunity to ply their trade, so to speak. This is why many Corrupt are found among the forces of the Federation of Magic; Dunscon's evil madness and willingness to unleash them on his enemies feeds their burning need for destruction and torment.

For all intents and purposes, the Corrupt are monstrous humanoids, similar to demons, except they were once humans or human-like D-Bees who gave their bodies and souls to an ancient, cosmic evil. Rumors abound of a sub-class of Corrupt, called the Elites. Outwardly, the Elite maintain their original appearance (though they tend towards darker, sinister clothing and armor), but their souls are just as black and, when angered or entering battle, they transform into similar horrors as their regular Corrupted brethren.

Attributes: Agility d8, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d10, Vigor d10

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d10, Intimidation d8, Notice d6, Shooting d8, Spellcasting d8, Stealth d6, Taunt d6, Throwing d6, Tracking d6

Pace: 8; **Parry:** 7; **Toughness:** 12 (4)

Hindrances: Bloodthirsty, Mean, Vow (Major — Serve the Liberator)

Edges: Alertness, Ambidextrous, Arcane Background (Magic), Brawny, Charge, Fleet-Footed, Quick, Two-Fisted

Powers: *Blind, boost/lower Trait, fly, invisibility, smite, stun.* **PPE:** 10

Gear: NG-E4 Plasma Ejector (Range 24/48/96, Damage 3d10, RoF 1, Mega Damage), 2 × vibro-swords (Str+d10, AP 4, Mega Damage).

Special Abilities:

- **Armor +4:** What looks like strange leather-wrapped, spiky plate mail is actually the Corrupt's body.
- **Claw:** Str+d4.
- **Euphoric Bloodlust:** In combat, Corrupt automatically enter a state granting them the benefits (and penalties) of the Berserk Edge. They must make a Smarts check at -2 to come out of it, and only when the battle is over. Note this state does not prevent them from using firearms or casting spells!
- **Fast Regeneration:** These beings roll Vigor to recover wounds each round. They also gain +2 to recover from Shaken.
- **Fear:** Corrupt invoke a Fear check when they are encountered.
- **Fearless:** Nothing in the Megaverse® frightens a Corrupt, for they've already bonded to the most terrifying entity there is.
- **PPE Vampire:** Whenever a Corrupt kills someone, he automatically gains 2 × their Spirit die in PPE for himself.
- **Special Senses:** Corrupt can see even in pitch darkness, ignoring -6 Illumination penalties. They detect thermal signatures, and can see invisible entities with no problem.
- **Supernatural Form:** Half-damage from normal fire, heat, and cold; immune to all diseases and poisons.
- **Weakness (Holy Attacks):** As supernaturally evil beings, the Corrupt take +4 damage from holy attacks and weapons.
- **Weakness (Life Energy):** Food and drink mean nothing to a Corrupt; he must slay and consume the life energy of a sentient being to feed.

Elemental Primorda

“Official” source material for *Rifts*®, *Phase World*® and *Palladium Fantasy RPG*®, but suitable for most Palladium settings where magic exists.

Concepts by Greg Diaczek.

Additional Concepts by Kevin Siembieda and Charles Walton II

Written by Greg Diaczek and Kevin Siembieda

Believed to be a fusion of humans and the essence of true Elemental beings (perhaps a Greater Elemental or an Elemental Intelligence), these odd beings, known as **Elemental Primorda**, have recently begun appearing throughout the Megaverse.

Primorda first appeared on worlds where Lesser and Greater Elementals are known to be summoned by practitioners of magic, such as Warlocks. In fact, the very first Elemental Primorda appeared on the *Palladium World* and then a few key worlds within the *United Worlds of Warlock* in the *Three Galaxies*, and most recently they began showing up on *Rifts Earth*.

Some have speculated that the Primorda’s origins lay with a lost band or tribe of humans – perhaps True Atlanteans – that accidentally Rifted to the Elementals’ home dimension. To enable the humans to survive in the harsh dimension of the Elementals, the humans were somehow bound to a particular Elemental Force that transformed their bodies and made them something new and different. A sort of Elemental-human hybrid – part human, or mortal of some kind (can be any S.D.C./Hit Point based human or D-Bee), and part Elemental. It is common knowledge among worshipers of Elementals that the Elemental realms are deadly to mortals not protected by powerful magicks. So if mortals were accidentally Rifted to the Elemental planes unprotected, it may only have been through the intervention of god-like Elemental beings that their frail human bodies could survive.

Others believe the appearance of the so-called Elemental Primorda has more to do with Elemental Intelligences trying to make sense of the *Minion War* and the various players in the conflict. Elementals are so alien and far removed from humans, and demonkind for that matter, that the only way for them to understand these beings and the circumstance of the *Minion War* is to become one of them. This has resulted in one or more Elemental Intelligences merging a piece of its splintered life essence with a mortal, linking the human to the Elemental Intelligence in order to try to translate the sensory data received from these Elemental-human hybrids. Some mages and scholars have gone so far as to speculate that the reason for creating Elemental Primorda is to put a stop to the *Minion War*, but that is unclear.

This theory is not as far fetched as it may seem at first glance. Historically, Elemental beings do not care about nor get involved with the affairs of mortals. The truth is, they do not relate to humans, human emotions or the needs of mortals. The same holds true of demons and most life forms. Thus, the affairs of mortals and supernatural beings hold no significance to Elementals. It would be like asking the average person if he cared about the goings-on in the ant hill under his porch. The answer is no, unless the ants’ activity is affecting the foundation of his house.

This may be the case with Elementals. They had no interest in mortals or demonkind until the actions of those creatures began to have a direct and noticeable impact on Elementals. The forces of **Hades** and **Dyval** are using dark magic to capture and enslave the life essences of Elementals in unprecedented numbers. They do so to power their foul weapons, demonic war machines and spacecraft; and in the process are burning out and destroying the enslaved Elementals trapped inside these magical devices and war machines. While this theory seems to make the most sense, especially with Elemental Primorda appearing for the first time in recorded history, nobody really knows if that’s the reason or not.

Whatever the reason, the merging of a powerful Elemental life essence with a human or other mortal humanoid has created a new species of Elemental being. One with a physical body grounded to the realm of mortals, yet also linked to the Elemental Realm in a profound and magical way. These new beings call themselves **Elemental Primorda** – mortal and Elemental combined into one. Some believe this works like a *supernatural possession* in which the Elemental essence inhabits and uses the human body as its vessel in the mortal realm in much the same way that we drive a car. However, this does not seem to be the case, as mortal and Elemental cannot be separated via an exorcism or by any known means.

Whatever this process is, it appears to be a permanent transformation that creates a true synthesis of two greatly divergent creatures and makes them into something new. The two are one: a humanoid creature that is neither human nor Elemental. A hybrid sentient being that cannot be separated once the two are merged. At least not by any process that is known to any practitioners of magic; not Warlocks, Alchemists, Lemurian Biomancers or even the Splugorth Bio-Wizards. Moreover, the merger and transformation into this unique, new life form appears to be completely harmonious. There is no resentment or fight between the Elemental essence and the mortal that have merged to become a Primorda. They just are. And accept it. This suggests the creation of Elemental Primorda may require a *willing human/mortal* who accepts or even invites the transformation. This also suggests the volunteer knows it is a permanent transition into something completely new and irreversible.

This new sentient life form is neither mortal nor immortal Elemental. Which has led some to question where its loyalties may lie. Do the Elemental Primorda serve the deities of the Elemental Realms and possibly seek to harm mortals, or does their loyalty lie with humanity? The truth lies somewhere in between, as Elemental Primorda seem to possess a free will and a desire to serve both pieces of their heritage. The two prior lives – one human, one Elemental – before the transformation are largely forgotten, with only impressions and faint memories that come mostly in dreams. Which means Primorda cannot adequately explain their own existence, either. They do not remember the creation process, why they may have volunteered, nor anything about life before their creation. Their memories (other than some dreams) begin as a fully formed, adult Elemental Primorda. Their driving purpose, to explore worlds and come to an understanding about sentient beings, particularly humans, mortal humanoids like them, and demons.

Despite concerns about an allegiance to Elementals over humans, and even fears that they are the scouts for an army of Elemental soldiers being placed across the Megaverse, the allegiance of Elemental Primorda seems to be to the preservation of life. All life. Making them the allies of mortals, and the enemies of the demonic and anyone who engages in senseless destruction of life.

All Primorda are curious about the world they first find themselves on (“as if waking from a dream,” is a common statement by Primorda), and the life forms that inhabit it. They are also interested in the Megaverse, in general, and like the idea of visiting many worlds. They instinctively dislike, but not fear, evil supernatural beings, and are particularly interested in the *Minion War* as well as humans, True Atlanteans, Lemurians, and similar sentient beings. Elemental Primorda themselves seem to be

of a predominantly good alignment, sometimes Anarchist, but no known evil ones, and are driven by curiosity. They are endlessly fascinated by everything human: The human condition, physiology, mind, emotions, desires, hopes, dreams, creativity, imagination, interaction, art, magic, culture and civilization, all of which they can sit and observe for endless hours. This includes human philosophy, arts and entertainment, and the application of mystical knowledge and psionic abilities. All Primorda possess a high regard for *all* life forms and nature, and feel most at home and at peace in natural environments. That said, their curiosity about humans and other sentient life forms sends them into cities, urban communities, spaceships and space stations (the latter as applicable to various game settings and campaigns). It is all fascinating and a welcomed adventure to the Primorda.

Whenever possible, Elemental Primorda try to be unobtrusive and diplomatic. They are seldom the aggressors, and usually wander around quietly observing, taking notes and photographs (in settings where that is appropriate), and asking questions; often questions tinged with a child-like innocence and sincere interest. Many are happy to join a group of adventurers and tag along wherever they want to go. However, they do not get involved in politics, religion or leading other people. Elemental Primorda are not suicidal, but they are willing to take considerable risks to see and learn more. Most are loyal, hardworking teammates who can be trusted. Most fight only when they are attacked first, or to protect someone under the threat of serious bodily harm or death. Even then, they are usually satisfied with stopping the aggressor, not killing him, or fighting long enough to escape. The beings they attack with lethal force at the slightest provocation are demons of all kinds and other evil supernatural creatures, and evil practitioners of magic.

Like the four elements of Air, Earth, Fire and Water, each **type of Elemental Primorda** has strong ties to that specific element. The element is also reflected in the Primorda's personality traits and Elemental powers.

Scattered across the Megaverse as they are, it is impossible to tell how many Elemental Primorda may exist, but their numbers appear to be small. For example, it is unusual for more than a half dozen to exist on the same planet. They do not have a civilization or culture to call their own, nor do they try to build one or join other cultures. Nor do they gather in groups. Most Primorda are encountered as lone individuals or the occasional pair. They are able to relate to the people around them to some degree, but ultimately they struggle to fully understand the actions and motivations of sentient beings, especially the emotionally mercurial humans. So they observe and study people and cultures. In the company of those willing to accommodate them, Elemental Primorda ask a great many questions. Some on par with a child asking, why this and why that, while others may ask more ethereal and deep questions about life, love, hate, betrayal, why people lie, and so on.

Primorda are the eternal outsider and observer. All Elemental Primorda are nomads without a home. They do not belong in the Elemental Realm, nor do they fit in the mortal world. They are outsiders who wander and explore the Megaverse. It is theorized that some Primorda may have seasonal strongholds or places in the mortal realm which they visit at various times for a variety of reasons, including places to grow crops for food or to reconnect with a favorite group or community of humans, D-Bees or other life forms. But none are "home" in the sense that we think of home, and it is certainly not their place of birth.

The Elemental dimensions are volatile and hostile environments, even for Elemental Primorda. They are uncomfortable in the Elemental Realms, but they can survive within them indefinitely. The same cannot be said for mortals, who, without an environmental suit or containment system (power armor or vehicle/spacecraft), perish in a matter of minutes. Not only can Elemental Primorda survive in the *Elemental Realms*, but once a year they are magically swept to the Elemental plane to "commune with the Creator" with whom they are linked. Most scholars believe this is how the Elemental Intelligence who created the Primorda gets to learn what its creations have experienced. An information dump, if you will, in which the Creator is able to retrieve, copy and share all of its Elemental Primorda's memories and corresponding emotions that go

with them. In this way, the Creator lives vicariously through its Primorda heralds, somehow extracting and experience a year's worth of adventure within 1D6 hours. Often syphoning the experiences of a dozen or more Primorda at the same time. The experiences and memories remain with the originating Primorda, but are now also known to the Elemental Intelligence that made him. It is interesting to note that the Primorda do not know if they actually meet with or touch the essence of their creator. Shortly after arriving in the appropriate Elemental Realm, they enter a swirling energy nebula. There they fall into a sleep-like trance, from which they awaken 2D4 hours later. Any physical injuries/wounds are completely healed, and the Elemental Primorda feels energized and ready to return to the realm of mortals. Whether the nebula of energy is their Creator, or some part of it, is unknown even to them. It may simply be the way the Creator is able to access the memories and emotions of its creations. The process is easy for the deific Elemental Intelligence because the Primorda are already a part of it. After all, they are created by the Intelligence merging a piece of its own life essence.

Sometimes wandering Elemental Primorda can be spotted with creatures that are clearly Elementals or Elemental in nature, but it is unclear to outsiders whether these creatures are Lesser Elementals summoned to assist or serve their mortal Primorda brethren, or they are Elementals checking on their Primorda cousins, perhaps giving them a new mission or delivering a message. It is a common belief that Elemental Primorda are more bound to Elementals than to humans, and serve their Elemental masters as scouts, explorers and spies. However, that assumption has never been proven, and is born from xenophobia and humanity's knee-jerk fear response to distrust anything that is different and alien. Humans' "them or us" mentality, and tendency to destroy that which they do not understand, makes human beings "monsters" to be feared across the Megaverse. And some believe it is why humans and other humanoid mortals are the favored henchmen and dupes of demonic forces. It is a trait that Elemental Primorda do not share. Most are very accepting and tolerant of other species; another life form to study and come to understand.

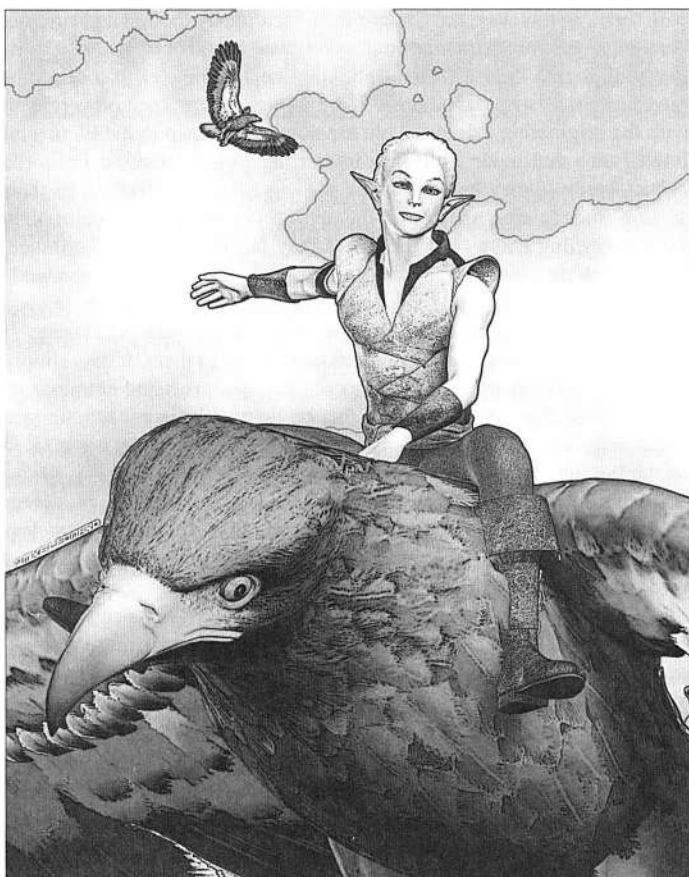
In the end, Elemental Primorda remain quite the enigma. A powerful, not quite human species of mysterious origin and unknown purpose.

Air Primorda

Of all the Elemental Primorda beings, those associated with air are among the most elegant and elusive. In fact, for the longest time they were only theorized to exist based on the fact that the other three types of Elementals had Primorda. The ability of the Air Primorda to float and fly has allowed them to move quietly and often unnoticed, hovering above the ground or walking among the clouds where they are not often encountered or noticed. Air Primorda have an affinity for avian creatures and are able to fly among birds as if they were members of the flock. When Air Primorda are seen, it is often on the back of a giant eagle or other, large winged animal. These giant predatory birds and riders have been reported to swoop out of the sky and carry off large prey, such as deer, elk, wild boar, cattle and even humanoids. The Air Primorda and his mount is often accompanied by 1D4+1 other predatory birds used as scouts, companions, messengers and attack animals. Other times they are seen simply floating among the clouds or hovering a few inches to a few feet (meters) above the ground.

Air Primorda are the most free spirited and playful of their species and are known to lead flocks of birds, play tag, and ride the largest avians like a horse. Rumors speak of them as having massive castles and towers located among the clouds and on the peaks of tall mountains, away from prying eyes. Some rumors claim these domiciles are actually made out of clouds or mist.

Air Primorda have an Elvish or Faerie-like appearance. They have slender, muscular builds, delicate features, pale skin, large, pointed ears, and blond, white or silver hair. Their eyes are big and full of curiosity. All Air Primorda possess exceptional vision and a keen sense of



perception that goes well beyond human capabilities. Eye color ranges from light blue and bluish grey, to crystalline white with warm, golden flecks dancing in their iris. When angry, the gold flecks turn into ripples of energy that resemble the crackle of electricity or lightning cascading through their iris. Their movements are quick and smooth, like those of a ballet dancer, and their gait is light and effortless, as they skip and jump and dance above the ground as if gravity was only a fraction of what it is to us. When hovering or flying above the ground, they glide as they walk – sliding along the air currents as effortlessly as an autumn leaf. Their natural ability to ride the air currents, like a hawk or eagle, makes them agile and difficult to hit when they fall under attack.

Elemental Air Primorda Stats

Alignment: Any, but almost always Principled (30%), Scrupulous (40%) or Unprincipled (20%).

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6+3, M.E. 2D6+6, M.A. 2D6+10, P.S. 2D6+13 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+15, P.E. 2D6+11, P.B. 2D6+13, Spd 1D6+11 on the ground (8 mph/13 km), +11 additional when hovering (15 mph/24 km), +30 additional when flying in the air (around 30 mph/48 km).

M.D.C.: All Elemental Primorda are M.D.C. beings in Mega-Damage environments.

Air Primorda have 2D4x10 M.D.C. + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+13 M.D.C. per each level of experience. (**On an S.D.C. World:** Air Primorda have 2D4x10 Hit Points + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+10 Hit Points per level of experience. They also have 1D6x10+15 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 14.) See Natural Abilities for Bio-Regeneration.

Horror/Awe Factor: 11

Size: 5 feet to 6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m).

Weight: 100-160 pounds (45 to 72 kg).

Gender: Male and female, at a roughly 50/50 ratio.

P.P.E. Base: 1D6x10+60 at level one, plus an additional 20 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience starting with level two.

Average Life Span: 2D6x10+300 years.

Average Level of Experience: Player Characters start at level one. NPCs (Non-Player Characters) are level 1D4+2 or as designated by the Game Master. Use the Dragon Experience Table.

Natural Abilities: Magically understands and speaks all languages (90%), including Elemental (+8%) and Demongolian as if it was their native tongue; P.S. and P.E. attributes are Supernatural; resistant to cold (half damage), impervious to lightning/electricity (no damage), and Bio-Regeneration 1D6 M.D.C. (or Hit Points) per melee round.

Hover and Fly (special): Air Primorda are nimble and light on their feet, and when hovering or flying they automatically get the Prowl skill at 44% +4% per level of experience.

Hovering: Maximum altitude when hovering and moving in a lateral direction is three feet (0.9 m). Hovering in a stationary place and rising up into the air is 10 feet (3 m) per level of experience. When hovering, the Air Primorda leaves no tracks or footprints, making it difficult to track him, but he may still leave other signs of passage that are noticeable to skilled trackers, such as broken branches, snagging clothing and leaving fibers behind, dropping trash or items behind, etc.

Flying: Maximum flying altitude is 40,000 feet (12,192 m). Speed: As per Spd attribute number, typically around 30 mph (48 km). For greater speed, the Air Primorda must find himself a riding animal. Such an animal is usually a giant creature found in the wild.

Superior Vision (special): Air Primorda also have 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). This superior vision and the ability to hover and fly also provide bonuses listed under that heading, below.

Rapport with Flying Animals (special): Avians/birds and other flying animals as small as a sparrow or as large as a blue whale. If it flies and is an animal (not sentient), there is an empathic bond between it and the Air Primorda that tells the animal this being is its brethren and can be trusted. The character can command two animals at first level, +1 additional animal for every TWO levels of experience.

All Elemental Primorda have an affinity and rapport with a particular class of animals. In each case, those animals never attack or harm that type of Primorda and the Primorda never hurts any of them unless left with no other choice. The exception are animals under the ownership or control of an owner/master.

The ability to command one or more animals applies mainly to wild animals that are encountered. Pets and domesticated work animals and familiars that already have a relationship with a human/owners masters/pack leaders/loved one, are not likely to disobey or attack their humanoid owner.

The commands given to these animals must always be simple, basic instructions like, "Go away and leave us alone." "Do not hunt the people accompanying me." "Stop." "Run. Flee." "Accompany me." "Follow behind me." "Take me to where there is food or water (or a particular person or animal, provided there is a scent to follow or the person or location is known to the animal)." "Lead us safely down the trail so that we may follow you." "Take us around the danger (monster, enemy, etc.) so that it does not see us." "Lead us to safety." "Show us the way to good hunting grounds, water, safety, etc." "If you can follow the scent lead us to that being, person, animal, monster, etc.," and similar. Animals are generally used as helpers, companions, native guides, playmates and, when large enough, as riding animals. A Primorda cannot actually speak with animals, or have a conversation with them, but has an innate empathy, understanding and kinship with a particular range of creatures. In the case of Air Elemental Primorda, it is avians and flying animals.

The animal can also be *asked* (not forced) to "attack" a mutual enemy/prey, or something it hates or fears, as well as "protect" the Primorda and his companions. If the animal complies, most animals

fight only enough to hold the threat at bay or chase it away. Only predatory animals fight to kill and may drag away and eat their victim.

A Primorda NEVER knowingly and willfully puts an animal's life in danger, and never has it fight to the death. Likewise, Primorda do not like to see any animal caged or mistreated. Pets, companions and work animals that are treated well are one thing, caged and abused animals are quite another. Any animal under the influence of the Primorda automatically stops fighting and flees when its Hit Points or M.D.C. are reduced by half. And the Primorda is likely to send it away sooner. Primorda NEVER send animals into any situation where they are likely to be injured or killed.

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (special): 50%/40% +3 per level of experience; +20% bonus when riding giant birds or any large flying animal. Birds and any suitably large, flying animal can be ridden by the Air Primorda. Their rapport with creatures of the air enables them to ride even completely *wild* flying animals. Non-flying creatures need to be domesticated and trained as riding animals in order to be ridden. Thus, an Air Primorda cannot jump onto the back of a tiger or a wild horse and ride it, only wild, flying beasts, like a giant bird or Pegasus, and ground animals tamed and trained to serve as a riding animal.

Vulnerabilities: Charged particles, such as ion and particle beams, do 50% greater damage and reduce the speed of the Air Elemental Primorda by 30% for 1D6 melee rounds after being hit by each blast; cumulative effect from multiple blasts. Fire, which consumes oxygen, does 50% greater damage as well. Electricity and lightning do no damage. Lasers, other energy attacks, kinetic weapons (bullets) and explosions do full damage.

Available O.C.C.s: Air Primorda find work as *Wilderness Scouts, Rangers, Pilots, Spies, or Vagabonds*, living off the land and by their wits. They make excellent pilots as they love fast vehicles, especially those that hover and fly. **Skill Note:** The Air Primorda only gets the *O.C.C. Skills* of any chosen occupation. Do not select O.C.C. Related or Secondary Skills. And if a Hand to Hand Combat skill is one of the O.C.C. Skills, replace it with a Piloting or W.P. skill. This character has certain instincts and abilities that compensate for the lack of formal training. Speaking of which, Air Primorda love action. They like to be on the move and doing something, and enjoy flying, scouting, tailing, tracking, observing, participating in physical games, competitions and combat. Remember, the Primorda possess superhuman attributes, M.D.C. bodies, natural abilities and magic that more than make up for their limited range of skills.

Attacks per Melee (Special: Air Primorda): Fast and nimble, the Air Primorda starts with three attacks per melee at level one, +1 at levels 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 14, 18 and 22.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., magic or weapon.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls that involve the air/wind/sky, weather, flying animals, aerial attacks, and activity or attacks from above, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +3 to dodge on the ground, +5 to dodge in the air, +4 to roll with impact, +3 to save vs possession, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic (special): The equivalent of a Warlock, spell casting is another innate ability automatically known to all Air Primorda. All start with Blinding Flash (1), Breathe without Air (3), Cleanse (6), Create Light (2), Globe of Daylight (2), See the Invisible (4), and Sheltering Force (10), at level one. Select two additional Air Elemental spells per each level of experience, starting at level two. Also see Cloud Magic Alternative, below.

Spells available for selection are limited to the Primorda's level of experience, plus one. So at level two, the Air Primorda can select a total of two spells. However, he or she can select those two spells from Level One, Level Two, or Level Three Air Magic. This means the Primorda could select two spells from Level One Air Elemental Magic, or two from Level Two, or two from Level Three, or one spell each from two different spell levels. As the character grows in experi-

ence, the spell levels available increase (i.e. a 4th level character can make his selections from Levels 1-5, and so on), but the total number of available spells is always limited to two. **Note:** Primorda do not learn spells, they automatically know them as they grow with experience. As a result, spell selections are strictly limited to Air Elemental Magic, the same as an Air Warlock.

Cloud Magic Alternative: Instead of choosing Air Elemental Magic spells, the Air Primorda may select **Cloud Magic** (see *Rifts® New West or Rifts® Book of Magic* for spell descriptions), beginning at the second level of experience. This choice must be made upon reaching level two experience and cannot be changed later. If Cloud Magic is selected, ALL future spells must be selected from that type of magic only. There can be no selecting from both, it is one or the other. First level, starting spells remain unchanged.

Clouds of Defense spells are considered Level 2-3 spells.

Clouds of War are the equivalent of Level 4-5 spells.

Clouds of Survival are the equivalent of Level 6-7 spells.

Clouds of Peace are the equivalent of Level 8-9 spells.

Clouds of Travel are the equivalent of Level 10-11 spells.

Clouds of the Mind are the equivalent of Level 12-13 spells.

Clouds of Creation are the equivalent of Level 14-15 spells.

Psionics: None; despite their innate ability for magic, they seem to lack any kind of psychic abilities as a race. This may be due to the fact that Elementals also lack any kind of psychic abilities.

Enemies: New to the Megaverse, they have yet to make many enemies. The only exceptions are evil supernatural beings, particularly demons and all Minions of Hell. These are natural enemies to be studied and destroyed at the slightest provocation.

Allies: True Elementals of any power level, other Primorda, as well as Warlocks and Elemental Fusionists, both of whom recognize Primorda as Elemental beings whom they cannot control or influence.

A Note About Elementals: Unlike Warlocks, Elemental Primorda cannot summon or control Elemental beings. They can speak to them but that is all. Elementals encountered in their travels generally nod or wave to acknowledge a Primorda, and continue to go about their business. If approached and spoken to, the Elementals respond as best they can. However, most Elementals active in the Realm of Mortals are present as the servant, slave or captive of another, and do as their master or captor commands, including doing battle with Elemental Primorda if so ordered.

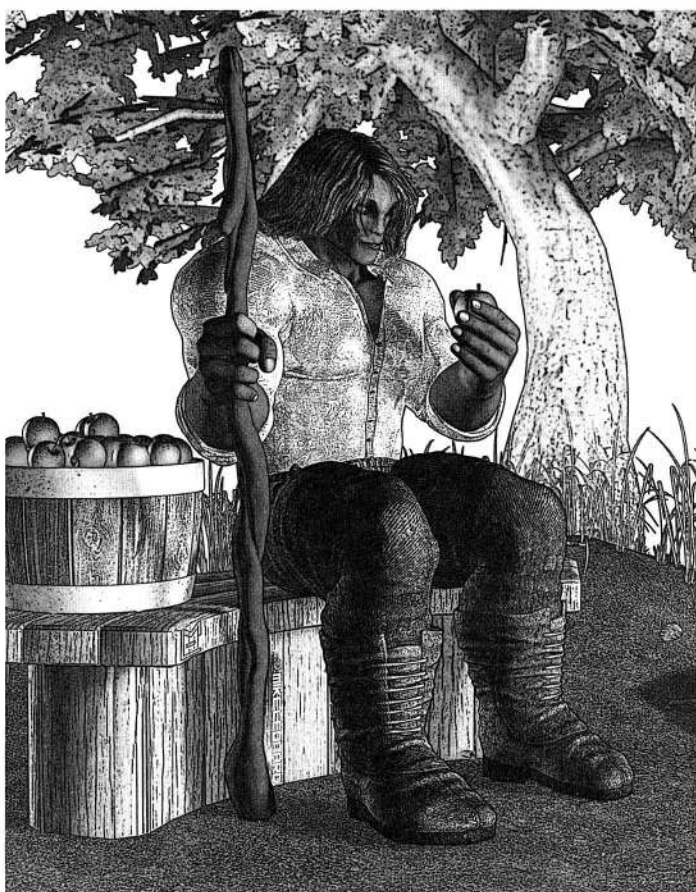
Value: Varies on the slave market. As an oddity in the Splynn Dimensional Market, they can fetch 2D6x10,000 credits and are used as M.D.C. humanoid combatants against all sorts of monsters, including sub-demons and demons.

Habitat: Elemental Primorda have no home world or home dimension. They seem best suited to the realm of mortals, but can survive in the Elemental realms too. They prefer the realm of mortals and think of themselves as citizens of the Megaverse, without limits or boundaries. Elemental Primorda enjoy wandering and exploring the worlds and people of the Megaverse.

Earth Primorda

Earth Elemental Primorda are probably the easiest to find in the Megaverse, as they are known to gather in small numbers (2-8) and serve as builders, ranchers, farmers and protectors of other people. Wherever one or more Earth Primorda stays for more than six months, he is likely to create large, wood or stone structures such as statues, totem poles, standing stones, stone monoliths, wood or stone towers, walls, strongholds, and other wood and/or stone structures. The Earth Primorda creates, transports and erects these structures on his own via his Supernatural Strength or by magic.

Earth Primorda enjoy physical labor and working with their hands. Most are talented carpenters, stone workers and artisans with both materials. Some Earth Primorda have been known to create underground tun-



Earth Elemental Primorda Stats

Alignment: Any, but almost always Principled (40%), Scrupulous (40%) or Unprincipled (10%).

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6+3, M.E. 2D6+4, M.A. 2D6+11, P.S. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+8, P.E. 2D6+16, P.B. 2D6+9, Spd 1D6+11.

M.D.C.: All Elemental Primorda are M.D.C. beings in Mega-Damage environments.

Earth Primorda have 2D6x10 M.D.C. + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+20 M.D.C. per each level of experience. (**On an S.D.C. World:** Earth Primorda have 2D6x10 Hit Points + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+20 Hit Points per level of experience. They also have 1D6x10+40 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 16.) See Natural Abilities for Bio-Regeneration.

Horror/Awe Factor: 11 (+3 when lifting or carrying something huge and heavy).

Size: 7-8 feet (2.1 to 2.4 m).

Weight: 250-400 pounds (112.5 to 180 kg).

Gender: Male and female, at a roughly 50/50 ratio.

P.P.E. Base: 1D4x10+60 at level one, plus an additional 20 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience starting with level two. **Note:** Earth Primorda can draw upon the ambient energy of ley lines at a rate of 40 P.P.E. every melee round (15 seconds) to casts spells, and 60 P.P.E. at a ley line nexus point.

Average Life Span: 3D6x10+300 years.

Average Level of Experience: Player Characters start at level one. NPCs (Non-Player Characters) are level 1D4+2 or as designated by the Game Master. Use the Dragon Experience Table.

Natural Abilities: Combination herbivore and insectivore; only eats plants and bugs. Magically understands and speaks all languages (90%), including Elemental (+8%) and Demongogian as if it was their native tongue; P.S. and P.E. attributes are Supernatural; resistant to cold (half damage), impervious to lightning/electricity (no damage), perfect 20/20 vision, and Bio-Regeneration 1D6 M.D.C. (or Hit Points) per melee round, triple on ley lines (earth energy).

Lift and Carry Incredible Weight (special): Earth Primorda can both lift and carry 300 times their P.S. attribute, but to do so reduces Spd by half. That means the typical Earth Primorda can lift and carry four tons! Double on ley lines! Cannot throw such a heavy object, just place it down or drop it in front of him. A perfect ability for erecting standing stones, megaliths, and building and carving large, heavy pieces of stone or wood.

Rapport with Mammals, Herd Animals and Large Animals (special): Ground-based animals, particularly dogs, horses, bovine and large animals, but most mammals are comfortable around Earth Primorda. The character can command two such animals, +1 additional animal per each additional level of experience.

All Primorda have an affinity and rapport with a particular type and range of animals. In each case, those animals do not attack or harm that type of Primorda and the Primorda never hurts any of them unless left with no choice. See Air Primorda for details about this ability.

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (special): 60%/50% +2% per level of experience; +12% bonus when riding large ground animals or beasts from the Elemental Realm of Earth. Large animals such as bison, bear, elephant, Rhino-Buffer, herbivore dinosaurs, and other suitable animals, can be ridden by the Earth Elemental Primorda. Their rapport with creatures of the earth enables them to ride even completely wild animals, provided the creature is large enough to support their weight.

Vulnerabilities: Water and cold attacks do 50% greater damage. When in freezing or water environments, reduce speed by 30% and skill performance by 20%. Fire and plasma attacks do half damage. Explosives, electricity and all other energy and kinetic attacks do full damage.

nel systems and the occasional underground cathedral. These structures are always made with joy for the people of the region, because while Earth Primorda may adopt an area to live and use as their base of operation, they, like all Elemental Primorda, are tasked with exploring the Megaverse and studying the many different places, people and cultures of countless worlds.

Earth Primorda are also the most likely to be artisans, builders, animal caretakers and farmers, with a particular love for fruit orchards and trees. They understand the science of botany, crop rotation and irrigation, and are naturals when it comes to growing anything and taking care of plants, animals and livestock. When operating underground, edible mushrooms and lichen are among their crops, including fungus and vegetation that attracts edible insects. Yes, Earth Elemental Primorda have no problem munching on worms, crickets, grasshoppers, dragonflies, beetles, centipedes, spiders, flies, moths and bugs of all kinds. Insect food may be prepared with spices or sauces, roasted, baked, grilled, or eaten raw. About one third of the Earth Primorda's diet is insects, with the rest being vegetables, fruits, nuts, and other types of vegetation. When necessary, that can include most types of leaves, vines, pine needles, grass, flowers, straw and roots. They never eat the meat or bones of larger animals, but do not have a problem with people that do.

Earth Primorda look like large, beefy humans with bronze to dark brown skin, black or dark brown hair, often with natural green highlights or streaks, and sparkling green eyes. All have broad shoulders, barrel chests, and thick, muscular builds reminiscent of weightlifters. Even the women have thick bodies and chiseled muscles like a bodybuilder.

Earth Primorda tend to be calm, even tempered and curious beings with a deep fondness for flora, fauna and nature. They enjoy physical activities and have a powerful sense of fair play, and right and wrong. Most have a high regard for all life and try to avoid killing unless it is clearly justified or necessary. While Earth Elemental Primorda try to be empathetic and merciful toward all other sentient life forms, they are not pushovers, and do not hesitate to use magic or physical force to confront enemies and deal with threats. Slow to violence, once they commit to a fight, they are like an angry bull with the strength of a bulldozer.

Available O.C.C.s: None. Earth Elemental Primorda do not pick an O.C.C. nor get additional skills. However, they do possess a wide range of knowledge that can get them work as carpenters, builders, farmers, veterinarians, cowboys, and wood and stone workers/artisans, as well as fighters or mercenaries.

They don't like being cooped up inside a vehicle, robot or power armor, and avoid combat, but stand up against evil and injustice. Earth Primorda enjoy physical labor, building and working with their hands or with animals and nature. Remember, the Primorda possess superhuman attributes, M.D.C. bodies, natural abilities and magic that makes them formidable characters.

Intuitive Knowledge (special): The Earth Primorda have the equivalent of all the following skills:

Artistry (special): Art, Calligraphy, and Whittling and Sculpting, all at 60% at level one, +2% per each additional level of experience.

Building (special): Boat Building, Carpentry, Excavation, Masonry, Military Fortification, Mining, W.P. Blunt, W.P. Staff (and can make staves and blunt weapons), all at 70% at level one, +2% per each additional level of experience.

Nature Skills (special): Animal Husbandry, Botany, Entomological Medicine (made from bugs), Holistic Medicine (for animals; -20% penalty for humanoids), Horsemanship: General, Identify Plants and Fruits, Gardening, Preserve Food, Track and Trap (but not kill) Animals, Veterinary Science, Xenology, Zoology, and ALL Cowboy skills (*except* Trick Riding and W.P. Rope; see **Rifts® Ultimate Edition** for Cowboy skills), all at 74% at level one, +2% per each additional level of experience.

Attacks per Melee (Special: Earth Primorda): Surprisingly agile for their bulk and many are fine artisans and workers of wood and stone. The Earth Primorda starts with three attacks per melee at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 13, 18 and 22.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., magic or weapon.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on Perception Rolls that involve growing plants, farming, and animals, particularly animal health, care and state of mind. An Earth Primorda who is paying attention can always tell when an animal is nervous, agitated, or preparing to attack. +1 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge and disarm, +4 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs mind control and illusions, +4 to save vs insect and snake poison, +4 to save vs possession, and +3 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic (special): The equivalent of a Warlock, spell casting is another innate ability automatically known to all Earth Primorda. All start with Breathe Without Air (3), Cleanse (6), Chameleon (5), Death Trance (1), Dig (8), Dowsing (2), Grow Plants (8), Identify Plants (3), Lantern Light (1), Mend Stone (15), and Mystic Fulcrum (3), at level one. Select two additional Earth Elemental spells per each level of experience, starting at level two. Or see *Nature Magic Alternative*, below.

Spells available for selection are limited to the Primorda's level of experience, plus one. So at level two, the Earth Primorda can select at total of two spells. However, he or she can select those two spells from Level One, Level Two, or Level Three Earth Magic. This means the Primorda could select two spells from Level One Earth Elemental Magic, or two from Level Two, or two from Level Three, or one spell each from two different spell levels. As the character grows in experience, the spell levels available increase (i.e. a 4th level character can make his two selections from Levels 1-5 Earth Magic, and so on), but the total number of available spells are always limited to two. **Note:** Primorda do not learn spells, they automatically know them as they grow with experience. As a result, spell selections are strictly limited to Earth Elemental Magic, the same as an Earth Warlock.

Nature Magic Alternative: Instead of choosing Earth Elemental Magic spells, the Earth Primorda may select **Nature Magic** (see *Rifts® Mystic Russia* or *Rifts® Book of Magic* for spells), beginning at the second level of experience. This choice must be made upon reaching level two experience and cannot be changed. If Nature Magic is selected, ALL future spells must be selected from that type

of magic only. There can be no selecting from both, it is one or the other. First level, starting spells remain unchanged.

Psionics: None; despite their innate ability for magic, they seem to lack any kind of psychic abilities as a race. This may be due to the fact that Elementals also lack any kind of psychic abilities.

Enemies: New to the Megaverse, they have yet to make many enemies. The only exceptions are evil supernatural beings, particularly demons and all Minions of Hell. These are natural enemies to be studied and destroyed at the slightest provocation.

Allies: True Elementals of any power level, other Primorda, as well as Warlocks and Elemental Fusionists, both of whom recognize Primorda as Elemental beings whom they cannot control or influence. All Elemental Primorda tend to stand against cruelty and evil, but none more than Earth Primorda. They are the quickest to help others and fight against wickedness and injustice.

A Note About Elementals: Unlike Warlocks, Elemental Primorda cannot summon or control Elemental beings. They can speak to them but that is all. Elementals encountered in their travels generally nod or wave to acknowledge a Primorda, and continue to go about their business. If approached and spoken to, the Elementals respond as best they can. However, most Elementals active in the Realm of Mortals are present as the servant, slave or captive of another, and do as their master or captor commands, including doing battle with Elemental Primorda if so ordered.

Value: Varies on the slave market, fetching 3D6x10,000 credits as slave laborers and builders, or as combatants in the gladiatorial arena.

Habitat: Elemental Primorda have no home world or home dimension. They seem best suited to the realm of mortals, but can survive in the Elemental realms too. They prefer the realm of mortals and think of themselves as citizens of the Megaverse, without limits or boundaries. Elemental Primorda enjoy wandering and exploring the worlds and people of the Megaverse.

Fire Primorda

These people enjoy hot climates and may be found toiling away in the heat of volcanoes, lava fields and desert environments across the Megaverse. The toxic fumes, stifling heat and solar radiation that would fatigue and kill humans seem to invigorate Fire Primorda rather than harm or slow them down. Sunlight, radiation, heat, and thermal energy nourish them, and make them a force to be reckoned with in hot environments where humans find it difficult or impossible to survive.

Fire Elemental Primorda are tall, slender, lanky humanoids with muscular builds, warm brown eyes, and bright red or copper hair distinguished with lighter streaks of yellow or orange running through their manes. They also like to wear their hair spiked, in a large wave or combed out and up, all of which gives the hair a fiery appearance. In fact, the static energy in the air and the heat currents of hot and steamy environments cause their hair to rise and stand up rather like the flame of a candle. The skin of Fire Primorda is a light bronze or copper color and is always warm to the touch.

As one might expect, Fire Primorda tend to be hot tempered, outspoken, quick to anger, quick to action and, unlike their Earth cousins, often act in the heat of the moment, working on assumptions rather than waiting to get all the available facts. This makes them fun at parties and festivals – always a lively, friendly and brash member at any function – and quick to accept a challenge or fight. In combat, Fire Primorda are sharp, quick thinking, and seldom hesitate to take action where it is needed. The problem is, they often act too quickly, without thinking their actions through, and can be merciless in combat. Fire Primorda need to learn self-control, focus and discipline, with time and experience, to hold themselves back in the heat of battle in order to show mercy and to take prisoners. They also love sports and physical contests, from darts and knife throwing, to fisticuffs and football or swordplay. And like all Primorda, they are fascinated by other people, cultures and worlds. Their



need for action and adventure makes Fire Primorda enjoy travel, exploration, combat, and new experiences. They are not quite thrill-junkies, but close.

Elemental Fire Primorda Stats

Alignment: Any, but almost always Principled (15%), Scrupulous (20%), Unprincipled (20%) or Anarchist (35%).

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6+2, M.E. 2D6+6, M.A. 2D6+8, P.S. 2D6+13 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+13, P.E. 2D6+10, P.B. 2D6+10, Spd 1D6+12 (8 mph/13 km).

M.D.C.: All Elemental Primorda are M.D.C. beings in Mega-Damage environments.

Fire Primorda have 2D4x10 M.D.C. + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+14 M.D.C. per each level of experience. (**On an S.D.C. World:** Fire Primorda have 2D4x10 Hit Points + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+10 Hit Points per level of experience. They also have 2D4x10 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 14.) See Natural Abilities for Bio-Regeneration.

Horror/Awe Factor: 11

Size: 6-7 feet (1.8 to 2.1 m) tall.

Weight: 150-250 pounds (67.5 to 112.5 kg).

Gender: Male and female, at a roughly 50/50 ratio.

P.P.E. Base: 1D6x10+80 at level one, plus an additional 20 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience starting with level two.

Average Life Span: 1D6x10+300 years.

Average Level of Experience: Player Characters start at level one. NPCs (Non-Player Characters) are level 1D6 or as designated by the Game Master. Use the Dragon Experience Table.

Natural Abilities: Magically understands and speaks all languages (90%), including Elemental (+8%) and Demongogian as if it was their native tongue; P.S. and P.E. attributes are Supernatural; impervious to heat, fire, smoke, magic fire, sulfuric gases, and radiation, perfect 20/20 vision, and Bio-Regeneration 1D6 M.D.C. (or Hit Points) per melee round.

Thermal Vision (special): Sees in the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums of light (including heat signatures) even in total darkness. Can see infrared light beams from targeting systems and alarms that use them. Can tell if an engine is cool, hot or recently used, and can even see and follow the heat signature of fresh footprints, but they must have been made in the last six minutes, and a specific heat footprint gets lost in heavily traveled areas (too many other footprints). This makes Fire Primorda dangerous night predators and stalkers.

Track Fire by Smell (special): Fire Primorda can smell a fire up to two miles (3.2 km) away, and tell if it is a small fire or large fire, and the type of material burning (forest, wood, house, plastic, M.D.C. materials, gasoline, chemicals, etc.). This ability is 60% +3% per level of experience; -20% to trace the cause of the fire to its source/where it started, and the presence of accelerants (chemicals to make the fire burn hotter and faster).

Firefighting Skill (special): 76% +2% per level of experience. Instinctual understanding of combustibles and the nature of fire grants them a natural Firefighting skill.

Rapport with Poisonous Animals and Worms of Taut (special): Poisonous animals, including venomous frogs, snakes, reptiles, scorpions and spiders/arachnids, beasts from the Elemental Realm of Fire, and the following Worms of Taut: Fire Worm, Nipper, Tri-Fang and Tomb Worms! The character can command one such animal at level one, +1 additional animal per each additional level of experience.

All Primorda have an affinity and rapport with a particular type and range of animals. In each case, those animals never attack or harm that type of Primorda and the Primorda never hurts any of them unless left with no choice. See *Air Elemental Primorda* for details.

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (special): 50%/40% +3% per level of experience; +20% bonus when riding large, poisonous animals, insects, Worms of Taut or beasts from the Elemental Realm of Fire. Their rapport with venomous creatures enables them to ride even completely *wild* animals, provided the creature is large enough to carry their weight.

Vulnerabilities: Water and cold-based attacks do *double damage*. Temperatures below freezing reduce Spd by 30% and inflict a -1 attack per melee round. Many Fire Primorda cannot swim and those who have an O.C.C. that enables them to take the Swimming skill suffer a -25% skill penalty. Fire Primorda crave action and get bored and careless when there is nothing to do (-2 on Perception Rolls and initiative). They may also get grumpy, wander off on their own, get in trouble, and start a brawl when bored. Their hot tempers and tendency to act before they think everything through can also get them into trouble. They also tend to be risk takers and flamboyant.

Available O.C.C.s: Fire Primorda may select one of the following O.C.C.s: *Mercenary Soldier*, *Gunfighter*, *Gunslinger*, *Assassin*, *Wilderness Scout* or *Vagabond*, and can always get work as a firefighter (or arsonist, for Anarchist or evil alignments). **Skill Note:** The Fire Primorda only gets the O.C.C. Skills of any chosen occupation. Do not select O.C.C. Related or Secondary Skills. And if a Hand to Hand Combat skill is one of the O.C.C. Skills, replace it with a different Physical skill or a Rogue skill. This is because the character has certain instincts and abilities that compensate for the lack of formal training. Speaking of which, Fire Primorda love action, brawling and fighting, and do not blanch at the idea of killing. Remember, the Primorda possesses superhuman attributes, an M.D.C. body, natural abilities and magic that more than make up for a limited range of skills.

Attacks per Melee (Special: Fire Primorda): Agile, the Fire Primorda starts with three attacks per melee round at level one, +1 at levels 2, 5, 8, 12, 16, and 20.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., magic or weapon.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): A Fire Primorda who is paying attention is +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing Fire Elementals, Warlocks and other Primorda, as well as fire hazards, combustible materials and accelerants, and traps involving fire/

arson, +3 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +2 to dodge, +2 to pull punch, +1 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs mind control, +4 to save vs possession, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic (special): The equivalent of a Warlock, spell casting is another innate ability automatically known to all Fire Primorda. All start with Blinding Flash (1), Breathe Without Air (3), Desiccate the Supernatural (50), Create Coal (5), Extinguish Fire (8), Fiery Touch (5), Fire Bolt (4), Nightvision (4), and See Through Smoke (12) at level one. Select two additional Fire Elemental spells per each level of experience, starting at level two. Or see *Living Fire Magic Alternative*, below.

Spells available for selection are limited to the Primorda's level of experience, plus one. So at level two, the Fire Primorda can select a total of two spells. However, he or she can select those two spells from Level One, Level Two, or Level Three Fire Magic. This means the Primorda could select two spells from Level One Fire Elemental Magic, or two from Level Two, or two from Level Three, or one spell each from two different spell levels. As the character grows in experience, the spell levels available increase (i.e. a 4th level character can make his selections from Levels 1-5, and so on), but the total number of available spells are always limited to two. **Note:** Primorda do not learn spells, they automatically know them as they grow with experience. As a result, spell selections are strictly limited to Fire Elemental Magic, the same as a Fire Warlock.

Living Fire Magic Alternative: Instead of choosing Fire Elemental Magic spells, the Fire Primorda may select **Nature Magic** (see *Rifts® Mystic Russia* or *Rifts® Book of Magic* for spells), beginning at second level of experience. This choice must be made upon reaching level two experience and cannot be changed. If Living Fire Magic is selected, ALL future spells must be selected from that type of magic only. There can be no selecting from both, it is one or the other. First level, starting spells remain unchanged.

Psionics: None; despite their innate ability for magic, they seem to lack any kind of psychic abilities as a race. This may be due to the fact that Elementals also lack any kind of psychic abilities.

Enemies: New to the Megaverse, they have yet to make many enemies. The only exceptions are evil supernatural beings, particularly demons and all Minions of Hell. These are natural enemies to be studied and destroyed at the slightest provocation.

Allies: True Elementals of any power level, other Primorda, as well as Warlocks and Elemental Fusionists, both of whom recognize Primorda as Elemental beings whom they cannot control or influence.

A Note About Elementals: Unlike Warlocks, Elemental Primorda cannot summon or control Elemental beings. They can speak to them but that is all. Elementals encountered in their travels generally nod or wave to acknowledge a Primorda, and continue to go about their business. If approached and spoken to, the Elementals respond as best they can. However, most Elementals active in the Realm of Mortals are present as the servant, slave or captive of another, and do as their master or captor commands, including doing battle with Elemental Primorda if so ordered.

Value: Varies on the slave market, fetching 2D6x10,000 credits as a combatant in the gladiatorial arenas of Atlantis.

Habitat: Elemental Primorda have no home world or home dimension. They seem best suited to the realm of mortals, but can survive in the Elemental realms too. They prefer the realm of mortals and think of themselves as citizens of the Megaverse, without limits or boundaries. Elemental Primorda enjoy wandering and exploring the worlds and people of the Megaverse.

Water Primorda

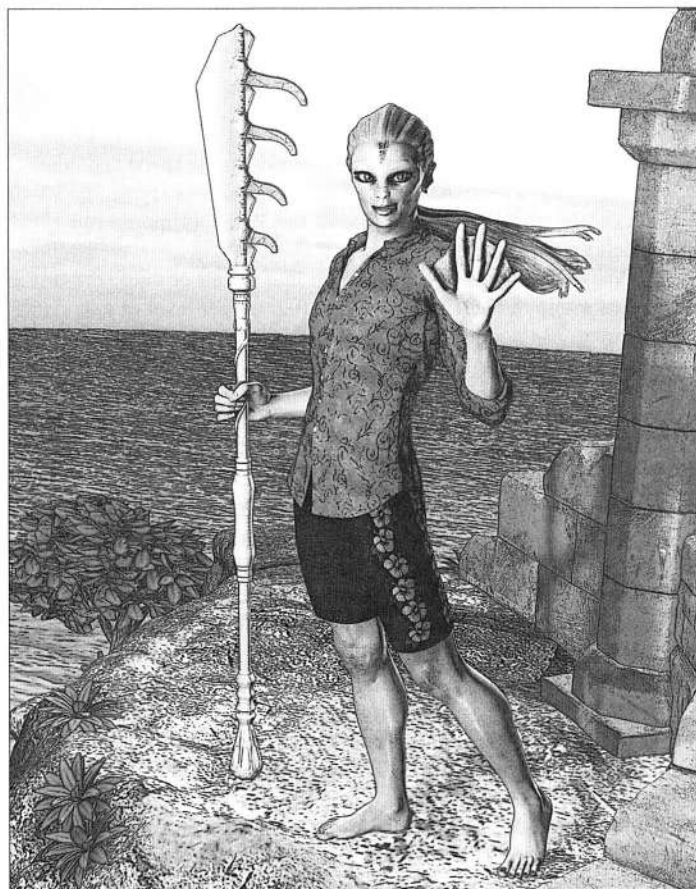
Water Primorda are most often encountered traveling along the shores of lakes, seas and oceans across the Megaverse. They have a strong connection to water, especially deep water like oceans and seas. This affinity to the element means that most natural sea creatures see them as one of their own and nonthreatening. This enables Water Primorda to swim among fishes and aquatic wildlife, even predators, without causing a disturbance. This also enables them to travel and explore underwater without being noticed, and like to hide among schools of fish.

Linked to the element of water, these Primorda can survive indefinitely underwater, breathing water as well as being able to breathe air. They are impervious to the pressure at great depths but tend to be more amphibious than aquatic. Stories about Water Primorda tell of weapons encrusted in magnificent pearls, and even of structures and homes made of pearls, coral, stone and seashells. Recovered sunken treasure and artifacts, teeth/ivory, seashells, pearls and exotic corals and sea life may be used by the Water Primorda as trade goods with surface dwellers.

Though Water Primorda feel most at home and safest in water, they can survive on land indefinitely, though hot, dry climates and extreme cold environments are difficult for them (see vulnerabilities).

Water Primorda have webbed fingers and hands, light grey skin with white accents reminiscent of a dolphin, and their skin is always cool to the touch. Their hair is either a glistening silver or pale yellow (almost white), and they have large, almond-shaped, blue or green eyes like those of a cat. Many in their culture also mark themselves in a variety of iridescent tattoos with a magnificent blue coloration that glow in the eerie blue light of ley lines. Otherwise, they look quite human in shape and size.

The personality of the Water Primorda is fluid and changing. They can seem friendly or curious one minute and cool and aloof the next. Though slow to anger, Water Primorda have long memories and can hold a grudge for decades. Most are open-minded and willing to con-



sider all sides in a dispute. They prefer to avoid conflict, but once a Water Primorda commits, he or she is a stalwart ally and fierce combatant. Likewise, while Water Primorda may seem aloof and selfish at times, once one has embraced another humanoid as a friend, that friendship is unshakeable and forever, at least until that friend betrays him.

Water Elemental Primorda Stats

Alignment: Any, but almost always Principled (25%), Scrupulous (25%), Unprincipled (20%) or Anarchist (20%).

Attributes: I.Q. 3D6+2, M.E. 2D6+8, M.A. 2D6+10, P.S. 2D6+18 (Supernatural), P.P. 2D6+10, P.E. 2D6+12, P.B. 2D6+8, Spd 1D6+12 on land (8 mph/13 km), +30 additional when swimming (about 30 mph/48 km/26 knots).

M.D.C.: All Elemental Primorda are M.D.C. beings in Mega-Damage environments.

Water Primorda have 2D4x10 M.D.C. + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+14 M.D.C. per each level of experience. (**On an S.D.C. World:** Water Primorda have 2D4x10 Hit Points + P.E. attribute number to start, and gain an additional 1D6+10 Hit Points per level of experience. They also have 2D4x10 S.D.C. and a Natural A.R. of 14.) See Natural Abilities for Bio-Regeneration.

Horror/Awe Factor: 11

Size: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m) tall.

Weight: 120-220 pounds (54 to 99 kg).

Gender: Male and female, at a roughly 50/50 ratio.

P.P.E. Base: 1D6x10+60 at level one, plus an additional 25 P.P.E. per each additional level of experience starting with level two.

Average Life Span: 2D6x10+330 years.

Average Level of Experience: Player Characters start at level one. NPCs (Non-Player Characters) are level 1D6 or as designated by the Game Master. Use the Dragon Experience Table.

Natural Abilities: Magically understands and speaks all languages (90%), including Elemental (+8%), Demongolian, and Cetacean (dolphin and whales), as if it was their native tongue; can breathe air on land and has gills to breathe underwater indefinitely; P.S. and P.E. attributes are Supernatural; impervious to normal cold, resistant to magical cold (half damage), impervious to ocean depths/pressure; 20/20 vision, nightvision 1,000 feet (305 m), and Bio-Regeneration 1D6 M.D.C. (or Hit Points) per melee round.

Swimming Capabilities (special): Water Primorda can swim on the surface of water or underwater at considerable speed and depths.

Swimming Speed: As per Spd attribute number, typically 30-40 mph (48-64 km). For greater speed, the Water Primorda must find himself a riding animal or have the magic spell Swim as the Dolphin.

Dive and leap out of the water up into the air or onto land or the deck of a ship: 8 feet (2.4 m) +2 feet (0.6 m) per level of experience and counts as two melee attacks/actions.

Dive into water. This is possible from any height without fear of injury. Diving down into the watery depths with a burst of speed carries the character 300 feet (91 m) deep in a few seconds (counts as two melee attacks and is +2 to dodge via a dive).

Floating along on a water current can be done on the surface of the water or underwater, otherwise drops to the bottom to find a place to hide while he or she sleeps or rests. Speed is that of the current.

Maximum Depth: Unlimited, as the Water Primorda is impervious to deep sea water pressure and resistant to cold. However, they get nervous and worried at depths greater than 10 miles (16 km).

Underwater Vision (special): Has clear and undistorted vision underwater and can see 1,000 feet (305 m) even in murky water.

Keen Sense of Smell Underwater (special): Water Primorda have a keen sense of smell underwater, and can notice blood or chemicals in the water up to two miles (3.2 km) away. Moreover, the character can tell if it is a small to large quantity and the type of chemical (human, mammal or fish blood, gasoline, etc.). This ability is 60% +3% per level of experience; -20% to trace the cause of the pollution to its source/where it started or is coming from.

Firefighting Skill (special): 60% +2% per level of experience.

Rapport with Fish (special): Fish, including sharks, eels, rays, octopus, squid and beasts from the Elemental Realm of Water. (This rapport does not extend to sea mammals, amphibians, crustaceans or other sea creatures.) The character can command three such animals at level one, +1 additional animal per each additional level of experience.

All Primorda have an affinity and rapport with a particular type and range of animals. In each case, those animals never attack or harm that type of Primorda and the Primorda never hurts any of them unless left with no choice. See *Air Elemental Primorda* for details.

Horsemanship: Exotic Animals (special): 50%/40% +3% per level of experience; +20% bonus when riding large fish. Their rapport with fish enables them to ride even completely wild animals, provided the creature is large enough. In the case of the Water Primorda, they can ride the animal or hold onto a fin and be pulled along.

Vulnerabilities: Fire, lava, plasma and heat-based attacks do double damage. Temperatures greater than 100 degrees Fahrenheit (37.8 C), reduce Spd by 30% and inflict a -1 attack per melee round. Water Primorda tend to be confident and bold, which sometimes compels them to take on more than they can handle or accept risks and challenges before thinking it all through.

Available O.C.C.s: Water Primorda may select one of the following O.C.C.s: *Rogue Scholar*, *Vagabond* or *Wilderness Scout* are the most common, but can also be a *Navy Seaman/Navy Sailor*, *Pirate*, or *Privateer*, and can always get work as a sailor, deep-sea diver or explorer, or firefighter. **Skill Note:** The Water Primorda only gets the O.C.C. Skills of any chosen occupation. Do not select O.C.C. Related or Secondary Skills. And if a Hand to Hand Combat skill is one of the O.C.C. Skills, replace it with a different Physical skill or a Wilderness skill. This is because the character has certain instincts and abilities that compensate for the lack of formal training. Remember, the Primorda possesses superhuman attributes, an M.D.C. body, natural abilities and magic that more than make up for a limited range of skills.

Attacks per Melee (Special: Fire Primorda): The Water Primorda starts with three attacks per melee round at level one, +1 at levels 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, and 18.

Damage: As per Supernatural P.S., magic or weapon.

Bonuses (in addition to likely attribute bonuses): A Water Primorda who is paying attention is +3 on Perception Rolls related to noticing features of water, sudden changes, pollution/toxins or poison, as well as water hazards such as the potential for flash floods, storms, strong water currents, etc.; +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry to dodge, +3 to pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, +1 to save vs psionic attacks, +4 to save vs possession, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Magic (special): The equivalent of a Warlock, spell casting is another innate ability automatically known to all Water Primorda. All start with Breathe Without Air (3), Cleanse (5), Extinguish Fire (4), Frostblade (7), Ride the Waves (7), Salt Water to Fresh (4), Sense Direction Underwater (4), Speak Underwater (10), Water Seal (8) and Walk the Waves (5), at level one. Select two additional Water Elemental spells per each subsequent level of experience, starting at level two. Or see *Ocean Magic Alternative*, below.

Spells available for selection are limited to the Primorda's level of experience, plus one. So at level two, the Water Primorda can select a total of two spells. However, he or she can select those two spells from Level One, Level Two, or Level Three Water Magic. This means the Primorda could select two spells from Level One Water Elemental Magic, or two from Level Two, or two from Level Three, or one spell each from two different spell levels. As the character grows in experience, the spell levels available increase (i.e. a 4th level character can make his selections from Levels 1-5, and so on), but the total number of available spells are always limited to two. **Note:** Primorda do not learn spells, they automatically know them as they grow with experience. As a result, spell selections are strictly

limited to Water Elemental Magic, the same as a Water Warlock. Or see Ocean Magic Alternative, below.

Ocean Magic Alternative: Instead of choosing Water Elemental Magic spells, the Water Primorda may select **Ocean Magic** (see *Rifts® Underseas* or *Rifts® Book of Magic* for spells), beginning at the second level of experience. This choice must be made upon reaching level two experience and cannot be changed. If Ocean Magic is selected, ALL future spells must be selected from that type of magic only. There can be no selecting from both, it is one or the other. First level, starting spells remain unchanged.

Psionics: None; despite their innate ability for magic, they seem to lack any kind of psychic abilities as a race. This may be due to the fact that Elementals also lack any kind of psychic abilities.

Enemies: New to the Megaverse, they have yet to make many enemies. The only exceptions are evil supernatural beings, particularly demons and all Minions of Hell. These are natural enemies to be studied and destroyed at the slightest provocation.

Allies: True Elementals of any power level, other Primorda, as well as Warlocks and Elemental Fusionists, both of whom recognize Primorda as Elemental beings whom they cannot control or influence. They are also likely to get along with Lemurians and other peaceful aquatic races.

A Note About Elementals: Unlike Warlocks, Elemental Primorda cannot summon or control Elemental beings. They can speak to them but that is all. Elementals encountered in their travels generally nod or wave to acknowledge a Primorda, and continue to go about their business. If approached and spoken to, the Elementals respond as best they can. However, most Elementals active in the Realm of Mortals are present as the servant, slave or captive of another, and do as their master or captor commands, including doing battle with Elemental Primorda if so ordered.

Value: Varies on the slave market, fetching 2D6x10,000 credits as a combatant in the gladiatorial arenas of Atlantis.

Habitat: Elemental Primorda have no home world or home dimension. They seem best suited to the realm of mortals, but can survive in the Elemental realms too. They prefer the realm of mortals and think of themselves as citizens of the Megaverse, without limits or boundaries. Elemental Primorda enjoy wandering and exploring the worlds and people of the Megaverse.

Notes about Elementals

It is very important to remind people that Elementals generally have absolutely no regard for the lives of humans or sentient mortal beings of any kind, nor any interest in their activities or civilizations. Elementals will step on a baby or destroy a town without a second thought. None of this is done with malice or wicked intent. To an Elemental, creatures of this dimension (including all intelligent races) are just insects without value and barely worthy of their notice. You do not ponder the havoc you cause when you kick over an ant hill, nor do you hesitate to swat the fly that has annoyed you. It is just an insect. That's exactly how 99% of all Elementals think of humans and the technology and civilizations we so cherish. Elementals are not evil, they are just so completely different from us, that they have no comprehension of life as *we* know it. Nor any concept of law or customs, or what humans might consider correct behavior, good or bad. In this regard, Elementals go about their business with no regard for the "insects" around them. They pay no heed to the harm or damage they may cause simply by walking down a street.

Warlocks, and any being who summons an Elemental, must be exceedingly careful or they could cause mass destruction without ever intending to do so. **For Example:** A Warlock who commands a Fire Elemental to go into town and get something, or somebody, has just sent a pillar of walking fire stomping through the streets. Along the way it may step on innocent people, set vehicles and buildings ablaze simply by brushing against them, or by going inside of them as the Elemental tries

to fulfill its orders. Likewise an Air, Earth or Water Elemental is likely to knock down fences and walls in its way, smash through buildings and cause all sorts of mayhem and destruction. For that matter, it may accidentally kill the very person it was supposed to retrieve.

This is why the appearance of the *Elemental Primorda* is so shocking and significant: Never before has any Elemental being cared to understand mortals for any reason.

Only other Elementals, Warlocks and Elemental Primorda are able to freely converse with an Elemental without being ignored, torn limb from limb, or needing some kind of protection (circle, charm, ward, etc.) from the creatures. An Elemental will not accept someone because he is the friend, kin, or lover of an Elemental Primorda. They will accept and befriend ONLY Warlocks or Elemental Primorda, none other. In fact, Elementals are so friendly toward Warlocks and Elemental Primorda that they have been known to stop in the middle of a massacre to converse. **Note:** This applies only to true Elementals and not Spirits of Light.

Most Elementals (98%) never leave the Elemental dimension which is their home, unless impressed against their will into some activity by a magic user, usually a Shifter, Summoner, Diabolist, Warlock, or demonic being. While enslaved, especially by non-Warlocks, Elementals show their enslavers little loyalty. This means an **enslaved Elemental** will tell a brother Warlock or Elemental Primorda everything it knows about its mission or any other subject that the mortal may inquire of it. Elementals and Warlocks share a great kinship between each other, in a strange, metaphysical way, and both always try help each other. Both man and monster are uncommonly courteous and friendly toward each other, unless that Warlock is known as a cruel destroyer or enslaver of Elementals. If the latter is the case, the Warlock is treated as if he were an enemy, and possibly attacked if he continues to irritate or threaten the Elemental.

Though they are, themselves, closely linked to Elementals, Primorda do not share the same sense of kinship to Elementals that Warlocks feel. They can communicate with Elementals and may choose to help those in captivity, but they do not see Elementals as their brethren. This, again, suggests that Primorda are either something completely new, or more aligned to humans. Of course, all Primorda despise the slave trade, and may work to free those in captivity as well as do things to undermine slavers. It must be noted that unlike Warlocks, Elemental Primorda cannot summon or control/command Elementals. They can talk to them, and may be able to enlist their help from time to time, but that is entirely up to the Elemental, and its cooperation is, at best, 50/50; G.M.'s discretion.

Beasts of the Elemental Realms

It is unclear whether the creatures described in the section below are animals native to the Elemental Realms or alien worlds visited by Elementals, or even Lesser Elementals themselves. Such animals sometimes find their way into the realm of mortals via the Rifts or magical summonings. In some rare instances, they slip in through the dimensional fabric when a dimensional traveler opens a portal or Rift for himself. In any case, they may be used as beasts of burden, riding animals, guard animals, monsters for the gladiatorial arena, and familiars by powerful beings.

Elemental Primorda use the creatures described here as riding animals and/or traveling companions. However, because of their unique rapport with certain types of animals, these creatures are not domesticated beasts that can be used by anyone. They are wild animals under the thrall of the Elemental Primorda who has brought it with him. **Note:** It is left to G.M. discretion as to whether or not a player character Primorda starts with such a mount or some other exotic animal as its steed. The four magical beasts presented below are among the most commonly

used creatures by Elemental Primorda in the Mortal Realm. However, that could be because they are among the most recognizable and acceptable to mortals; meaning they are animals that mortals can relate to and accept. Other creatures from the Elemental Realms exist, but are a rare sight to see.



Lightning Eagle

Air Primorda Riding Animal

This giant bird resembles a giant, North American bald eagle with whitish-blue or white head plumage, a golden yellow beak, and blue-grey plumage that crackles with thin streams of electrical energy flowing from the eyes and head, and down the rest of its body. When the Lightning Eagle takes wing, it does so with a shower of sparks, and a white mist seems to generate from under its feathers and rolls off the great bird as it flies. This leaves a faint cloud or vapor trail behind it that slowly dissipates.

When enraged or engaged in combat, the Lightning Eagle's name becomes truly apparent, as its body feathers darken and electricity crackles from the bird's eyes and beneath its feathers, like flashes of lightning within a dark cloud can be seen inside. Light and energy cascades around the bird in a trail of light and energy. Likewise, electrical energy arcs between its talons and its mouth when it opens it to shriek or bite. When it strikes with its razor sharp claws, or tearing beak, it also inflicts electrical damage, and once per melee round the animal can fire lightning from its eyes.

These majestic and deadly predators from some alien world or dimension serve as flying mounts for **Air Primorda** and the two share a deep and obvious fondness for one another. Chicks are hatched from their egg four months after being laid, and the babies become strong

enough to fly after six months. However, it takes nearly 10 years for a Lightning Eagle to reach full maturity and be able to mate and produce offspring. The great bird can feed on ley line energy and can go without physical food indefinitely along a ley line, but also likes to hunt, and preys upon large animals, though seldom humanoids and other sentient beings unless attacked first and their opponent was killed.

Lightning Eagle Stats

Note: Though seemingly made of feathers and flesh, the Lightning Eagle is considered an *Air Elemental creature*.

Also Known As: Giant Storm Eagles, Storm Crows and Elemental Eagles.

Alignment: Any, but almost always Anarchist (65%) or Unprincipled (30%).

Attributes (Adult): I.Q. 11 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+5, M.A. 1D6+7, P.S. 1D6+24 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+21, P.E. 1D6+19 (Supernatural), P.B. 2D6+15, Spd on the ground/running/hopping 1D6+7, flying speed is 1D6x10+82 (66-97 mph/106 to 155 km)!

Attributes (Juvenile): I.Q. 8 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+1, M.A. 1D6+1, P.S. 1D6+10 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+15, P.E. 1D6+13, (Supernatural), P.B. 2D6+11, Spd running 1D6+2, flying speed is 1D6x10+41 (35-67 mph/56 to 107 km).

M.D.C.: Adult: 4D6x10+240. Juvenile: 2D6x10+120. (On an S.D.C. world, the adult Storm Eagle has 2D6x10+160 Hit Points and

2D6x10+60 S.D.C. with a Natural A.R. of 14, half for juveniles and they have a Natural A.R. of 12.)

Horror/Awe Factor: 15

P.P.E.: Adult: 2D6x10+100. Juvenile: 2D4x10+45.

Size: 9-14 feet (2.7 to 4.3 m) tall with a wingspan of 30-40 feet (9.1 to 12.2 m). Juveniles are 20% smaller, mature males are 10% larger.

Weight: 1D6x100 +200 pounds (135 to 360 kg), surprisingly light for a creature of its size. Juvenile animals weigh 20% less.

Plumage Note: Like most birds, the males are more brightly plumed and possess iridescent white and gold specs and highlights. Females have the same basic coloring, but without the white and gold highlights and their heads are less white and more light blue. Females are also 20% smaller.

Average Lifespan: Lightning Eagles are extremely long lived, with an average lifespan of 600 years.

Natural Abilities: As intelligent, predatory, Elemental birds, they understand the Elemental language at 66%. They can see the invisible, see in all spectrums of light, nightvision 1,200 feet (366 m), have perfect vision and can see a rabbit or recognize a face from up to 3 miles (4.8 km) away when they concentrate; are impervious electricity including M.D. lighting and electrical attacks; M.D. cold-based attacks do half damage; and Bio-Regenerate 2D6 M.D.C. every melee round/15 seconds. They also automatically recognize Elemental Air Primorda and are submissive to them, as well as to Greater Elementals and Elemental Intelligences.

Electrical Attack (special): All Lightning Eagles crackle with electrical energy and can unleash electricity when they bite or attack with their talons, as well as let loose with a bolt of electricity that resembles lightning. The creature can determine whether to strike without an electrical charge from its bite or talons (see Damage stats) or charge its beak or talons to inflict the additional damage below. There is no P.P.E. cost associated with this attack.

Damage Bonuses from charging beak or talons with electricity:

+1D6 M.D. to bite attacks.

+3D6 M.D. to claw attacks.

Also see Lightning Bolt Attack, below.

Electrical Aura (special): In attack mode or when feeling threatened, the Lightning Eagle's body crackles with electricity, creating a protective electrical field that covers its entire body. Primorda riders are impervious to the energy and actually feel energized by it. All other beings, however, take 1D4 M.D. just by touching the animal and 4D4 M.D. every melee round (15 seconds) they try to hang onto or ride the creature. No P.P.E. cost.

Invisible in Storm Clouds (special): Lightning Eagles automatically turn invisible when they fly among dark rain clouds, whether it is actually raining or not. During a storm, the animal becomes visible for a split second whenever lightning flashes near it. It also becomes visible whenever the giant eagle attacks or engages in combat. Duration: As long as the dark storm clouds remain and the eagle does not attack. When the creature stops its attack and flies back into the clouds, it becomes invisible again. No P.P.E. cost.

Lightning Bolt Attack (special): Once per melee, the adult bird can fire a 1D4x10 M.D. lightning bolt (the juvenile animal's blast does 4D6 M.D.). Requires line of sight and the animal must spend 6 P.P.E. per blast. The electrical blast seems to come from the animal's eyes or face and has a range of 1,500 feet (457 m); 50% farther when on a ley line. Only one blast per melee round is possible and counts as one attack. P.P.E. cost: 6 points per lightning bolt, no cost when flying along a ley line.

Sense Storms (special): The Lightning Eagle can sense when a thunderstorm or electrical storm is coming with 98% accuracy, as well as sense from which direction it approaches, how fast it is moving, and knows within 1D4 minutes when it will arrive at its present location. The storm can be sensed from up to 100 miles (160 km) away. This also applies to Ley Line Storms. No P.P.E. cost.

Skill-Like Abilities (special): Astronomy 50%, Detect Ambush 60%, Land Navigation 90%, Prowl (in the air only) 66% (+10% in clouds, fog or mist), and Tailing from above (animal or people) 80%.

Vulnerabilities: Slow moving and vulnerable on the ground. All attacks, except electricity, do their full, normal damage; fire and heat-based attacks and magic inflict 50% greater damage. Impervious to electricity and lightning.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Talons: As per Supernatural P.S. (typically 3D6 M.D.), +3D6 M.D. additional when also charged with electrical energy (6D6 total when charged). A diving attack is considered a high speed power punch that does 1D6x10 M.D. +3D6 M.D. from the electrical energy of the talon, but counts as two attacks.

Bite/Beak: 3D6 M.D. +1D6 M.D. additional when the beak is also charged with electrical energy (4D6 total when charged).

Lightning Bolt Attack (once per melee round): See details above.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +3 on initiative, +3 to strike, +1 to parry, +4 to dodge when airborne, no dodge on the ground, +4 to pull punch/bite/claw strike, +4 to roll with impact or fall, +2 to save vs magic, +1 to save vs mind control, +4 to save vs Horror Factor and possession.

Magic: Like Faeries and some other creatures of magic, the Lightning Eagle can cast a handful of Air Elemental spells. Opponents need a 14+ to save. Each spell requires the expenditure of P.P.E. **Note:** All spells are cast as if by a 4th level Warlock, and the eagle recovers P.P.E. at a rate of six points per hour, double on ley lines.

Breathe Without Air (3), Create Air (6), Create Light (2), Float in Air (6; without using wings to actually fly), Invisibility (20), and Thunder Clap (2). Only the first three spells are available to the juvenile animal. The spells are not spoken in human words and the creature does not possess spell knowledge, but it does make a different animal noise (shriek, chirping, whistle, etc.) before activating a particular spell.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Distrusts ground dwellers, but tolerates them if they are working with their Air Primorda ally. Seems to sense and recognize most demons and evil supernatural beings, which are regarded as natural enemies.

Allies: Indifferent to most except the Air Primorda, Air Warlocks, and Greater Elemental beings, most of whom are considered reliable allies.

Value: As intelligent animals of the air, they hate captivity and many will fight to the death rather than be taken alive and imprisoned. If captured and enslaved, the Storm Eagle does everything in its power to escape, including biting the hand that feeds it. If that fails, the animal falls into a deep depression and stops eating, eventually wasting away. Still, they can fetch 10,000-40,000 credits as monsters to fight in the gladiatorial arena, chained so they cannot fly far. However, the feathers of the Lightning Eagle possess magical properties valued by Alchemists, Bio-Wizards, Techno-Wizards, Shamans and some other mages. Its meat is not edible.

Small feathers fetch 2D6 credits each, the larger feathers 1D4x10 credits each and the large tail feathers (seven of them) get 1D6x100 credits each. The feathers can be used in magical charms, talismans, necklaces, earrings, headdresses and magic weapons.

Lightning Eagle Arrows: Using the feathers of a Lightning Eagle to guide an arrow makes the projectile able to fly straight and true (+1 to strike and 10% farther) without enchantment.

Enchanted Arrows: Arrows, javelins and spears adorned with Lightning Eagle feathers and properly *enchanted* fly straight and true 20% farther than normal and deliver an electrical charge that does 2D6 M.D. in addition to the usual damage for that weapon, but has only one use as the magic arrow or spear (and its feathers) are destroyed on impact. Shamans and Techno-Wizards can both create such arrows, javelins and spears. When they can get them, Techno-Wizards may also use the rare feathers instead of crystals as conduits

and lightweight batteries for electrical TW devices and TW weapons that fire electrical charges/lightning bolts.

Charms and Talismans: Bio-Wizards, Shamans and Alchemists (not Techno-Wizards) can use Lightning Eagle feathers to create charms that make the person carrying or wearing it resistant to lightning and electricity (half damage), impervious to lightning (no damage; requires more than one or two feathers and other components), resistant to energy attacks (half damage and requires additional magic and components), and talismans to save vs Elementals (+1 to save vs Elemental magic).

Magic Feather to Understand Elementals: A properly enchanted magical feather from a Lightning Eagle enables the person holding or wearing it (as jewelry, pin/brooch, earrings, headdress, one or more feathers in a headband or hat, etc.) to understand the spoken language of Elementals, Warlocks and Primorda at 60% proficiency, but not speak the language themselves; just understand it. **Note:** All these magic items and the feathers of Lightning Eagles are exceedingly rare on Rifts Earth and in most of the known universe. Less so on the Palladium World and in the United Worlds of Warlock in the Three Galaxies.

Habitat: Its place of origin is unknown. Presumably an unknown alien world or dimension of Air Elementals where the birds soar in the sky and rest atop mountains and/or gigantic trees. Wild flocks of Lightning Eagles are known to exist in the Air Elemental home dimension, but may originate elsewhere, and are found in small numbers on a few worlds of mortals, including various mountain ranges on Rifts Earth – as well as Mount Nimro, the mountains of the North and the Land of the Damned in the Palladium Fantasy RPG® setting.

Magma Lizard

Fire Primorda Riding Animal

This fiery reptile swims and basks in the warm lava pools formed by volcanoes as well as deep underground in the heart of volcanoes, hot springs and subterranean magma vents. The Magma Lizard is impervious to heat, fire and molten stone, and appears to be made of stone and lava itself. Between its scales, like replicas of rivers of lava visible through the cracked molten crust, is glowing red skin that looks as if lava pulses underneath its tough hide. The large, charcoal grey and black scales resemble cooled and crusted lava, and are hot to the touch. Not enough to burn, but enough to take quick notice of. And like the Lightning Eagle, when threatened or in attack mode, the Magma Lizard's body heats up enough to burn anyone who touches it. Of course, the Fire Primorda who use the great lizards as riding animals are impervious to M.D. fire and heat, but most others are not. When this happens, the scales across the entire body of the Magma Lizard more resemble hot coals than flesh, and burn to the touch. Only its padded and clawed feet do not burn, but even they are hot.

It is unknown if the Magma Beast is an actual lizard or some sort of Elemental creature actually made of lava and stone. Evidence suggests the latter, as its M.D.C. scales look and feel like rock and the *Stone to Flesh spell* hurts the beast, inflicting 5D6 M.D. every time it is cast upon the Magma Lizard. For this reason, it is sometimes referred to as the *Stone Lizard* or *Lava Lizard*.

Though it possesses a high animal intelligence, like a chimpanzee, the creature is definitely not related to dragons and is more animal than sentient. Physically, the body most resembles a monitor lizard with the head of a Gila monster and the long, thick tail of crocodile. The tail is used for swimming in lava, mud and water. The neck is short, thick, and heavily armored, and its head is as hard as stone. Sharp, conical teeth line the mouth, and the mucus-like drool is burning hot. As one might expect, the Magma Lizard can unleash a burst of M.D. fire and/or steam once per melee around. Its long, sharp claws are good for digging and climbing, as well as in battle.

All Magma Lizards love to swim in lava and bask on the burning hot crust of cooling lava fields around active volcanoes. Fire Primorda have no trouble riding and controlling Magma Lizards, and the creatures have been known to be domesticated by the likes of Simvan Monster Riders, Psi-Stalkers, Druids and even ordinary humans. Using the lizard as a domesticated riding animal can be a bit tricky (-10% to Horsemanship: Exotic Animals), as Magma Lizards are aggressive and like to engage in hunting and killing large animals as well as humanoids. Beings who are not impervious to heat usually ride the animal via a heat and fire resistant saddle.

Magma Lizard Stats

Note: Though seemingly made of stone and lava, the Magma Lizard is considered a *Fire Elemental creature*.

Also Known As: Magma Beast, Lava Lizard, Stone Lizard and Elemental Lizard.

Alignment: Any, but almost always Anarchist (75%) or Aberrant (20%). Though submissive to Primorda, Magma Lizards are bold and aggressive. The animal is always ready to fight and may battle to the death when backed into a corner, angry or hungry. They tend to have prickly temperaments, especially in cold climates and when annoyed. (**Note:** It feeds upon ley line energy and can go without physical food indefinitely along a ley line, but also likes to hunt, and preys upon large animals, including humans and other humanoids.) Most are aggressive in combat (-20% to *Horsemanship: Exotic Animals* skill when riding the creature while it is engaged in combat).

Attributes (Adult): I.Q. 9 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+3, M.A. 1D6+3, P.S. 2D4+26 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+14, P.E. 2D6+12 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+10, Spd 3D6+28 running on solid ground (typically 26 mph/41.6 km), Spd 3D6+61 swimming in lava, mud or water (typically 50 mph/80 km).

Attributes (Juvenile): I.Q. 7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+1, M.A. 1D6+1, P.S. 2D6+2, P.P. 1D6+8, P.E. 2D6+6, P.B. 1D6+5, Spd is same as the adult.

M.D.C.: **Adults:** 5D6x10+220. **Juvenile:** 3D6x10+110. (On an S.D.C. world, the adult Magma Lizard has 5D6x10+60 Hit Points and 1D6x10+60 S.D.C. with a Natural A.R. of 16; half the Hit Points and S.D.C. for the juvenile animal and a Natural A.R. of 15.)

Horror/Awe Factor: 14

P.P.E.: **Adult:** 1D6x10+80. **Juvenile:** 1D4x10+20.

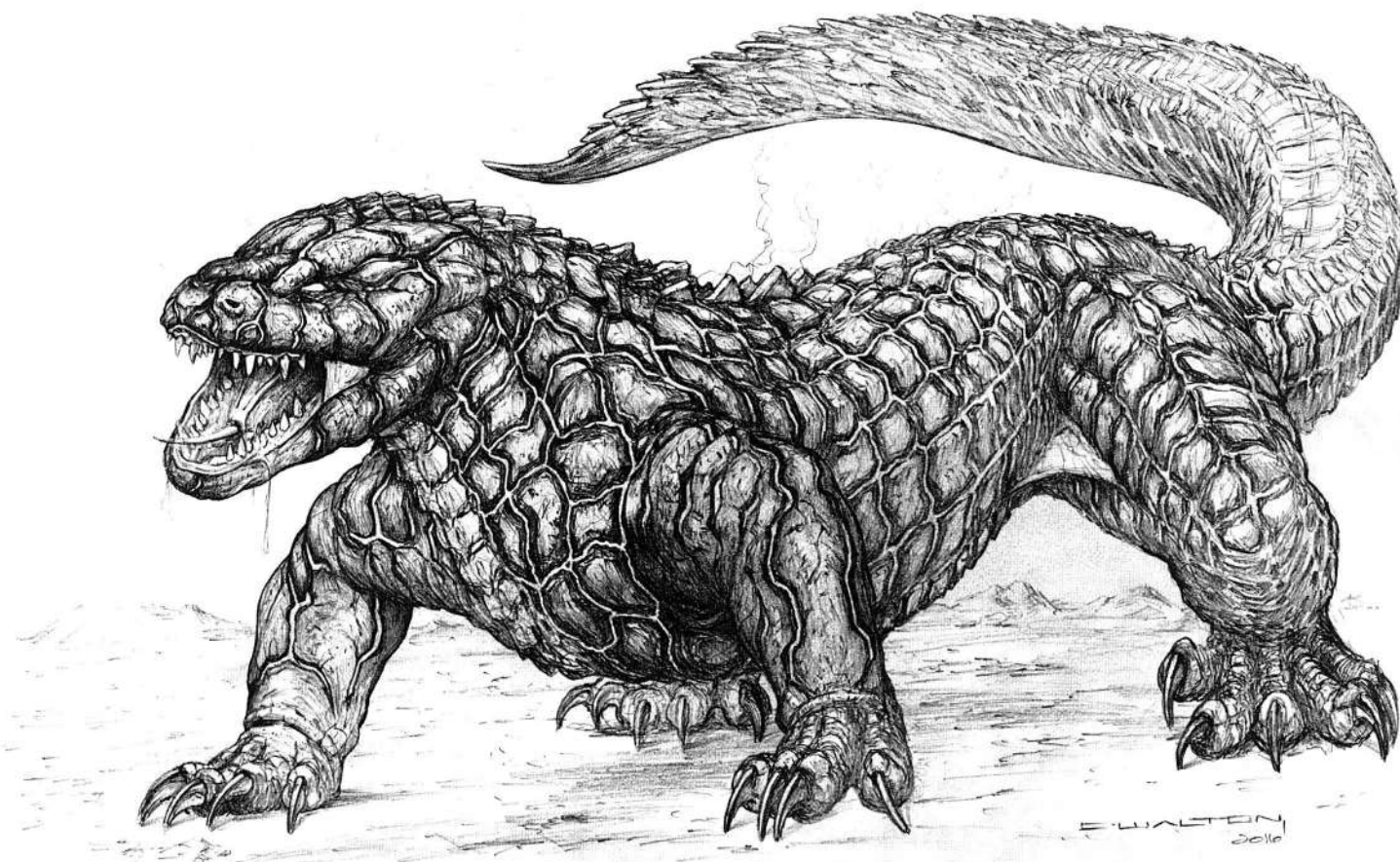
Size: Adults are 6-9 feet (1.8 to 2.7 m) tall at the shoulders. The neck and head can extend up to another 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m). The overall length of the Magma Lizard is 38-45 feet (11.6 to 13.7 m); approximately 18-20 feet (5.5 to 6.1 m) from snout to rump, with the tail extending to another 20-25 feet (6.1 to 7.6 m). Juveniles are 20% smaller. Adult females are 10% larger.

Weight: Adults are 12-16 tons. Juvenile animals are 30% lighter, while adult females are 10% heavier.

Gender: Like most reptiles, the female is slightly larger, and a more charcoal than black in color, but otherwise it is difficult to discern.

Average Lifespan: Magma Lizards are extremely long lived, with an average lifespan of 700-800 years. Mature females lay a clutch of 1D4+1 eggs every 1D4 years. Eggs hatch after five months. It takes seven years for the animal to reach full maturity and be able to bear offspring.

Natural Abilities: As intelligent, predatory, Elemental stone reptiles, they understand the Elemental language at 60%. The giant lizard can also see the invisible, see infrared and ultraviolet spectrums of light, including heat emanations equal to thermo-imaging at a range of 1,000 feet (305 m), nightvision 600 feet (183 m), impervious to M.D. heat/fire/plasma, and is able to safely breathe smoke, sulfur and toxic fumes common to volcanoes and underground vents, and Bio-Regenerates 2D6 M.D.C. every melee round/15 seconds. It also automatically recognizes Elemental Fire Primorda and is submissive to them, as well as to Greater Elementals and Elemental Intelligences.



Breathe Fire Attack (special): All Magma Lizards seethe with heat energy and can unleash a blast of fire like a flamethrower. Everything caught in its path takes 5D6 M.D. and flammable materials may catch fire (60% chance). Range: 120 feet (36.6 m). P.P.E. Cost: Five points.

Breathe Steam Attack (special): The giant lizard can unleash a blast of steam. Everything caught in its path takes 2D6 M.D. Range: 60 feet (18.3 m). P.P.E. Cost: None.

Burning Body: When angry, threatened or fighting, the body heat of the Magma Lizard rises to the point that anyone who touches its body without M.D. protection takes 1D4 M.D.; 4D4 M.D. per melee round when riding or holding onto the creature's body, unless impervious to fire/heat. Its drool also becomes boiling hot and does 3D6 S.D.C. when a large glob (a gallon/3.8 liters or more) hits bare flesh, and it smells like sulfur.

Digging (special): The claws of the Magma Lizard are made for climbing cooling lava flows and in and out of volcanoes, as well as breaking through the hard crust of cooling lava fields so that it can reach the soothing, boiling lava within.

Skill-Like Abilities (special): Climb 72% (20% rappelling), Detect Ambush 50%, Land Navigation 87%, Prowl 66% (in lava, mud and water only; prowl is not possible on land), Track Humanoids and Animals (60% by sight, has a poor sense of smell), and Swim 88% (in lava, mud and water; maximum depth underwater is six miles/9.6 km, but the Magma Lizard swims half as fast in cold water and avoids icy cold water; hates cold temperatures and suffers from the cold; see Vulnerabilities, below).

Vulnerabilities: Cold: M.D. ice weapons, cold magic and cold-based attacks do double damage. All other types of attacks, except heat, fire and plasma, do their full, normal damage. Hates Cold and Snow: The lizard becomes irritable and grumpy (-20% to riding skill) in climates where the temperature is near freezing or below; reduce running and swimming Spd by half in freezing temperatures. For that reason the lizard avoids cold waters unless it can find an underwater volcano or heat vents to enjoy.

Its large size makes the Magma Lizard an easy target in open ground, but only the head and rump show when swimming through lava, mud or water. The lizard's aggressive, hunter nature can also get it in trouble. Though the creature has decent speed on dry land (usually 25 mph/40 km), it is not the fastest steed on the battlefield.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Claw Strike: As per Supernatural P.S. (typically 3D6 M.D.) +3D6 M.D. from the large claws.

Tail Swat: 4D6 M.D.

Bite: 4D6 M.D.

Fire Breath and Steam Breath attacks (once, each, per melee round): See details above. Each breath attack counts as one of its melee attacks.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +3 to strike and parry, +1 to dodge (double dodge when in lava, mud or water), +4 to pull punch/bite/claw strike, +3 roll to roll with impact or fall, +1 to save vs magic, +4 to save vs Horror Factor and possession.

Magic: Like Faeries and some other creatures of magic, the Magma Lizard can cast a handful of Fire Elemental spells. Opponents need a 14+ to save. Each spell requires the expenditure of P.P.E. **Note:** All spells are cast as if by a 4th level Warlock and recover at a rate of six per hour, double on ley lines.

Breathe Without Air (3), Cloud of Smoke (2), Circle of Flame (10), Heat Object and Boil Water (4), Part Fire (8), and Stench of Hades (4). Only the first three spells are available to the juvenile animal. The spells are not spoken in human words and the creature does not possess spell knowledge per se, but it does make a different animal noise (growl, grunt, bark, howl, shriek, whine, etc.) before activating a particular spell.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Demons and evil supernatural beings which are regarded as natural enemies, as are creatures of ice and cold. Distrusts humanoids, but tolerates them if they are working with his Fire Primordially. May hunt and feed upon humanoids, particularly those who fall

in battle. It is interesting to note that demons and Deevils cannot tame these creatures, so they are not found in Hades or Dyval.

Allies: Indifferent toward most except the Fire Primorda, Fire Warlocks, and Greater Elemental beings, most of whom are considered reliable allies.

Value: As a giant guard animal, riding animal or gladiatorial combatant, the creature can fetch 10,000-40,000 credits. The tongue and eyes can get 2D4x100 credits from Necromancers, who can eat them to temporarily gain the monster's magic powers and skill-like abilities. Valued by Alchemists, Bio-Wizards, Techno-Wizards, Shamans and some other mages, the tongue and eyes may also be used to make potions of resistance or imperviousness to fire and heat.

The M.D.C. teeth are sometimes used to make simple, M.D. weapons such as knives, swords, pickaxes, and the heads of spears and pole arms. Small teeth get 1D4x10 credits, large teeth 2D4x10 credits. The rest of the Magma Lizard's body deteriorates rapidly, its stone-like hide crumbling into ash within 1D4 days. What little meat it has is not edible.

Habitat: Environments that are consistently boiling hot or at least very warm with access to lava/volcanoes. Seldom found in deserts due to the sharp drop in temperature at night.

Its place of origin is unknown. Presumably an alien world or dimension of Fire Elementals where the creature lives inside volcanoes, lava flows and hot springs. Though it can swim, Magma Lizards are not aquatic and prefer dry land, and hunt prey on land. Solitary hunters, the lizards may congregate with others of their kind, especially in and around lava, like crocodiles or alligators, but tend to hunt alone or in mated pairs or small family groups of two parents and 1D4 juveniles. When food is scarce, adult Magma Lizards may prey on the smaller young. The animals are found in small numbers on a few worlds in the Three Galaxies and a few active volcanoes on Rifts Earth – as well as Mount Nimro, the Yin-Sloth Jungles and the Land of the Damned in the **Palladium Fantasy RPG®** setting.

Stone Buffalo

Earth Primorda Riding Animal

The Stone Buffalo, like the Magma Lizard, is presumed to be some sort of Elemental creature that has more in common with Elementals than mammals. It has a bovine appearance very reminiscent of Earth bison, only its hide is made of stone with tall grass and vines on the underbelly, neck, shoulders, haunches, lower legs, and tail where you would expect shaggy fur on a buffalo. Instead of buffalo horns, it has a pair of massive antlers that seem to be both moose and deer-like. The rock portions of its body are usually brownish grey to light grey stone, while its shaggy mane, tail and other parts are made of long grass and leafy vines that are various shades of green. Its limbs are thick and powerful, and even the shaggy green vegetation on its body grows on a thick, leathery M.D.C. hide.

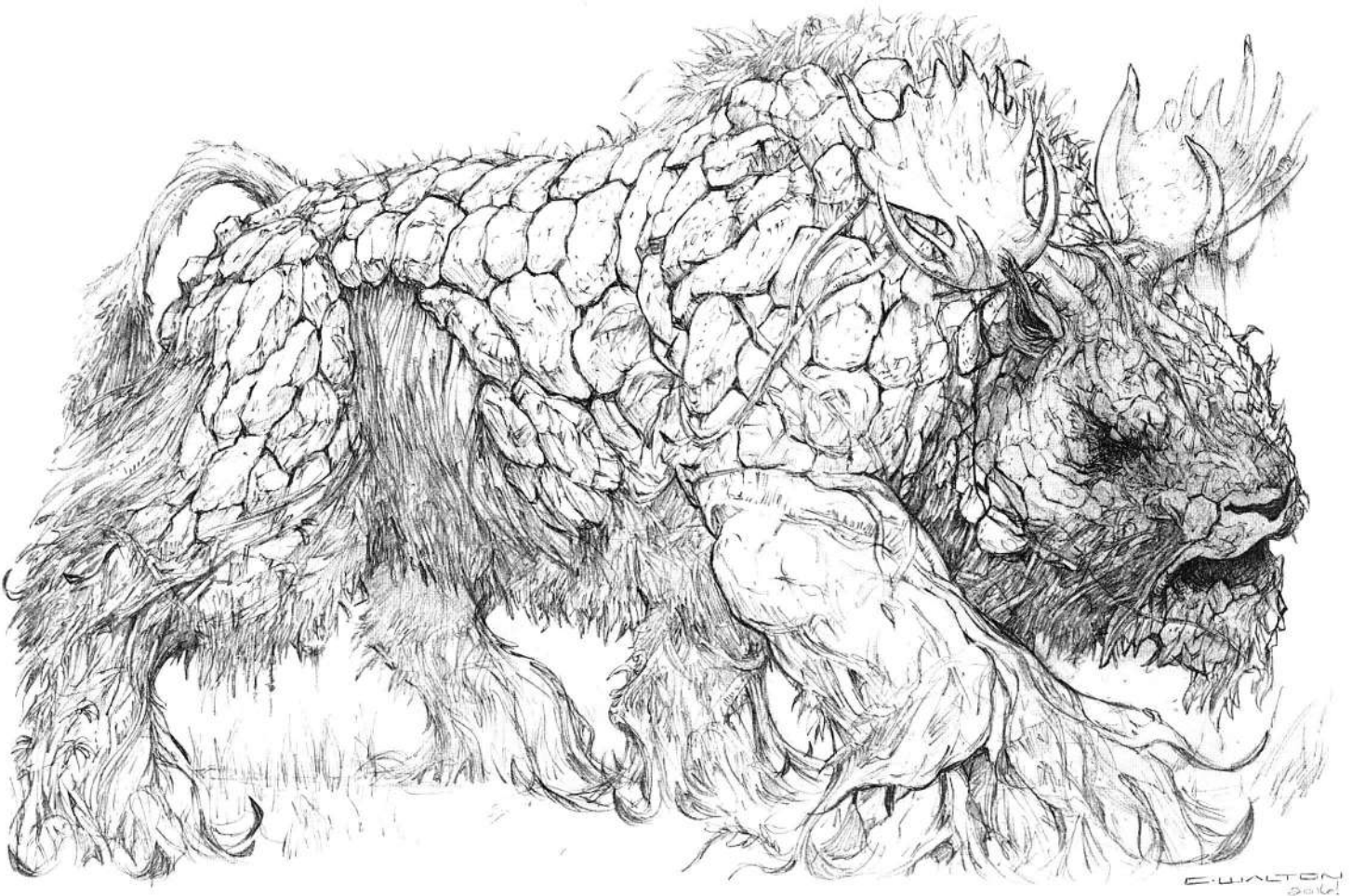
Despite its bovine appearance, this odd creature behaves more like a rhinoceros than a timid herd animal. They are much more aggressive and dangerous than bison, and gather in small groups (2D6+2) rather than vast herds. They can survive most environments and climates, but prefer forests, low mountains and valleys covered in forest, and grasslands. Stone Buffalo are scavengers that can survive on ley line energy indefinitely, but prefer to scrounge for physical food. That food can be just about anything from grass, vines and weeds, to hay, fruits, vegetables, garbage, insects, road kill, dry bones, and the remains of dead animals and people. The latter includes people and animals slain when they foolishly attack the great beast. When hungry enough, a Stone Buffalo may eat twigs and the wood of fallen trees, paper and wood products, upholstery, clothing and just about anything but concrete, stones, and steel. Though it may eat plastic, the material provides no nourishment and may upset its stomach.

If a Stone Buffalo is attacked or feels threatened, the massive creature stomps its feet, lowers its head and prepares to charge. The size of its opponents does not matter to this large animal, so giant predators, robots, armored vehicles and monsters bigger than it do not intimidate the beast. Since it is not a predatory animal, Stone Buffalos are satisfied with chasing away "threats" – including robots and vehicles. Consequently, its first few charging maneuvers are accompanied by plenty of snorting, grunting and foot stomping in an attempt to show the intruder who is boss, and that they need to back away and give it (and its group if gathered in numbers) a wide berth. However, if attacked, the creature charges with the intent to destroy the threat. That is done by slamming into it/ them head first, slashing with its antlers, stomping, kicking and, when suitable, biting. Getting hit by a Stone Buffalo is akin to being struck by a train or rolled over by a bulldozer. If running through a pack of animals or a crowd of people, it shakes its head to hit and slash several targets in the crowd as it runs clear through them. It then turns around and repeats the attack as often as necessary to scatter and chase them away. Anyone caught underfoot gets trampled. People not fast enough to dodge or clad in heavy armor are likely to be killed in the first attack. If the threat is as large or bigger than it is, the Stone Buffalo usually rams it first with the intent of knocking its opponent down. When down, the animal goes for the underbelly, goring it with its horns or kicking and stomping it to death. If a larger enemy remains standing after the Stone Buffalo's initial ram attack, it continues its attack by battering and ripping at it with its head and antlers, and/or via more devastating ram attacks. Just getting butted by a creature as heavy and powerful as a Stone Buffalo can inflict considerable damage. Being trampled or gored by it can be brutal.

Earth Primorda have no trouble controlling and riding Stone Buffalo, but the creature is also known to be domesticated by the likes of *Simvan Monster Riders*, *Psi-Stalkers*, *Druids* and even *ordinary humans*. Though comparatively rare on Rifts Earth, stories about the creature have spread everywhere, making them coveted as powerful riding animals and beasts of burden for heavy labor. Stone Buffalo tamed while young are easily domesticated and make excellent riding animals (+10% to Horsemanship: Exotic Animals), provided the animal is ridden or used a lot. Left alone for long periods of time, they revert to their untamed, wild behavior. Their aggressive yet steady nature makes them ideal for use as massive warhorses, as the animal is not easily spooked and is willing to charge down groups of humanoids, dinosaurs and other large animals as well as attack and ram combat vehicles and giant robots. Stone Buffalo are a favorite riding animal of Earth Primorda everywhere, but on Rifts Earth, so are Fury Beetles and almost any type of dinosaur.

It should be noted that the Stone Buffalo's fearlessness and willingness to face all challenges makes capturing adults very difficult and dangerous. So is capturing their young. The parents, and all adult animals in a small herd (typically 2D6+2 animals), will fight to the death to protect the young in their group. This means somehow separating the young from the adult animals, or subduing or slaying the adults to capture the young. It helps that Stone Buffalo do not fear, and even seem to like and tolerate, humans and most other humanoids, allowing them to get close enough to walk with them and even pet them. That takes courage, because a sudden move that is interpreted as aggression may cause the animal to butt or stomp the person. Scholars familiar with animal behavior believe the Stone Buffalo knows it has little to fear from your average human or D-Bee, so it lets them get close, attacking only if startled or threatened. The same is not true of people clad in power armor or riding vehicles. The machinery makes the great beast nervous and causes them to move away or attack.

Even stronger than they appear (Supernatural P.S.), domesticated Stone Buffalos make excellent beasts of burden ideal for caravan work, moving large, heavy blocks of stone and transporting other heavy cargo, pulling trees out by their roots, removing boulders, knocking down stone walls and demolishing buildings. Need the remains of a giant robot or tank hauled away? Lash it to a Stone Buffalo. They can also be used for tilling the land and harvesting crops, but such light labor seems wasted on these animals.



Stone Buffalo Stats

Note: Though seemingly made of stone and plants, the Stone Buffalo is considered an *Earth Elemental creature*.

Also Known As: Stone Rhino, Tree Buffalo, and Giant Moss Moose.

Alignment: Any, but generally considered Scrupulous (20%), Unprincipled (50%) or Anarchist (25%).

Attributes (Adult): I.Q. 1D4+9 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+9, M.A. 1D6+9, P.S. 2D6+30 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+12, P.E. 2D6+14 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+12, Spd 2D6+48 running (typically 36 mph/57.6 km) and can run at full speed for six hours straight before tiring and slowing down by half. It can run at half speed or slower indefinitely.

Attributes (Juvenile): I.Q. 1D4+5 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+3, M.A. 1D6+6, P.S. 2D6+14 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+8, P.E. 2D6+8 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+8, Spd is 30% is less than the adult.

M.D.C.: Adults: 6D6x10+290. Juvenile: 3D6x10+145. (On an S.D.C. world, the adult Stone Buffalo has 1D4x100 Hit Points and 3D6x10 S.D.C. with a Natural A.R. of 16; half the Hit Points and S.D.C. for the juvenile animal and a Natural A.R. of 15.)

Horror/Awe Factor: 14

P.P.E.: Adult: 2D4x10+80. Juvenile: 1D4x10+40.

Horror/Awe Factor: 14

Size: 9-12 feet (2.6 to 3.7 m) to the crest on the back. Overall length is 20-24 feet (6.1 to 7.3 m). Adult males have a set of antlers 5-7 feet (1.5 to 2.1 m) wide. Juveniles are 30% smaller. Females are 20% smaller than males. Babies are the size of a full grown cow. It takes four years for a Stone Buffalo to reach full maturity and size.

Weight: Adults are 12-16 tons. Juveniles are 4-8 tons; babies weigh one ton at birth.

Gender: Females are 20% smaller and their antlers are slimmer and smaller, more like those of a deer; male antlers are wide and heavy like those of a moose.

Average Lifespan: They are extremely long lived, with an average lifespan of 700-900 years. Juveniles are born after 2 years in utero, and take two years to grow to "juvenile" size. They reach full maturity in another three years.

Natural Abilities: As an intelligent Elemental creature, the Stone Buffalo understands the Elemental language at 76%, can see the invisible, daylight and nightvision 800 feet (244 m; eyesight is fair), keen sense of smell and can track a specific scent like a bloodhound at 76% (+10% to track a member of its herd or to follow a blood scent), and can smell fire, the dead on a battlefield, garbage, and civilization up to 12 miles (19.2 km) away. Maximum leaping ability is 10 feet (3 m) high or 20 feet (6.1 m) across; increase by 20% with a running start. It is also resistant (half damage) to electricity, cold and fire, but M.D. lasers, ion, particle beams, explosives, rail gun rounds and physical M.D. attacks inflict full damage; and Bio-Regenerates 3D6 M.D.C. every melee round/15 seconds. It automatically recognizes Elemental Earth Primorda and is submissive to them, as well as to Greater Elementals and Elemental Intelligences.

Control Plants on its Body (special): The Stone Buffalo can control and manipulate the vines, tall grass and other plants growing on its body to provide hand holds and places for feet to help humanoids climb onto its back, and to secure passengers or cargo. In the alternative, the animal can make the vines and plants *uncooperative*, loose and difficult to grab (moves out of the way, etc.) to prevent humanoids and climbing animals from getting a good handhold or footing, so they cannot climb up or hang on for long (-30% penalty to Climbing skill). When necessary, a Stone Buffalo can toss out 2D4 vines, like rope, to attach to a tree, boulder or other support to pull itself (or others) free of mud, deep water, a shallow pit, or to steady itself as it goes up an incline. Typical maximum vine length is 24 feet/7.3 m. It may use the vines to secure and anchor itself when necessary, or to lead its young on a tether. **Note:** These vines and plants cannot be

used to lasso, ensnare or tie up animals or people/prisoners, or while running.

Sense Earth Stability (special): The Stone Buffalo can tell if the ground underfoot and nearby, around it, is solid and safe or unstable, loose and dangerous; e.g. can sense loose earth and rocks, quicksand, bog, mud, hollow earth ready to cave in or become a sinkhole, etc., at 86% proficiency. Can sense an impending, natural earthquake 20 minutes before it occurs and move to safer ground. **Note:** The Stone Buffalo can magically stabilize the ground for two melee rounds (30 seconds) at the cost of 4 P.P.E., long enough for it to walk across it and move past the unstable earth. Covers a 120 foot (36.6 m) length, seven feet (2.1 m) wide or 840 square feet (78 sq. m).

Sense the Location of Fresh Water (special): 90% within a range of five miles (8 km).

Sense the Location of Plants (special): 95% within a range of five miles (8 km).

Travel Through Stone or Wood Walls/Barriers (special): Eight times a day, the Stone Buffalo can travel through solid stone or wood, walking right through a boulder, a stone wall, fallen trees, standing trees, a wooden fence or barricade, and even S.D.C. concrete without hurting the structure or the animal itself. This applies to any rider, equipment or load on the animal's back or any wagon and cargo it may be pulling behind it! This innate ability is basically the same as the spell *Travel Through Walls*, which means the Buffalo cannot walk through M.D.C. concrete, steel, ceramics or plastic; only wood, rock, and dense tangles of trees, vines or underbrush. For the Stone Buffalo, the distance of travel "through" such materials is 200 feet (61 m). P.P.E. Cost: 4 P.P.E. per activation, but is limited to a maximum of eight times per 24 hour period.

Skill-Like Abilities (special): Detect Ambush 40% (+30% in forest settings), Detect Concealment 30% (+30% in forests), Herd Cattle 70%, Land Navigation 92%, Prowl 22% (only applicable when moving slower than a Spd of 8), Track (see Natural Abilities, above), and Swim 50% (only a fair swimmer, very heavy).

Vulnerabilities: Its large size makes the Stone Buffalo an easy target in open ground, plus the sound of it running is like thunder. The animal's fearlessness and willingness to charge and fight any threat, can also get it in trouble. This trait can be circumvented by a rider. Though the creature has good running speed (36 mph/57.6 km), it cannot outrun most vehicles, combat robots or power armor.

Attacks per Melee: Six.

Damage: Bite: 2D6 M.D.

Head Butt or Body Bump (blunt attack, not using its antlers): 1D6 M.D. for a warning, 2D6 M.D. for an attack.

Body Strike: 3D6 M.D. An attack in which the Stone Buffalo hits and pushes with its 12+ ton body, like a tap from a slow-moving vehicle. Counts as one melee attack.

Body Ram: 5D6+6 M.D. This is a running maneuver and counts as two melee attacks. An attack in which the Stone Buffalo bangs into an opponent with its rocky 12+ ton body, like a sideswipe from a vehicle.

Swipe or Butt with Antlers: 4D6 M.D. Counts as one melee attack.

Antler Goring Attack: 1D4x10 M.D. (only possible against targets its size or larger). Counts as one melee attack.

Ram with Antlers: 1D6x10 M.D. This is a charging attack and counts as two melee attacks. 50% chance of knocking back or knocking down an opponent, causing him to lose one melee attack.

Full Speed Charging Ram with Antlers: 2D6x10+20 M.D.! This is a *charging, power attack* and counts as four melee attacks. There is an 88% likelihood that targets smaller and lighter than the animal are thrown 1D4x10 feet (3-12.2 m) and are stunned (lose 1D4+1 melee attacks, but can parry and dodge incoming attacks). There is a 55% chance that a target larger than the Stone Buffalo is knocked off its feet and loses two melee attacks. 50% chance a vehicle lighter than the Stone Buffalo struck in this fashion *from the side* may be flipped onto its side or flipped over onto its roof, or veers off and crashes into

something else nearby (G.M.'s discretion). If the vehicle is speeding toward the Buffalo Elemental and there is a head on collision, the vehicle stops in its tracks and takes double damage! But the Buffalo also takes 5D6 M.D.

Stomp Attack (front legs): 5D6 M.D., rears up and drops down. Counts as one attack.

Kick Attack (rear legs): 1D6x10 M.D., but -1 to strike. Counts as one attack.

Trample: 1D4x10 M.D., literally runs over its victim.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +4 to strike, +4 to parry with horns, +2 to dodge when running, +4 to pull punch/butt/ram/bite, +4 roll to with impact or fall, +1 to save vs magic, +5 to save vs Horror Factor and possession.

Magic: Like Faeries and some other creatures of magic, the Stone Buffalo can cast a handful of Earth Elemental spells. Opponents need a 14+ to save. Each spell requires the expenditure of P.P.E. **Note:** All spells are cast as if by a 4th level Warlock and P.P.E. is recovered at a rate of six points per hour, double on ley lines.

Breathe Without Air (3), Chameleon (5), Dust Storm (5), Earth Rumble (10), Hopping Stones (6), Identify Plants (3), and Rot Wood (4). Only the first four spells are available to the juvenile animal. The spells are not spoken in human words and the creature does not possess spell knowledge per se, but it does make a different animal noise (growl, grunt, bark, howl, snort, whine, etc.) before activating a particular spell.

Psionics: None.

Enemies: Indifferent to most creatures, but instinctively distrust and hate demons of every variety and most evil supernatural beings.

Allies: Other Stone Buffalo, Earth Primorda, Greater Elementals and Elemental Intelligences. The animal also shows an affinity for humans and other mortal humanoids.

Value: As a giant, powerful work and construction animal, riding animal or gladiatorial combatant, the creature can fetch 10,000-60,000 credits. It has no other value, and has no meat to be sold or eaten, only dirt, roots and stone. Its stone hide crumbles within 12 hours after it is slain.

Habitat: Stone Buffalo can live almost anywhere, but prefer mixed forest and lush grassland environments, especially low mountain forests and lush valleys. Can be found with the Earth Primorda anywhere, including underground and in desert or arctic climates. On Rifts Earth, several small herds are known to run wild along the Rocky Mountains and into the mountains and plains of Northern Mexico. A few small herds and individual Stone Buffalo are also known to exist in parts of Russian and Mongolia. Typically encountered as lone individuals, mated pairs or small groups of 1D4+2.

Water Fin

Water Primorda Riding Animal

This strange, blue and white fish is part giant eel, part seahorse and part dragon with the head of a fish. It has an array of frilly fins and a lower body reminiscent of a seahorse, a pair of powerful arms that end in claws, a head that resembles a marlin, a crown of sharp spikes running from the forehead and down the neck, but it has smooth, rubbery skin more like that of an eel or dolphin. Coloration ranges from blues and greens, to green with gold and brown fins and highlights, and most have black-tipped fins and accents. The belly is a cool, pinkish, light grey or a creamy white.

Despite a menacing appearance at first glimpse, with its sword-nose, claws and large size, Water Fins are highly intelligent and playful creatures. They are the favorite riding animal of Water Primorda in water and on land. The animal may be used to track and corral large schools of fish, or function as a guard animal and companion. Water Fins love to swim, play and explore, and always have time to chase and play with other Water Fins, Water Primorda, whales, dolphins, otters, humans and

aquatic humanoids. Of all the known Elemental beasts, the Water Fin is one of the most friendly and understanding of humans, D-Bees and other intelligent beings. The creature is an omnivore that eats fish, shrimp, crabs, turtles, seaweed and other aquatic animals and vegetation, but like the other Elemental beasts, can survive indefinitely by absorbing and processing the mystic energy at ley lines. On the surface it can subsist on a wide range of vegetation, fruit, vegetables, garbage, and grain, but it prefers fish, frogs, turtles and other aquatic animals and seaweed plucked from lakes, rivers, and swamps whenever it can. Fish and seaweed, with crayfish, crabs and other crustaceans, are always its favorite food.

Though a creature of the sea, the Water Fin can survive on land indefinitely, slithering across the ground like a snake and rearing up like a cobra to defend itself or fight. It can also run, if you will, in a loping manner, pulling itself across the ground with its two, powerful arms/front legs. In combat, it slashes and stabs enemies with its sword-like nose fin, strikes them with its tail, or rips them to ribbons with its clawed hands.

Water Fin Stats

Note: Though seemingly an amphibious animal, the Water Fin is considered a *Water Elemental creature*.

Also Known As: Giant Sword Eel, Giant Sea Cobra, and Elemental Seahorse.

Alignment: Any, but almost always Scrupulous (50%), Unprincipled (25%), or Anarchist (20%).

Attributes (Adult): I.Q. 1D4+10 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+8, M.A. 1D6+16, P.S. 2D6+20 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+13, P.E. 2D6+13 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+10, Spd 2D6+22 on land (typically 20 mph/32 km), but in the water or on ice Spd is 2D6+55 (typically 41 mph/66 km), and can swim at full speed five hours straight before tiring and slowing down by half; double speed on a ley line. It can swim indefinitely at half speed or slower.

Attributes (Juvenile): I.Q. 1D4+7 (high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+4, M.A. 1D6+13, P.S. 2D6+12 (Supernatural), P.P. 1D6+10, P.E. 2D6+8 (Supernatural), P.B. 1D6+9, Spd is 20% is less than the adult.

M.D.C.: Adults: 4D6x10+210. Juvenile: 2D6x10+140. (On an S.D.C. world, the adult Water Fin has 3D6x10+120 Hit Points and 2D6x10+60 S.D.C. with a Natural A.R. of 14; half the Hit Points and S.D.C. for the juvenile animal and a Natural A.R. of 13.)

Size: 30-40 feet (15.2 to 24.4 m) long from the tip of the nose to the end of its tail.

Height: On dry land, the Water Fin can move low to the ground, slithering on its belly like a snake, 4-6 feet (1.2 to 1.8 m) tall, and can easily hide in tall reeds, weeds and underbrush. When it rears up like a snake to look around or strike, the head can be raised up as high as 25% of its overall length. That means a short, 50 footer can rise up 12 feet (3.7 m) tall. Juveniles are 20% smaller. Females are 10% larger than males. Newborns are the size of a man's arm. It takes four years for one to reach full maturity and size.

Weight: Adults are 4-6 tons. Juveniles are 2-4 tons; babies weigh only 20 pounds (9 kg) at birth.

Gender: Females are 10% larger than males.

Average Lifespan: They are extremely long lived, with an average lifespan of 600-700 years. Young are born underwater and hatch from 1D4 eggs that are placed in a concealed pouch in the male animal. They hatch 18 months later and take two years to grow to "juvenile" size. They reach full maturity in another two years.

Horror/Awe Factor: 13

P.P.E.: Adult: 2D4x10+88. Juvenile: 1D4x10+44.

Horror/Awe Factor: 13

Natural Abilities: As an intelligent Elemental creature, the Water Fin understands the Elemental language at 76%, can see the invisible, has good day vision roughly equal to humans, nightvision and can see in murky water 1,200 feet (366), can leap out of water 10 feet (3 m) high and 30 feet (6.1 m) across; increase by 40% if swimming near or at full speed (likes to chase and play with dolphins). It is also impervious to cold (no damage), resistant to electricity (half damage), can survive a depth of up to 5 miles (8 km) underwater, and Bio-Regenerates 2D6 M.D.C. per melee round.



Breathe Steam Attack (special): The Water Fin can unleash a blast of steam. Everything caught in its path takes 2D6 M.D. Range: 50 feet (15.2 m). P.P.E. Cost: None.

Snow and Ice Travel (special): The Water Fin's serpentine body has a length of barbed fins along its sides, plus its snake-like method of movement and sharp claws enable it to "swim" and slither across the top of deep snow at full speed, and travel downhill and across ice (and mud) at speeds twice as fast! In fact, it enjoys sliding and gliding on its belly along any slippery surface, using its clawed hands to pull and push faster or slow down, and its fin quills to navigate, make sharp turns and slow down or stop with impressive control (equal to Ski/Snowboard skill, see below).

See in Fog (special): This Elemental beast can see 200 feet (61 m) in the densest, pea soup fog; double in thinner fogs. P.P.E. Cost: None.

Sense Storms (special): The Water Fin can sense when a rain-storm, thunderstorm, squall, hurricane or Tsunami is coming with 92% accuracy, as well as sense from which direction it approaches, how fast it is moving, and knows within 1D6 minutes when it will arrive at its present location. The storm can be sensed from up to 100 miles (160 km) away. This also applies to Ley Line Storms. No P.P.E. cost.

Ski/Sled on Snow and Skate/Slide on Ice (special): Water Fins love snow and ice, and can navigate both easily. It is nothing for the creature to snake its way across snow-covered fields and even zoom down tall hills and snowy mountains. The fun-loving animal likes to belly flop into the snow and ski down the side of hills and mountains as if it were riding a snowboard. It also enjoys sliding along frozen lakes and is excellent at rapidly skating across ice. The two long fins along its side are lined with long, sharp, black and gold quills that the creature uses to control its speed, and make sharp turns and quick stops. The tail is used as both a rudder and a means to increase speed. The claws of its front arms also give it control on the ice and for climbing snow or iced covered inclines and rocks. The Water Fin slides across any slippery surface on its belly using its clawed hands, fins and tail to guide and navigate the slick material. This sliding/skating/skiing doubles the Water Fin's natural running speed without fear of falling or crashing; applicable to ice, snow, mud, standing water and other slick surfaces. In situations where the ground is dry, the Water Fin may use its magic to create an icy path in front of it upon which to slide (or to slow down pursuers). This is just a thin layer of ice that melts quickly in warm climates, but gets the job done. There is no P.P.E. cost other than the Water Elemental spell to create the ice. **Base Skill, Ski/Sled/Skate: 94%.**

Travel Through Snow Mounds and Ice Barriers (special): Five times a day, the Water Fin can travel through solid packed snow or a wall of solid ice, swimming or slithering right through it as if it were not there. Any rider and equipment or load on the animal's back is carried through the ice or snow with it. This innate ability is fundamentally the same as the Earth spell *Travel Through Walls*, except the creature cannot walk through other materials such as stone, wood, underbrush, a dense tangles of seaweed, etc. The distance of travel "through" snow or ice is 200 feet (61 m). P.P.E. Cost: 4 per each activation, but is limited to a maximum of five times per 24 hour period.

Skill-Like Abilities (special): Climbing 85%/60%, Dowsing 75%, Herd Cattle 60% (+15% to herd schools of fish), Land Navigation 80%, Prowl 55% (applicable when moving slower than a Spd of 8 on land, Spd 20 in the water; +10% to Prowl underwater), Swim 98%, and Underwater Navigation 98%.

Vulnerabilities: **Fire:** M.D. fire, plasma, fire magic and heat-based attacks inflict double damage. All other types of attacks do their full, normal damage, except electricity which does half damage, and cold which does no damage.

Hates Fire and Extreme Heat: The Water Fin becomes irritable and distressed (-10% to riding skill) in climates where the air temperature is 105 degrees Fahrenheit (40.5 C) or greater; reduce running/crawling Spd by half in such extreme heat. In waters that are

at or near boiling, -30% to riding skill and reduce swimming speed and combat bonuses by half. For that reason, the creature avoids hot springs and hot waters near underwater volcanoes or heat vents. The Water Fin's playfulness and trusting nature toward humanoids can also get it in trouble. And though the creature has decent speed on dry land, it is not the fastest steed on the battlefield.

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Damage: Sword-Nose Blunt Attack: As per Supernatural P.S. (typically 3D6 M.D.).

Sword-Nose Slash or Stabbing Attack: 5D6 M.D.

Claw Strike: +5D6 M.D.

Tail Swat: 3D6 M.D.

Bite: 1D4 M.D.

Steam Breath attack (once, per melee round): See details above. Each breath attack counts as one of its melee attacks.

Cannot do a power strike with sword-nose, tail or claws.

Bonuses (in addition to possible attribute bonuses): +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +4 to parry, +2 to dodge (double in water, mud, snow, or when on ice), +4 to pull punch/bite/claw strike, +2 roll to roll with impact or fall, +2 to save vs magic, +5 to save vs Horror Factor and possession.

Magic: Like Faeries and some other creatures of magic, the Water Fin can cast a handful of Water Elemental spells. Opponents need a 14+ to save. Each spell requires the expenditure of P.P.E. **Note:** All spells are cast as if by a 4th level Warlock and P.P.E. recovers at a rate of six per hour, double on ley lines.

Breathe Without Air (3), Command Fish (10), Create Fog (2), Fog of Fear (7), Salt Water to Fresh (4), Sheet of Ice (15), and Ride the Waves (7). Only the first three spells are available to the juvenile animal. The spells are not spoken in human words and the creature does not possess spell knowledge per se, but it does make a different animal noise (squeal, click, growl, grunt, bark, whine, etc.) before activating a particular spell.

Psionics: Minor Psychic! 3D6+20 I.S.P. Abilities are limited to the following: Sense Evil (2), Sense Magic (3), and Telekinetic Leap (8; 15 feet/4.6 m high or lengthwise, double along a ley line).

Enemies: Indifferent to most creatures, but instinctively distrust and hate demons of every variety and most evil supernatural beings. In the wild they are sometimes targeted by large predators and demons who like the sport of hunting such wild and powerful creatures.

Allies: Fellow Water Fins, other Elemental beasts, Water Primorda, whales, dolphins, humans, D-Bees and aquatic humanoids, but most are quick to befriend and help anyone recognized to be in danger. The creatures also associate with Greater Elementals and Elemental Intelligences.

Value: As a giant riding or work animal, companion/pet, or gladiatorial combatant, the creature can fetch 10,000-40,000 credits. The tongue and eyes are worth 2D6x100 credits from Necromancers, who can eat them to temporarily gain the monster's magic powers and skill-like abilities. Valued by Alchemists, Bio-Wizards, Techno-Wizards, Shamans and some other mages, the tongue and eyes may also be used to make potions for resistance to cold and imperviousness to cold. The long, narrow fin quills can be used to make magic wands as well as M.D.C. needles, darts, spikes, arrowheads, spearheads, harpoons, and for the longest, javelins. All weapons with the quill of a Water Fin are +1 to strike and inflict +1D4 additional M.D. (or +1D6 S.D.C. damage). The bone of its sword-like nose can be used for carving harpoons. The meat of the animal is also good tasting, and is reminiscent to swordfish.

Habitat: Oceans, rivers, lakes and coastal regions. On Rifts Earth, it is most likely to be encountered in the Atlantic Ocean, especially the North Atlantic, probably originating from the Bermuda Triangle, but they are also in the waters around Antarctica. In Palladium Fantasy, the Water Fin is most likely to be found in and around the Sea of Despair and the Northern Ocean. It can be found with the Water Primorda anywhere, including inland, away from the water.

Blood Diamonds

An Adventure for Heroes Unlimited™, Ninjas & Superspies™, or Nightbane®

By Thomas Morrison

Introduction

In *The Rifter*® #62, Palladium Books was kind enough to publish an article I wrote for **Heroes Unlimited**™ about an INTERPOL affiliated superhuman organization called the **World Association of Super-Humans** (WASH). Under United Nations mandate, WASH is dedicated to the goal of bringing to justice the worst international criminals in the world: genocidal dictators, brutal warlords, murderous terrorists, and traffickers in human misery.

Here is an adventure which can be used with that official supplemental material or as a stand-alone adventure. Please note that though it is designed with **Heroes Unlimited**™ in mind, it can be easily modified for use with **Ninjas & Superspies**™, **Nightbane**® or even **RECON** (minus the superhumans), and any campaign where the heroes get down to the business of following an international criminal organization's "money trail." While drugs remain the number one moneymaker for the richest criminal cartels, it is the multi-billion dollar trade in illicit gemstones, often called **blood diamonds**, that fuels some of the most genocidal conflicts of today. The blood diamonds are also used to support other criminal operations, smuggling, human trafficking, espionage and terrorism.

Design Note: Game Masters, please feel free to add more villains with super-abilities or magic to best accommodate and challenge your player group. Elements of magic and ancient African mysticism could also come into play, as well, especially among the villains. If this adventure is used for **Ninjas & Superspies**™, you can either keep or add more super beings, or swap them out for superspies and martial artists with mystical powers. Likewise, if for **Nightbane**® – and this would make great material for **Nightbane**® and the evil machinations of the Nightlords – substitute superbeings with the appropriate Night Princes, demons, monsters and **Nightbane**!

Moreover, use this is as just the beginning for a campaign that carries your heroes across the globe. It starts in one place in Africa and leads to another location on the continent, and then perhaps to the Middle East or Asia, and then Indonesia or Europe and who knows where. Have fun with it. Follow the trail of the blood diamonds and the criminals, terrorists, and super-villains who use them in their underworld endeavors. This could lead to drug, weapon and human (or superhuman, or **Nightbane**) trafficking, and so on. What does the superhuman underworld look like? Uncork those imaginations and run with the possibilities.

Background

Hutus and Tutsis live in the area of Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, and the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) (formerly *Zaire*). They share the same language (Central Bantu), give their children many of the same names, and have similar cultures. Despite their many similarities, these two ethnic groups have fought *five* genocidal conflicts in the modern era: in 1960, Hutus in Rwanda killed an estimated 300,000 Tutsis; in 1972, Tutsis in Burundi killed an estimated 100,000 Hutus; in 1993-1994, Hutus in Rwanda killed another 800,000 Tutsis; those same years, Hutus in Burundi killed about 50,000-100,000 Tutsis; and in 1996-1997, Tutsis in the DRC caused over 200,000 Hutus to "go missing."

Today, a brutal African warlord in the war-torn eastern Democratic Republic of Congo is trafficking in blood diamonds in order to fund his

reign of terror. Normally, this would elicit only the normal international response: outraged politicians loudly proclaiming that "somebody ought to *do* something before another genocide takes place," much moral hand-wringing, but no real action. Why? Because action would require soldiers, tens of thousands of soldiers, deployed for years at great expense and at great risk to pacify a huge region where Hutus and Tutsis have been killing each other for decades, with no end in sight. Who wants to pay billions of dollars to send their sons and daughters to die trying to stand between them?

No one, that's who.

But this time, it's different.

This time, it's not just Hutus and Tutsis.

This time, there's video – very gruesome, very graphic.

And this time, there's a reward – a *big* one.



The Hostages

Pieter DeBotha, scion of the DeBotha family (as in "DeBotha Diamonds," the wealthiest and most influential diamond business in the world), was a renowned philanthropist and "celebrity voluntourist" who donated tens of millions of dollars and brought media attention to the plight of Africa's poor. Recently, he and his family (wife Robijn, son Marcel [age 14], and daughter Odette [age 5]) were in Goma, eastern DRC, visiting the United Nations peacekeeping contingent there and supervising the offloading of a large amount of humanitarian supplies

bought and delivered by DeBotha Charities, the non-governmental organization (NGO) that Pieter himself established over 10 years ago to alleviate the suffering of Africa's poor. After distributing about a third of the supplies to refugees in Goma, Pieter and his family then traveled with an armed UN convoy to supervise the delivery of the remaining two-thirds of the humanitarian supplies to a refugee camp that was recently established east of the DRC town of Kamaniola.

En route, his convoy was ambushed and overwhelmed.

The attackers, who identify themselves as *la Brigade des Revanchistes Tutsis* (BRT), then videotaped several atrocities and posted them online. First, the BRT rebels used machetes to cut up the captured UN troops *slowly, bit by bit, while they were still alive*. Second, they tortured Pieter's wife, son, and daughter, and hacked them to bits as well. Third, they used the captured UN vehicles to infiltrate and raid the refugee camp, murdering every Hutu man, woman, and child there, and taking as hostages over two dozen Belgian nuns from the international Catholic medical charity *Soeurs Infirmières de Sainte Agathe* (SISa). Finally, after making Pieter watch all the above atrocities, the BRT rebels cut him to pieces as well. The rebels then released these videos to the world.

As terrible as these events may be, they are not unheard of in Africa. As such, they may not have garnered much more interest from the world community than one or two days' worth of mention in the media, were it not for the American celebrity who was captured with the DeBothas.

Dame Agua (real name: Fulani Nederlotta), who broke into the world of music seven years ago with her brash bisexuality, dance-house "pre-mixes," and lavish Broadway-esque music videos, hadn't put out any new music for five years after her first album went multi-platinum. Despite several headline-grabbing antics (like showing up to the World Music Awards wearing a suggestive outfit made of peanut butter and pickles), she seemed to fade in popularity almost as fast as she appeared. That trend, however, ended recently when she met Hal Tyler, a B-list Australian actor. The couple's plans to get married in France were cut short when a terrorist attack in Paris left Hal dead and Dame Agua with a long scar on the left side of her head. The tragedy energized the newly-pregnant singer, who within six weeks kicked off her *Knocked Up, Not Down* tour, featuring all-new music (much of it in French) that critics praised as being "richer, more mature, and more meaningful" than her previous work. Dame Agua was back in the spotlight and back on top of the music charts. With her music and her press releases, Dame Agua spoke out against hatred, fear, and violence. She was a last-minute (and unannounced) guest of the DeBothas.

Every twelve hours, the BRT releases a new video depicting the abuse, torture, and/or degradation of one or more of the Belgian nuns. While the rebels have not yet released any video of Dame Agua being mistreated, the BRT threatens to kill the nuns, Dame Agua, *and her newborn daughter* if the United States and/or the international community attempt to intervene.

The plight of Dame Agua and her baby has captivated the hearts of the world. The DeBotha family has offered a reward of US\$10 million for anyone who can rescue Dame Agua and her child. Online contributions from celebrities in the music industry as well as millions of adoring fans easily match that and continue to pour in.

Hooks

The reward itself is a great hook for both WASH and non-WASH-affiliated heroes. There's also plenty of fame to be had rescuing a famous singer, plus the heroic feeling of saving a damsel in distress and her infant girl. The players could be hired to effect a rescue directly by the DeBotha family, Dame Agua's family (or entourage), or a government entity (Belgium, the DRC, the UN, or the US).

Another hook is the aforementioned financial angle. Blood diamonds are in play here; if the players are looking into that for another case, it could very well lead them to investigate this crime as well.

For extra fun (and to keep the players guessing), the G.M. can play the DeBotha family three ways:

Converts to the Side of Good: While the family patriarch, grandpa Gerd DeBotha, may have dealt in "blood diamonds" in the past, he certainly does not do so now. His son, Jan DeBotha was an early advocate of the Kimberly Process, an international agreement that seeks to eliminate the trade in such gems. When the Kimberly Process was found to have loopholes and weaknesses, his grandson Pieter championed reforms that would have shut down the trade in "blood diamonds" for good. The BRT rebels then saw the DeBothas as a threat to their livelihoods, and opposed them on those grounds.

Scumbags Pretending to Be Good: The DeBotha family has always dealt in "blood diamonds" and the loopholes and weaknesses inherent in the Kimberly Process were intentionally placed there so the DeBothas could continue their shady trade. It's eminently profitable for the big diamond company: rebels desperate for cash use slave labor to dig for diamonds and sell whatever they find for pennies on the dollar. In this case, the BRT is seeking revenge on the DeBothas because the South Africans were buying from the Hutus. Pieter was on his way to Kamaniola to deliver money, weapons, and ammunition to Hutu FDLR extremists, using his well-publicized charitable organization and several tons of real humanitarian aid to hide a couple dozen crates of contraband. The BRT opposed Pieter because he was financing and arming their enemies. (And just because the rebels are opposing an evil corporation doesn't make them any less evil themselves.)

A House Divided: Grandpa Gerd DeBotha, still the CEO of the family diamond business, is an old-fashioned businessman at heart. Buying blood diamonds is more profitable than buying from legitimate businesses. When do-gooders publicized the evil that blood diamonds represent, that hurt business. Rich people didn't want their wedding rings to symbolize human misery, so Gerd had his son, Jan, spearhead the Kimberly Process, which made the self-righteous feel good about buying his diamonds again while still allowing the DeBothas to traffic in them on the sly. But then his idiot grandson got this do-gooder idea into his head that the loopholes in the Kimberly Process needed to be closed! Sometimes running a successful business requires a little sacrifice from a man's family. Pieter was that sacrifice. Now Gerd can buy from both the Hutus and the Tutsis ... if he can get the BRT to come to terms.

Mission Briefing

Whether the players get their mission briefing from a government or a private entity, the following information will be made available. If the players are going on their own without any help, some of the below information is readily available via the media, while indicated leads require appropriate skill checks.

1. A good idea of who the bad guys are: According to their propaganda broadcasts, the previously unknown *La Brigade des Revanchistes Tutsis* (BRT) (French for "Tutsi Avengers Brigade") is a new Tutsi "freedom fighter" group that is dedicated to the causes of 1) avenging the estimated 1.2 million Tutsis who were murdered by Hutus since 1960, and 2) creating a "greater Bantu homeland." Their vengeance will take the form of the genocide of all Rwandan, Burundian, and Congolese Hutus who are alleged to have participated in the massacre of Tutsis. The "greater Bantu homeland" would unite under Tutsi leadership all 19 Bantu countries (Angola, Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Congo [Brazzaville], Democratic Republic of the Congo [Kinshasa], Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe – see "Map of Bantu Peoples" under Resources). Since the DRC was once a Belgian colony and the BRT blames Belgium and France for instigating the cycle of genocide, the French-speaking Belgian nuns are an intentional target of the BRT. Estimated BRT strength: approximately 2,000 – 3,000 fighters.



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2. A good idea of other bad guys in the area:

- The *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (Congolese Rally for Democracy, known by its French acronym, RCD) was a Tutsi-dominated DRC militia that was backed by Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda. Many of its members were rebel DRC soldiers and officers, most of whom were later re-integrated into the DRC military. Anywhere between 1,500 to 3,000 who have *not* been re-integrated remain active as anti-government guerrillas in North and South Kivu. In 2014, WASH personnel arrested the most notorious RCD leader on an International Criminal Court warrant for crimes against humanity. The remaining rejectionists are split into four different factions and are on the run from UN and DRC forces who are seeking to arrest their leaders for war crimes. While the RCD and the BRT seem to share the same ideals, there is no indication that they are the same organization.
- The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which was driven from Uganda a decade ago, has approximately 1,500 LRA guerrillas dispersed in the jungle in northwestern DRC. Its leader is Joseph Kony, a self-proclaimed prophet and general who has an ICC warrant for crimes against humanity. He is known as an archenemy of Major General Nkurunziza.
- The *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda, known by its French acronym, FDLR) are Hutu extremists often referred to as *genocidaires*, Hutus who participated in, or supported, the 1994 genocide of Tutsis in Rwanda. The FDLR's leader, Sylvestre Mudacumura, also has an International Criminal Court warrant for his arrest for crimes against humanity. The FDLR has 5,000-6,000 guerrillas dispersed in the jungle in North and South Kivu.

3. A good idea of what the BRT is planning: While Dame Agwa and her baby are getting all the press, the BRT also wiped out a Hutu refugee camp near Kamaniola, DRC. BRT propaganda videos claim that the camp was a base for a battalion (700-1,000 personnel) of FDLR guerrillas. The BRT videos show what they claim are captured weapons, documents, and diamonds as "proof" that the camp was run by *genocidaires*. According to the BRT, this "justified" killing *all 22,000 Hutu men, women, and children in the camp*. Although approximately 68% of the DRC citizens in Kamaniola itself are also Hutu, there are no reports of the BRT harming them in any way. Clearly, the BRT's short-term goal is to eliminate the FDLR.

4. The rundown on who the good guys are:

United Nations: The UN peacekeeping force in the DRC is called MONUSCO. At the request of the DRC government, MONUSCO is already in the process of drawing down as the UN seeks an "exit strategy" from its commitment in the DRC. MONUSCO has an authorized total strength of 19,815 military personnel, 760 military observers, and 1,441 police personnel (including liaisons, advisers, and formed police units). It currently has only 16,938 military personnel, 454 military observers, and 1,226 police personnel, spread throughout the country. Approximately 4,000 are in the vicinity of Goma. Characters who are affiliated with the UN or who succeed on an Intelligence or Research skill check (at +20%) will gain the following additional information:

- The primary UN force in Goma is a specialized "intervention brigade" whose mission is to combat rebel DRC troops (like the now-defunct M23 movement), Hutu and Tutsi guerrillas such as the FDLR and the RCD, and LRA terrorists. The MONUSCO Intervention Brigade is composed of the following subordinate units:
- The Belgian 3rd Parachute Battalion (950 troops, commanded by Major Jan Wenk). Due to the BRT's anti-Belgian slant and their mistreatment of the Belgian nuns, the UN decided that the Belgian battalion should "hold the fort" in Goma, as its participation in the hunt for the BRT "would only complicate efforts to free the BRT's

hostages" (i.e., the BRT warned that they would kill the nuns if the Belgians came after them).

- The Canadian 3rd Battalion, Princess Patricia's Canadian Light Infantry (975 troops, commanded by Major Richard MacKenzie), which is currently south of Bukavu, assisting the DRC 105th and 112th Integrated Brigades search for the BRT.
- A French composite battalion (850 troops, commanded by Major Gerard Thibeault) formed of two companies from the 2nd Marine Infantry Parachute Regiment, plus one company from the 6th Marine Infantry Battalion. It is currently in North Kivu, assisting DRC forces in the search for FDLR and RCD guerrillas as well as the LRA's Joseph Kony
- A South African artillery battery (147 personnel, commanded by Captain Emershan Naidoo) equipped with long-range GV5 howitzers, remains at the UN base in Goma.
- A "Special Operations and Reconnaissance Company" (138 personnel, nominally commanded by a South African, Major Vinesh Singh), formed of a mix of Guatemalan, French, South African, Polish, and UK personnel. The French and the Guatemalans are to the north, assisting the French battalion. The Polish and UK personnel are to the south, helping the Canadians. The South Africans remain in Goma.

DRC military: The *Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* (Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, known by its French acronym, *FARDC*) has the following major units stationed within 400 miles (640 km) of Goma:

- The DRC 13th Brigade (nominally 3,500 troops, under the command of Colonel Rolly Lukungu) is headquartered in Goma, with its 1st Battalion garrisoning Goma proper, its 2nd Battalion engaged in security operations along the DRC-Rwanda border, and its 3rd Battalion administering the refugee camp east of Goma.
- 2nd Integrated Brigade (nominally 3,500 troops, Colonel Moise Adoula) is headquartered in Ubundu, with one battalion garrisoning Ubundu and the other two battalions in the field engaged in the search for FDLR guerrillas.
- 12th Integrated Brigade (nominally 3,500 troops, Colonel Samuel Dondo) is headquartered in Kindu, with one battalion garrisoning Kindu and the other two battalions in the field engaged in the search for FDLR guerrillas.
- 103rd Integrated Brigade (nominally 3,500 troops, Colonel Heritier Tshisekedi) is headquartered in Kasongo, with one battalion garrisoning Kasongo and the other two battalions in the field engaged in the search for FDLR guerrillas.
- 105th Integrated Brigade (3,500 soldiers, Colonel Pierre Diako) recently reformed and retrained in Kinshasa after it disintegrated two years ago during an attempt to put down a mutiny. It was assigned to the 10th Military Region just last month. It is headquartered in Kalermie, with one battalion garrisoning the city and the other two engaged in operations west and south of Kalermie searching for the BRT. It is the only DRC brigade that is at full strength; the DRC government touts it as its most capable unit in the region.
- 112th Brigade (3,500 soldiers, Colonel Christian Gizenga) is headquartered in Bukavu, with one battalion garrisoning Bukavu and the other two battalions in the field south of Bukavu engaged in the search for the BRT.

Notes: "Integrated" means that the brigades mixed former rebels in with troops deemed more loyal to the government. Such units have undergone a UN-funded 45 day training program to teach infantry skills and build teamwork and cohesion between Hutus and Tutsis, former rebels and loyalists. Thirty percent of the FARDC troops are Banyamulenge (DRC Tutsi).

The DRC 12th and 112th Brigades are *not* integrated and may have battalions that are fully Hutu or Tutsi.

Ostensibly, these DRC brigades are in eastern DRC to search for anti-government guerrillas – BRT, FDLR, and RCD. In practice, they never seem to find any, due to corruption, disloyalty, incompetence, and lack of motivation. DRC units are chronically understrength (50-80% [1D4x10+40] of nominal strength), their leaders are corrupt, and their soldiers are unmotivated and ill-disciplined.

Other UN forces in the DRC: UN forces in the area include the Pakistani 4th International Duty Motorized Rifle Battalion (4th IDMR Bn, under the command of Major Ali al-Haq) in Kindu and the Indian 2nd Peacekeeping Battalion (2nd PB, under the command of Major Abhishek Mukhopadhyay) in Kasongo. In theory, both of these battalions would be powerful additions to the UN force in Goma, as both the 4th IDMR Bn and the 2nd PB are equipped with wheeled armored personnel carriers. However, Indians and Pakistanis do not like each other and will *absolutely refuse* to work together. Each commander will insist that the other one's unit is more obligated to go to Goma, as their own unit is "sorely needed" where it is, helping the DRC army to search for FDLR guerrillas. No, they haven't found any yet, nor have they ever found any, "but it is only a matter of time before we do." (If for any reason the Pakistanis or Indians *do* come into play, their stats are similar to the DRC's soldiers, except they are all fully supplied, not corrupt, and at least 18 years of age; however, they are just as unmotivated.)

5. Plenty of press coverage about the leader of the BRT: Major General Godfrey "Noddy" Nkurunziza is a former Ugandan Tutsi military officer who trained at the UK's Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in 1989-1993. As a junior officer, he was openly seconded to the Tutsi Rwandan People's Front that toppled the Hutu regime after the 1994 genocide. Still seconded to the Rwandan army, Major General Nkurunziza next distinguished himself in fighting against the government of Zaire (now the DRC) in the 1996-1997 First Congo War. Next on loan to the Burundian army, he distinguished himself again against the government of the newly-declared DRC in the 1998 Second Congo War. From 1999-2009, the general returned to Uganda to fight against the Ugandan terrorist group called "the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)." Once the LRA was driven from Uganda, Major General Nkurunziza's forces pursued the fleeing LRA across the border into northeastern DRC, where the terrorists seemed to find some level of support from the local Hutu populace. Since the leader of the LRA, Joseph Kony, has an International Criminal Court (ICC) warrant for crimes against humanity, the Ugandans gained Western aid to bring him to justice. Western aid was withdrawn after ten months, however, when the Ugandan Tutsi soldiers resorted to indiscriminate punitive measures against Congolese Hutu civilians to break the LRA's hold on the area (200,000 DRC Hutus "went missing," presumed killed by Ugandan forces).

In 2009-2010, Major General Nkurunziza attended the Advanced Command and Staff course in Shrivenham, UK, where he wrote a series of influential papers about unconventional warfare in Africa.

In 2010-2013, he was again seconded to the Rwandan People's Army as an assistant to the Minister of Defense, where he worked closely with the current President of Rwanda, Paul Kagame. Returning to the Ugandan People's Defence Force, Major General Nkurunziza served six months as an adjutant to the inspector-general of the armed forces before retiring in August of 2013 to become a resident professor of military science at the Uganda Military Academy and a visiting professor at the Tanzania Military Academy, teaching light infantry tactics and unconventional warfare until this summer (2016).

Bottom line: No known super abilities, but a well-educated, well-trained, and experienced professional military officer who is an expert in guerrilla warfare; has powerful Tutsi friends in Uganda, Burundi, and Rwanda; and may already have the blood of 200,000 Hutus on his hands. He is also a dedicated family man and a second degree black belt in karate.

6. While at the Uganda Military Academy, Major General Nkurunziza wrote two books: The first, *Two in the Bush*, was a compilation and expansion of the papers he wrote at Shrivenham about unconventional warfare in Africa. The second, shorter book was *The Bantu Manifesto*, in which he set forth three arguments. The first, that the Hutus and the Tutsis were one people living in peace before European colonial powers (France and Belgium) set them against each other as a "divide and rule" strategy in the 1800s. The second, that only the Tutsi leadership of a "great Bantu homeland (*kubwa nchi ya Kibantu*)" that would span across the lands of all Bantu peoples (i.e., virtually all of sub-Saharan Africa) can reverse the artificial, European-imposed division of their lands and be strong enough to protect the people from any further foreign imperialist-colonialist meddling. The third, that the Hutus of Burundi and Rwanda were now so brainwashed by the French and Belgians that the Tutsis have only two options for survival: "To kill them so much more than they kill us that they will fear us and forever forsake any violence against us; or to exterminate their men and take their women as our own, that we may be one people again."

The Uganda Military Academy trains not only Ugandan officers, but Burundian and Rwandan officers as well; in addition, the Tanzania Military Academy is the most highly regarded officer training school in the region and draws cadets and officers from all over east and central Africa. Bottom line: potentially three years' worth of Burundian, DRC, Rwandan, Tanzanian, and Ugandan officers were exposed to Nkurunziza's teachings. The general presumably used this access and his Rwandan and Ugandan military contacts to identify and recruit the best and brightest Tutsi military professionals to form the cadre of the BRT.

7. No idea of where the bad guys are, but a good idea of where they are *not*: Major General Nkurunziza has campaigned all over Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, and eastern and northeastern DRC, an area of tens of thousands of square miles. However, the taking of European and American hostages is not something with which the governments of Burundi, Rwanda, or Uganda would want to be associated, so it is unlikely that he would find sanctuary in those countries. His old enemy, Joseph Kony, is still active in northeastern DRC with an ICC warrant over *his* head and more than one close call with western-backed forces seeking to action it. That evil warlord would be more than happy to get the international community off his back by catching the world's new #1 bad guy, *Major General Nkurunziza*, if the general were foolish enough to show up in the LRA's backyard. Ditto for Sylvestre Mudacumura's FDLR, which has about 5,000-6,000 rebels remaining, hidden in the jungle in company- and platoon-sized groups within 100 miles (160 km) of Kamanjola. A joint DRC-UN force (DRC 105th and 112th Brigades, 10th [South Kivu] Military Region, plus the UN Canadian Battalion [based in Goma]) is searching the presumed area where the rebels are – south of Bukavu and west of Lake Tanganyika. However, their search of the area has so far turned up only what seem to be small, abandoned poachers' camps.

8. Tracking reveals nothing. The general and his soldiers know the African jungle like the backs of their hands and have excellent tracking skills of their own, so their ability to use counter-tracking techniques is formidable.

9. Aerial reconnaissance of the area south of Bukavu will reveal nothing but triple-canopy jungle and mountains. The general and his soldiers are experts at camouflage and jungle warfare.

10. Analysis of the videos being released will reveal the following information:

A) A successful Botany or Biology check will identify the flora and fauna seen and heard in the background as being most common to the area south of Bukavu and west of Lake Tanganyika, reinforcing the UN/DRC decision to concentrate their forces there for their search.

B) A successful Intelligence or Research check will note that the weather for the last video does not match the weather for the day it was allegedly filmed (sunny on the video, overcast in reality), indicating that it may have been pre-recorded.

C) A successful French and/or Central Bantu language check will note that while the BRT members speak Central Bantu to each other, only a few of them speak French to the nuns, reinforcing the view that much of the rank and file of the BRT is made of Ugandan Tutsis who speak Central Bantu and English, versus Burundian/Congolese/Rwandan Tutsis who speak Central Bantu and French.

D) A successful Intelligence and/or Recognize Weapon Quality check will note that BRT uniforms are fresh-looking “tiger stripe” camouflage and their weapons are overwhelmingly Russian small arms that are all too common in African bush wars: AK rifles, RPK light machine-guns, RPG grenade launchers, etc. However, the BRT’s weapons are in unusually good condition, indicating both a fresh supply and well-disciplined troops (plus the “tiger stripe” pattern is extremely uncommon for African soldiers).

E) A successful Intelligence and/or Recognize Weapon Quality check on the footage of the butchering of Pieter DeBotha’s UN convoy will note that the rebels took South African-made arms such as R4 rifles, Mini-SS machine-guns, and ERLP grenade launchers from the “UN soldiers.” However, the ERLP is not standard issue to the South African military, which uses the older Y2 Mk.1 (both made by the South African firm Milkor), indicating that these were mercenaries or “security contractors” and not regular UN troops.

F) A successful Afrikaans language check on the footage of the butchering of Pieter DeBotha’s UN convoy will confirm that the victims were speaking Afrikaans, the language of South African Boers (whites), confirming their nationality.

G) Once E and/or F have been determined, another successful Intelligence or Research check on the footage of the butchering of Pieter DeBotha’s UN convoy will note that while the new South African military is fully integrated and over 95% black, all 43 of the UN soldiers killed were white, strongly indicating that these particular South African “security contractors” were from the highly professional but sometimes shady all-white mercenary company known as Final Solutions International (FSI). FSI overtly specializes in intelligence, VIP protection, and “white hat” paramilitary operations, but allegedly also performs assassinations, “black hat” paramilitary operations, and espionage.

H) Contacting FSI about the mercenaries will elicit a response from FSI’s Vice President of Operations, Rand Kruger, who will reveal only that FSI provides security to certain VIPs in eastern DRC; actual client lists are proprietary. Calling the DeBotha family will get Gerd DeBotha to authorize FSI to discuss the details of the security contract: “Anything to help bring the killers of my grandson to justice.” Unfortunately, there’s not much to tell: Gerd hired the entire FSI team in Goma to protect Pieter DeBotha and the humanitarian shipment. The team was very professional and covered all the bases to keep Pieter and the convoy secure. There was no indication that the convoy would be hit by such a large, well-armed, and well-trained force. Kruger will say, “This tragedy has impacted FSI’s ability to recruit and retain the very best military professionals in the world and our ability to attract the type of clientele that need such professionals to operate in some of the most dangerous locations in the world. FSI will be very happy to share with you any information we may receive and any resources we may have to help bring these murderers to justice.” Yes, the FSI offer of information and resources is genuine: computer hackers, intelligence experts, high-tech weapons, reliable translators, extra muscle, air transport, even helicopter gunship support. But yes, he will want in return that FSI share some measure of the publicity if/when the heroes take down Major General Nkurunziza and/or rescue Dame Agua and/or the SISTa nuns. And yes, if the heroes associate themselves openly with FSI, its shady reputation will cause some people to distrust the heroes.

I) Major General Nkurunziza appears often on the BRT videos to reiterate the Tutsi grievances with Belgium, France, and the international community. A successful Intelligence or Recognize Weapon Quality check will identify his rifle as a brand-new AKM with a BG15 grenade launcher and his pistol as a custom-built Smith&Wesson .500 XLR. While the tricked-out AKM is readily available from any gun-runner

worthy of the name, the pistol is highly unusual for a military weapon as it requires ammunition that is not readily available in the African jungle.

J) Tracing the BRT’s “tiger stripe” uniforms and the general’s S&W .500 XLR with a successful Find Illegal Weapons and Contraband or Intelligence skill check will identify the only three gun-runners in the area who sell both items. All three will, through intermediaries, deny selling weapons and equipment to the BRT and offer to sell military hardware to the heroes, delivering them by airdrop, if required. Tracking down any of the three for a face-to-face meeting will require two successful Intelligence skill checks at -20% or one successful Business and Finance skill check at no penalty, if the heroes have verifiable bona fides (e.g., good reputations and big bank accounts). Strong-arming any of the three will cause the other two to shun the heroes and go into hiding, making it even harder to locate them: the heroes will then need *three* successful Intelligence skill checks at -25%, with no chance of arranging a meeting via the Business and Finance skill. The three illegal weapons dealers are as follows:

- **Sydney Perth** (real name: Sydney Horvath): This Australian is fairly reputable. If questioned, Perth will confirm that he sold 6,000 “tiger stripe” uniforms and 3,000 pairs of boots to the Ugandan government, but will insist that they were intended for the joint Burundian-Ugandan-Rwandan “Intervention Brigade” (see 13, below), not the BRT. Strong-arming Perth will get him to reveal that he knows that Lavalley supplies the FDLR and that Perth therefore suspects – but cannot prove – that Sokolov is the BRT’s supplier. Perth’s business records are encrypted on his laptop; exploiting them will require successful Hacking and Cryptology skill checks. Once exploited, Perth’s records will reveal that he sold .500 XLR pistols to several notorious East African poachers; he also transports endangered animals for unscrupulous collectors and traffics in ivory and rhino horn in violation of international law. To his credit, however, Perth does not deal in blood diamonds, nor does he deal with anyone who is known or suspected of committing crimes against humanity.
- **Vincent “Vichy” Lavalley**: This Frenchman is a former paratrooper and a total slime bag. If the heroes get their hands on Lavalley, they can hack his laptop or interrogate him to discover that he also fences tens of millions of dollars’ worth of blood diamonds and supplies military hardware for the FDLR, not the BRT. He has friends in the French UN battalion whom he uses as unwitting sources of information on the UN’s efforts to combat the FDLR – information he gleefully sells to its leader, Sylvestre Mudacumura, who thus remains one step ahead of those seeking to arrest him. These crimes could land Lavalley in jail for a very long time; Lavalley will happily sell out Perth and Sokolov as part of a plea bargain to avoid jail.
- **Sergei “Smiley” Sokolov**: This elderly Russian is a former KGB agent and a technophobe. He is the BRT’s source of arms and equipment as well as their fence for blood diamonds. The heroes can confirm this by exploiting his business records or getting him to confess. Sokolov’s records are in old-school ledger books in his own personal cipher, requiring successful skill checks in Russian and Cryptology to exploit. Getting Sokolov to confess will be difficult, requiring a successful Interrogation skill check at -20% or the use of appropriate magic or psionics. Sokolov’s records and/or confession will show that he sold the BRT not only 900 additional pairs of boots and “tiger stripe” uniforms, but also SA-7b man-portable anti-aircraft missiles, 120mm mortars, ZPU-2 anti-aircraft machine-guns, land mines, and (very unusual) gas masks and 120mm tear gas rounds.

11. **Intelligence analysis will reveal** that the DRC 112th Brigade, commanded by Colonel Christian Gizenga, is almost completely a Banyamulenge (DRC Tutsi) unit and may sympathize with the BRT. MONUSCO has already quietly requested that the unit be replaced with a more reliable DRC brigade, but the DRC commander of the 10th Military

Region, Brigadier General Olivier Muamba, also a Banyamulenge, has refused. Investigation will reveal that neither the soldiers of the 112th nor the commander of the 10th Military Region are actively helping the BRT, but they certainly aren't looking as hard as they could. In-person investigation will reveal that the 10th Military Region recently lent 43 heavy (7-ton) trucks to the DRC 1st Infantry Battalion, 13th Brigade [Integrated], which is stationed in Goma and under the command of Major Ildephonse Mbungira. A successful Intelligence or Military Etiquette skill check will reveal that this is unusual, as it skips the major's chain of command, going over his brigade commander's head to ask for a logistical favor that an infantry battalion would not normally need.

12. Anyone who takes the time to read Major General Nkurunziza's book on unconventional warfare ("*Two in the Bush*") will realize that he places great emphasis on military deception, training, preparation, logistics, intelligence, and psychological warfare. Armed with this information and the indications that he is *not* south of Bukavu (see 10B, above), characters who make a Detect Ambush skill check will be able to surmise that the BRT is *not* on the run from the international forces, but on the contrary, are probably maneuvering to attack their "center of gravity," the place the UN needs the most to continue to operate in the area: Goma! The videos the BRT releases every 12 hours are *intended* to pressure the UN and DRC to react and *intended* to draw the bulk of the UN and DRC forces south, leaving the city of Goma, with its excellent airstrip, piles of UN humanitarian and military supplies, and DRC-run Hutu refugee camp, only lightly guarded. The threat to kill the Belgian nuns was *intended* to cause MONUSCO to leave the Belgian battalion in Goma so the BRT could avenge Belgian colonization of the DRC (and their alleged collusion in the Hutu-Tutsi genocides). A second successful Detect Ambush skill check will identify the area west of Bukavu where Highway N2 is hemmed in between the mountains and Lake Edward as the natural spot to ambush any UN/DRC forces rushing north to reinforce their base.

Likewise, anyone who reads the general's book on Tutsi/Bantu nationalism, *The Bantu Manifesto*, and succeeds on an Intelligence skill check will also determine that the Hutus at the DRC-run Goma refugee camp are a specific target of the general's, as he blames them for turning the camp into a Hutu rebel base from which the FDLR has organized and launched dozens of murderous raids into Rwanda. Again, one successful Detect Ambush skill check will indicate that the general is planning to attack it soon; a second will indicate where he plans to ambush any UN/DRC forces moving back north to stop him.

13. Anyone with contacts in a world-class intelligence agency will be told two curious facts: **1)** Uganda has two full brigades (approximately 6,000-7,000 troops total) conducting non-routine exercises near the Ugandan-DRC border, with a third brigade in the process of mobilizing. **2)** Last year, Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda formed a composite "Joint Security/Rapid Intervention Brigade" comprising a Ugandan "mixed armored battalion" (20 T-55, 12 BRDM-2, 10 Eland Mk7), a Ugandan motorized infantry battalion (mounted in SAMIL trucks), two motorized infantry battalions (one Burundian, one Rwandan, mounted on civilian 5-ton and 4x4 pickup trucks), a joint artillery battalion (D-30), and a joint headquarters unit with an MP company, logistics company (civilian 7-ton trucks), anti-aircraft battery (S-60 with Fan Song radar), and an engineer platoon. This composite brigade is training near the Rwandan-DRC border.

The stated goal of this brigade is to protect Rwanda from Hutu FDLR rebels in Goma; however, the attachment of an anti-aircraft battery is curious, as the Hutu rebels have no aircraft. Even more curious is that two months ago, after 120 days of intense light infantry training, almost all the infantry was replaced with new troops. (**G.M. Note:** Who supervised the training, and where did the previous infantry battalions go? You got it, Major General Nkurunziza trained them and used those three battalions to form the core of the BRT – all under the orders of Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda.)

14. Once Goma is determined to be the general's next target, even a casual examination of the relative strengths of the BRT versus the remaining UN and DRC garrison will strongly indicate that the general does not have sufficient forces to take the city or the fortified UN base, but should have enough for a quick raid on the refugees. The UN commander, being a professional military officer herself, would never be so foolish as to leave her airbase and supplies too weakly guarded. How does the general intend to seize Goma, then? A successful Intelligence skill check, with a +17% bonus if the character read the general's books, answers that question via treachery (and tear gas, if the characters got the clues in 10J, above). Neither the UN forces nor the DRC troops have NBC gear, so they are vulnerable to a gas attack. Worse, the commander of one of the DRC units garrisoned in Goma (Major Ildephonse Mbungira, 1st Infantry Battalion, 13th Brigade) is a Congolese Tutsi who served alongside the general during the hunt for Joseph Kony in 2007-2008 and also was his student at the Tanzania Military Academy in 2014 for an Advanced Infantry Staff Officer Course.

Note: Ildephonse and his battalion had mutinied against the DRC in 2012 as part of the M23 Rebellion (see Resources), but they were later pardoned and re-integrated into the DRC military in early 2013. Tapping or hacking Major Mbungira's cell phone will show that he had been in touch with Major General Nkurunziza and other Ugandan and Rwandan military officials often in the past but stopped just two days before the general attacked Pieter DeBotha's UN convoy. Obviously, Ildephonse knew about the attack beforehand and began watching what he was doing on his phone for fear of being overheard. If the players get to the major before the general's attack, they will find in Ildephonse's quarters a bag of uncut diamonds worth 2D4x\$1000 (bribe for him), a briefcase with \$60,000 in small bills (payroll for his troops), plus 900 sets of gas masks and BRT "tiger stripe" uniforms, enough to issue one of each to every man in his battalion.

Cast of Characters

Major General Godfrey Nkurunziza

Major General Godfrey Nkurunziza was born in Uganda of a Ugandan Tutsi father and a Rwandan Hutu mother. He is a dedicated family man, a loving husband, a father of two sons and four daughters, an avid martial artist, an incorruptible leader, a life-long Christian, and a mass murderer. At the end of his 24 years of military service, he began to wonder: After all the fighting, all the killing, all the sacrifices he made, had he made Africa a better place for his children? He came to the conclusion that he had not, that his efforts had only benefited imperialist-colonialist Europeans, who have used "divide and rule" tactics to weaken Africa for over 500 years so they could enslave Africa's people and exploit its resources. The general believes that a professional soldier, given proper resources, could create a united "Greater Bantu Homeland" that would be strong enough to resist European hegemony. Then no longer would the Bantu lands possess Earth's richest resources yet the poorest people. The wealth of the land would become the wealth of the people and the Bantu would become a regional power with the strength to liberate the rest of the continent from the shackles of European domination.

The Tutsis are the traditional ruling class of the Bantu people and thus the spirit and drive for Bantu nationalism and self-determination naturally arises from them. The general believes that the French and the Belgians know this and are using Hutus to eliminate the Tutsis to keep the Bantu down. Thus, freeing the Bantu requires the elimination of those Hutus who are the willing pawns of the whites: a mass murder, an evil act, but one that must be done to prevent far worse evil and to bring



about much good. Once the Hutu *genocidaires* have been dealt with, a “hearts and minds” outreach to those Hutus who did not have blood on their hands will soon convince them of the benefits of a “Greater Bantu Homeland;” hundreds of thousands would willingly join the struggle for freedom (or so he believes).

Upon publication of these sentiments in his book, *The Bantu Manifesto*, the general was called to meet with the Tutsi leaders of Uganda and Rwanda. Those two leaders, President Yoweri Kaguta Museveni (dictator of Uganda since 1986) and President Paul Kagame (strongman of Rwanda since 1994), have had their own problems with Hutu *genocidaires* and their own efforts at seizing DRC territory thwarted. The two dictators pledged to support the general in his effort to create a “Greater Bantu Homeland” and provided him €10 million (US\$13.5 million) to establish the BRT. The general is under no illusions: he knows that these two dictators will only use him to take over the DRC and then kill him to prevent him from becoming their rival. Therefore, he watches his back and secretly is in contact with President Pierre Nkurunziza of Burundi, a democratically-elected leader who is the general’s third cousin.

With Burundian Tutsis in key positions in the BRT, the general plans for his organization to follow Pierre’s orders if the general should die. He is protected in the field by his personal super-powered bodyguard, Malvoisine Bagosora (see below), and a platoon of experienced soldiers (32 BRT enlisted men of second to fourth level, plus a third-level lieutenant, all of whom have infrared goggles), who ride in open-top pickup trucks with Russian-made DShK heavy machine-guns (roughly equal to the US Browning .50-caliber M2). The general himself rides in a fully-enclosed, lightly armored SUV. In camp, the general’s headquarters normally has another 47 BRT enlisted men and 21 officers to handle the standard military staff functions of administration (S-1), intelligence (S-2), operations and planning (S-3), logistics and medical services (S-

4), civil affairs (propaganda) (S-5), and communications (S-6); as such, only 6-8 of the enlisted men will be on guard at a time, while the others are busy doing their normal duties.

Major General Godfrey Nkurunziza

Alias: “Noddy.”

Power Category/O.C.C.: Human, no super abilities himself. However, the General may have 1D4 superhuman henchmen/protectors as his elite guard.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 15, M.E. 8, M.A. 13, P.S. 27, P.P. 12, P.E. 14, P.B. 9, Spd 25.

Experience Points: 70,000

Level: 9

Race: Human/African/Bantu/Tutsi.

Education: Military Academy (Bachelor’s Degree, but with access to military skill programs).

Sex: Male.

Age: 44 years.

Height: 6 feet (1.83 m) tall. **Weight:** 210 pounds (94.5 kg).

Hit Points: 45. **S.D.C.:** 66.

Armor: A.R.: 15, S.D.C.: 80 (flak jacket with Kevlar helmet).

P.P.E.: 14

Attacks per Melee: Seven.

Bonuses: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +6 to parry and dodge, +3 to disarm, +4 to pull punch, +7 to roll with impact, critical strike on an unmodified roll of 18-20 (double damage), knockout/stun on a Natural 20, pin/incapacitate on a Natural roll of 18-20. Also see W.P. bonuses under Primary Skills.

Special Combat Moves of Note: Body block/tackle: 1D4 damage, crush/squeeze: 1D4 damage, Crescent kick attack: 2D4+2, Karate kick: 2D4, Leg Hook/Rear Sweep kick does knockdown and victim loses 1 melee attack/action, Roundhouse kick: 3D6, knows all jump kicks: Double damage, and leap attack (all; double damage).

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Boxing, Climbing 98/95%, Detect Ambush 90%, Gymnastics, Hand to Hand: Martial Arts, Intelligence 84%, Interrogation 98%, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 98%, Mathematics: Basic 98%, Military Etiquette 95%, Pilot: Automobile 96%, Prowl 92%, Radio: Basic 98%, Running, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 98%, Tracking 90%, Wilderness Survival 90%, Wrestling, W.P. Automatic Rifle (+5 on and aimed shot, +3 to strike on burst fire), W.P. Heavy Weapons (+5 on an aimed shot, +3 to strike on burst fire), W.P. Revolver (+6 on an aimed shot), W.P. Spear (+4 to strike, +4 to parry, +2 strike when thrown), and W.P. Sword (+3 to strike and parry).

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Basic Mechanics 70%, Body Building/Weight Lifting (gained at third level), Business and Finance 50% (gained at sixth level), Computer Operation 80%, Dance 70%, First Aid 85%, Fishing 40% (gained at ninth level), Hunting (gained at sixth level), Identify Plants and Fruits 25% (gained at ninth level), Land Navigation 68%, Language: English 90%, Language: French 90%, Sing 65% (gained at third level), and Swim 90%.

Equipment of Note: Flak jacket, Kevlar helmet, camouflage utility uniform (three sets; "tiger stripe" pattern), AKM with BG15 grenade launcher, 1.5x combat optic, and laser sight (red dot/IR), Custom-built S&W .500 XLR with 9.1 inch (23.1 cm) barrel, 1.5x combat optic, and red dot laser sight (+3 to strike with Aimed shot, plus W.P. bonuses: +1 for being superior quality, +1 for combat optic, and +1 for laser sight), nightvision goggles (passive/active IR), superior quality machete (+1 parry, 1D6+2 damage), binoculars (high quality), encrypted walkie-talkie, and silver wedding band (inscription: "To my darling Godfrey forever").

Malvoisine Bagosora

Malvoisine is an orphan of the 1993 Rwandan genocide. Her parents, though Hutus, refused to participate in the killing of Tutsis, so an angry Hutu mob murdered them as "traitors." She grew up unwanted, a Hutu on the streets of the now Tutsi-dominated nation, until she was arrested by the Rwandan police for petty theft (trying to get something to eat). When the police realized that they could get no booking photo or fingerprints from the girl, she came to the attention of the Rwandan intelligence services. Now she is a well-treated but still untamed bodyguard for Major General Nkurunziza. He was the one who discovered her ability to derive power from gems and he keeps her well-stocked.

After growing up unseen and ignored all her life, the fact that the general makes her feel special fills a void in her soul. Having craved attention all her life, Malvoisine is fiercely loyal to him and fully committed to his cause, even if she doesn't have the I.Q. to understand it. Malvoisine's reptilian skin and last name gave her the nickname "Stegosaurus." She likes that name and even does her hair to look like the dorsal plates of said dinosaur. Malvoisine never wears footwear, preferring to turn her feet into taloned dinosaur feet (vaguely similar to a deinonychus). In combat, Malvoisine prefers to operate at night, becoming super-strong and invulnerable, sneaking to within grenade range to eliminate large numbers of enemies unseen, and then following up with sword-arms.

Malvoisine Bagosora

Alias: Stegosaurus.

Power Category/O.C.C.: Mutant (Unknown cause of mutation, and unstable powers that grow with experience and age).

Alignment: Miscreant, but loyal to the general.

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 10, M.A. 13, P.S. 17, P.P. 14, P.E. 13, P.B. 8, Spd 27.

Experience Points: 26,450

Level: 5

Race: Human/African/Bantu/Hutu.

Education: Street Schooled.

Sex: Female.

Age: 24

Height: 5 feet, 9 inches (1.75 m). **Weight:** 117 pounds (53 kg).

Hit Points: 33. S.D.C.: 72.

Armor: A.R.: 12, Armor S.D.C.: 50 (flak jacket, no helmet).

P.P.E.: 26

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses of Note: +3 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge +3, +3 to pull punch, and +3 to roll with impact.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities:

Odd Skin Color: Green skin with black "tiger stripes," which pretty much matches her uniform.

Scaly Skin: Tough, smooth, reptilian skin (S.D.C. bonus added to stats, above).

Major Super Ability: Cloaking (HU, page 256). Malvoisine cannot be seen via electronic means.

Major Super Ability: Gem Powers (HU, page 274). Malvoisine carries with her several gems; G.M.'s discretion as to how many of each type, but it should be tailored to presenting the heroes with a challenge.

Minor Super Ability: Body weapons (HU, page 229). This power automatically gives Malvoisine W.P. Paired weapons. Malvoisine is trained in the use of swords.



Minor Super Ability: Nightstalking (HU, page 236). Malvoisine gains an extra 50 S.D.C. and 1D6 damage at night. Paired with her Cloaking super ability, Malvoisine is virtually invisible at night (no electronic nightvision device can see her), so this is when she prefers to operate.

Primary Skills of Note: Art 55%, Concealment 45%, Cook 60%, Language: French 70%, Language: Native (Central Bantu) 95%, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 38%, Mathematics: Basic 38%, Palming 50%, Pick Pockets 50%, Pilot: Automobile 68%, Prowl 70%, Sing 50%, Streetwise 50%, W.P. Knife (+1 to strike, +2 to parry, +1 to strike when thrown), W.P. Spear (+3 to strike, +3 to parry, +3 to strike thrown, +1D6 damage when thrown), W.P. Sword (+2 to strike, +2 to parry), W.P. Targeting (+3 to strike when thrown).

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general) (gained at third level), Climbing 60%/50%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Land Navigation 62%, Running (gained at third level), Track Animals 55%, and Wilderness Survival 55%.

Equipment/Power Armor/Bionics/Robotics: Flak jacket, camouflage utility uniform (two sets; “tiger stripe” pattern; no boots), broad-bladed spear (six; 2D4 damage, throwing range: 100 feet/30.5 m), six fragmentation hand grenades, MP3 player with LOTS of music from Western female musicians, including everything Dame Agua ever recorded, encrypted walkie-talkie with hands-free headset, and uncut gems – lots of gems – braided into her hair, carried in her pockets, worn in pouches, etc. None of that “bling” reduces her ability to sneak, thanks to her Cloaking super abilities.



Major Ildephonse Mbungira

Major Ildephonse Mbungira came from an upper-middle-class Tutsi family in Goma. He is now a DRC military policeman, and he dresses the part perfectly. As such, he is in charge of base security and investigating breaches of military discipline. This is ironic, as the major and his entire

battalion participated in the M23 Rebellion in 2012 (see Resources), but they were later pardoned and re-integrated into the DRC military in early 2013. He is aware of the “blood diamond” trade in Goma financing the Hutu *genocidaires*; his primary complaint is that he isn’t getting a cut of the action. He is planning to join the BRT rebellion by betraying the Goma military base, using his position as the officer in charge of base security to give him access to his targets. His soldiers are all loyal Tutsis and will do as their commander says, especially since the BRT will pay and supply them better than what the DRC does. If the players get to the major before the general’s attack, they will find in his quarters a bag of uncut diamonds worth 2D4x\$1000 (BRT bribe for him), a briefcase with €60,000 in small bills (payroll for his troops), plus 900 sets of gas masks and BRT “tiger stripe” uniforms, enough to issue one of each to every man in his battalion. On the night of the attack, Ildephonse will issue the gas masks, BRT uniforms, and the month’s pay to his troops, which will improve their morale and ensure their loyalty to the BRT cause.

Major Ildephonse Mbungira

Alias: None.

Power Category/O.C.C.: Human, no super abilities.

Alignment: Anarchist, but loyal to the general.

Attributes: I.Q. 13, M.E. 6, M.A. 13, P.S. 18, P.P. 9, P.E. 12, P.B. 11, Spd 20.

Experience Points: 8,300

Level: Four.

Race: Human/African/Bantu/Tutsi.

Education: Third World Military Officer. (Roughly equal to a Western High School education, with the Basic Military Skill Program taking the place of one of the two High School Skill Programs, W.P. Automatic Pistol taking the place of W.P. Automatic Rifle, and the addition of Language: French as an extra primary skill; the character is literate.)

Sex: Male.

Age: 26

Height: 5 feet, 8 inches (1.73 m). **Weight:** 145 pounds (65.9 kg).

Hit Points: 31. **S.D.C.:** 25.

Armor: None when wearing a DRC uniform; flak jacket and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 12, S.D.C. 80) when wearing a BRT uniform.

P.P.E.: 12

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses of Note: +3 to parry and dodge, +3 pull punch, +2 to roll with impact, and Karate Kick: 2D4 damage.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Climbing 60/50%, Criminal Science 55%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Intelligence 49%, Language: French 70%, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 90%, Law (DRC) 45%, Mathematics: Basic 65%, Pilot: Automobile 71%, Running, Radio: Basic 65%, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 95%, W.P. Automatic Pistol (+4 to strike on an aimed shot, +2 to strike on a burst), W.P. Bolt-Action Rifle (+4 to strike on an aimed shot), W.P. Knife (+1 to strike, +2 to parry, +1 to strike when thrown).

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Cook 55%, Hunting (gained at third level), Land Navigation 48%, Prowl 42%, Sing 50%, Skin Animals 50%, Track Animals 40%, Weight Lifting/Body Building (gained at third level), and Wilderness Survival 50%.

Equipment of Note: Nickel-plated .45 ACP with four full, 7-round magazines, MAS-36 bolt-action rifle chambered for 10.75x68mm (.460) ammunition, with a low magnification scope (range: 1,640 feet/500 m, damage: 8D6 per shot, three round integral box magazine; personal hunting weapon), bush knife (1D6+2 damage), mess kit, one 0.5L (16.9 ounce) clear plastic bottle of water, aviator sunglasses, camouflage utility uniform (two sets, pressed and starched, with “Gendarmerie” patches; “NATO woodland” pattern), military boots (spit-shined, with white bootlaces), white cotton Sam Browne pistol belt, red brassard (with “Gendarmerie” emblazoned in white), white fourragère, laminated DRC military ID card, encrypted walkie-

talkie, and cell phone. (Yes, this is his primary communications device for both military and personal use.)

When/if Major Mbungira dons his BRT uniform, add the following: Flak jacket and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 80), camouflage utility uniform (two sets; "tiger stripe" pattern), spit-shined boots with normal black bootlaces, one fragmentation grenade, one smoke grenade, gas mask with one filter, camouflage poncho, olive drab load-bearing harness with four magazine pouches, and "fanny pack."

Typical DRC Enlisted Soldier

In the DRC, the average annual per capita income is \$740, so many young men (some as young as 13) join the military to earn \$50 per month and eat every day – sometimes even twice per day! They are often not paid for months at a time, lack basic field gear, and are always low on ammunition. Their morale, discipline, and level of supply are notoriously low: DRC soldiers often steal food, assault local women, and traffic in "blood diamonds," but at least they will not commit genocide. DRC soldiers will *not* risk their lives in combat if it can be avoided: when facing serious opposition, the bravest ones (NCOs) will shoot wildly and then hide or flee; the others won't even bother to shoot before turning tail. Note that when the DRC soldiers actually *do* get paid, they are paid in semi-worthless Congolese francs; the BRT rebels are paid with much more valuable euros *in full and on time*, which may motivate some DRC soldiers to change sides. (Note: 911.2 Congolese francs = US\$1; 1 euro = US\$1.35.) Heroes who talk to DRC enlisted personnel will be peppered with requests for basic things the soldiers should already have: food, potable water, pay, ammunition, boots, spare uniforms, insect repellent, field gear, soap, etc. DRC troops will also beg for luxury items like cigarettes, pre-paid SIM cards, MP3 players, sunglasses, and condoms. Kind-hearted heroes who give anything to one DRC soldier will immediately be swamped by every other DRC soldier in sight, each begging for a similar or greater handout. Junior enlisted who are well-treated will readily rat out their corrupt leaders who eat three full meals per day, embezzle the enlisted men's pay, demand bribes for favors, sell military supplies and equipment on the black market, etc. In short, DRC troops are pretty much worthless in combat and good only for showing the players how dysfunctional the DRC army is.

Names: DRC soldiers have French first names. Common family names for both are Byiringiro, Kagame, Manishimwe, Mbungira, Ndashimye, Ndilingiye, Nkunda, Nkurunziza, Shingiro, and Shyaka.

Alignment: Any.

Attributes (typical): I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, M.A. 9, P.S. 14, P.P. 10, P.E. 11, P.B. 10, Spd 23.

Level: Most DRC privates are first level, with sergeants being second or sometimes third level.

Race: Human/African/Bantu. For the DRC, about 30% are Tutsis, 68% are Hutus, and 2% are other.

Education: Third World Military Enlisted. (Hand to Hand: Basic, Running, Climbing, W.P. Automatic Rifle [no bonus], eight Secondary Skills, as illiterate as Street Schooled.)

Sex: Male.

Age: DRC soldiers are as young as 13 years of age. Welcome to the Third World.

Height: Adults average five feet, eight inches (1.73 m), but young teenagers tend to be shorter.

Weight: Skinny; typically 130 pounds (59 kg) as an adult, but young teenagers tend to be lighter.

Hit Points: 12 at first level, +3 per level of experience. **S.D.C.:** 20.

Armor: The DRC soldier has no body armor and normally has only a cloth hat; beret or ball cap-style.

P.P.E.: 7

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Typical Bonuses: +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact. Combat bonuses shown for first level; higher-level soldiers will progress normally for Hand to Hand: Basic.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Climbing 40%/30% +5%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 30% +2%, Mathematics: Basic 30% +2%, Pilot: Automobile 60% +2%, Running, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 75% +5%, W.P. Automatic Rifle, W.P. Ancient (Knife, Spear, or Sword).

Secondary Skills: (DRC) Athletics (general), Sing 35% +5%, Language: French 50% +5%, plus four secondary skills of choice.

Equipment of Note: AKM rifle with integral folding bayonet and 4 magazines with a total of 2D12x5 bullets, one bush knife or machete (1D6+2 damage), mess kit, one 0.5L (16.9 ounce) clear plastic bottle of water, camouflage utility uniform (one set; "NATO woodland" pattern), civilian shoes, laminated military ID card.

Typical DRC Military Officer

In the DRC, officers come from the educated elite. "Educated elite" in a desperately poor Third World country means the person completed high school and probably was never homeless. Officer recruits are trained for about 45 days before being assigned to their specialty school (e.g., armor, artillery, communications, infantry, intelligence, etc.). Lieutenants earn US\$90 per month – good money in a country where the per capita income is \$740 per year. DRC officers eat three times per day, even when their troops don't. Like their soldiers, however, the officers are often not paid for months at a time and lack basic field gear. Their morale, discipline, and level of supply are slightly higher than abysmal: DRC officers often deal in "blood diamonds," sell military equipment on the black market, demand bribes from their troops in return for favors (granting leave, avoiding unpleasant duties, etc.), and normally turn a blind eye when their ill-disciplined soldiers steal civilians' food when hungry or assault local women when brutish. On the plus side, DRC officers will not commit genocide. They will attempt to keep their soldiers in line if Westerners (civilian media, military advisers, etc.) are observing them. DRC officers will *not* risk their lives in combat if it can be avoided: when facing serious opposition, they will quickly sound the retreat and call for reinforcements. Note that when the DRC officers actually *do* get paid, they are paid in semi-worthless Congolese francs (911.2 Congolese francs = US\$1). Like the enlisted men, the DRC officers will request everything they can get from the heroes, but are discreet enough to make their requests in private. Should anyone think that supplying and equipping a full DRC battalion would help the situation, and be wealthy enough to do so (cost: US\$4.5 million), they will see the equipment proudly on display for one day. By the following morning, however, 90% of what was provided will have been sold on the black market, possibly to end up in the hands of the BRT.

Names: DRC officers will have French first names. Common family names are Byiringiro, Kagame, Manishimwe, Mbungira, Ndashimye, Ndilingiye, Nkunda, Nkurunziza, Shingiro, and Shyaka.

Alignment: Any; most tend to be Unscrupulous or Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, M.A. 10, P.S. 11, P.P. 10, P.E. 11, P.B. 10, Spd 23.

Level: Most DRC lieutenants are first level, with captains being second, majors third, and lieutenant colonels fourth or fifth. Promotions tend to be based more on political and family connections than ability.

Race: Human/African/Bantu. About 30% are Tutsis (called Banyamulenge in the DRC), 68% are Hutus, and 2% are other.

Education: Third World Military Officer. (Roughly equal to Western High School education, with the Basic Military Skill Program taking the place of one of the two High School Skill Programs, W.P. Automatic Pistol taking the place of W.P. Automatic Rifle, and the addition of Language: French as an extra primary skill; the character is literate.)

Sex: Male.

Age: DRC officers are as young as 16 years of age. Welcome to the Third World.

Height: Adults average five feet, eight inches (1.73 m).

Weight: Better fed than the enlisted troops; typically 145 pounds (65.9 kg).

Hit Points: 14 at first level, +3 per level. **S.D.C.:** 22.

Armor: DRC officers wear no body armor and normally have only a cloth hat (beret or ball cap-style).

P.P.E.: 10

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Typical Bonuses: +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact. Combat bonuses shown for first level; higher level soldiers will progress normally for Hand to Hand: Basic.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Climbing 45%/35% +5%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Language: French 55% +5%, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 75% +5%, Mathematics: Basic 50% +5%, Pilot: Automobile 65% +2%, Running, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 80% +5%, W.P. Automatic Pistol, plus one other civilian or military skill program.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Sing 35% +5%, W.P. Ancient (Knife, Spear, or Sword), plus five Secondary Skills of choice.

Equipment/Power Armor/Bionics/Robotics: Semi-automatic pistol (typically Tokarev or Browning High Power) with 2 magazines and a total of 4D4 bullets, one bush knife or machete (1D6+2 damage), mess kit, one 0.5L (16.9 ounce) clear plastic bottle of water, camouflage utility uniform (two sets, often with "Parachutist," "Ranger," and/or "Special Forces" patches, even though the officer never received any such training; "NATO woodland" pattern), military boots, laminated military ID card, and cell phone. (Yes, this is their primary communications device for both military operations and personal life.)

Typical BRT Enlisted Soldier

Compared to the DRC's soldiers, BRT troops are better paid (€60 per month [US\$67.61]), better trained, better equipped, better supplied, better led, and more highly motivated. Many of the BRT's rank and file have lost relatives to Hutu *genocidaires*, so will not hesitate to commit mass murder or other atrocities if ordered to do so. Most are only semi-literate, but have been told by their officers about Major General Nkurunziza's *The Bantu Manifesto* and are fairly ideologically committed to the cause of a greater Bantu homeland. However, they are not suicidal fanatics. BRT troops will engage enemies with aimed fire and flanking maneuvers, using cover and concealment intelligently. When faced with a superior force, they will break up into small groups and disappear into the jungle, reassembling at a predesignated rally point.

Names: Soldiers from Burundi, DRC, or Rwanda will have French first names. Ugandans will have English first names. Common family names for both are Byiringiro, Kagame, Manishimwe, Mbungira, Ndashimye, Ndilingiye, Nkunda, Nkurunziza, Shingiro, and Shyaka.

Alignment: Any.

Attributes: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, M.A. 9, P.S. 13, P.P. 11, P.E. 10, P.B. 10, Spd 21.

Level: The rebels had the luxury of selecting more experienced soldiers for their cadre, so BRT privates are first or second level, corporals and sergeants are third to fourth level, and senior NCOs are fifth level.

Race: Human/African/Bantu. The initial group of BRT cadre is 97% Tutsi, 2% Hutu, 1% other, but they expect to gain more Hutu (and Tutsi) recruits after they deal with the *genocidaires* in the Goma refugee camp.

Education: Third World Guerrilla. (Hand to Hand: Basic; Detect Ambush [+5%]; Running; Climbing; Prowl [+15%]; W.P. Automatic Rifle; plus either Demolitions, Radio: Basic, W.P. Knife, W.P. Heavy Weapons, or W.P. Spear; eight Secondary Skills; as illiterate as Street Schooled.)

Sex: Male.

Age: The BRT's cadre has no one younger than 17, because they hand-picked the more experienced soldiers.

Height: Adults average five feet, eight inches (1.73 m).

Weight: Skinny; typically 130 pounds (59 kg) as an adult.

Hit Points: 14 at first level, +3 per level; S.D.C.: Typically 18 (10 + 2D4 + 1D6).

Armor: Flak jackets and Kevlar helmets (A.R. 12, S.D.C. 80).

P.P.E.: 7

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Typical Bonuses: +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact. Combat bonuses shown for first level; higher level soldiers will progress normally for Hand to Hand: Basic.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Climbing 40%/30% +5%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 30% +2%, Mathematics: Basic 30% +2%, Pilot: Automobile 60% +2%, Running, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 75% +5%, W.P. Automatic Rifle, W.P. Ancient (Knife, Spear, or Sword).

Secondary Skills: (DRC) Athletics (general), Sing 35% +5%, Language: French 50% +5%, plus four Secondary Skills of choice.

Equipment of Note: AKM rifle with integral folding bayonet and five full magazines, one bush knife or machete (1D6+2 damage), mess kit, one 0.5L (16.9 ounce) clear plastic bottle of water, two olive drab 1L canteens with carriers, flak jacket and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 12, S.D.C. 80), camouflage utility uniform ("tiger stripe"), combat boots, one fragmentation grenade, one smoke grenade, gas mask with one filter, camouflage poncho, olive drab load-bearing harness with four magazine pouches and fanny pack, and one day's worth of food.

SPECIAL: Soldiers with the Demolitions skill will have a bag with 4 antipersonnel mines, one antitank mine, eight 250-gram (8.8 ounce) blocks of TNT, eight blasting caps, ten detonators, and 50 m (164 feet) of detonation cord; those with Radio: Basic will have an encrypted field radio with rechargeable batteries, solar recharger, and 50 m (164 feet) of extra communications wire; those with W.P. Heavy Weapons will have either an RPG-7V with 18 rounds, a Chinese Type 63-1 60 mm mortar with 60 rounds, or a PKM machine-gun with 1,200 rounds. When on the march, the riflemen of the supported unit normally help carry the extra ammunition for the heavy weapons soldiers.

Typical BRT Military Officer

BRT officers are better trained, better equipped, better supplied, and better paid than their DRC counterparts (€120+ per month [US\$135.22+]). BRT officers know the African jungle well and are adept at "fix and flank" tactics and techniques of infiltration/exfiltration. All the BRT officers have read both of the general's books and are ideologically committed to the cause, but are not mindless fanatics. Most of them have lost family members to Hutu *genocidaires*, so will not hesitate to commit mass murder or other atrocities if ordered to do so. That said, the BRT officers will confine their mass murder to known or suspected *genocidaires* and their immediate families and associates. They believe that this makes their crimes against humanity somehow more justifiable than those of their enemies, but evil is evil, no matter how it is rationalized.

Names: Soldiers from Burundi or Rwanda will have French first names. Ugandans will have English first names. Common family names for both are Byiringiro, Kagame, Manishimwe, Mbungira, Ndashimye, Ndilingiye, Nkunda, Nkurunziza, Shingiro, and Shyaka.

Alignment: Any, but the majority are Aberrant or Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 12, M.E. 11, M.A. 13, P.S. 14, P.P. 12, P.E. 11, P.B. 10, Spd 21.

Level: The BRT rebels had the luxury of selecting experienced officers for their cadre, so most BRT lieutenants are first or second level, with captains being third or fourth, majors being fifth, and lieutenant colonels being sixth.

Race: Human/African/Bantu. The initial group of BRT cadre is 97% Tutsi, 2% Hutu, 1% other, but they expect to gain more recruits (Hutu and Tutsi) after they deal with the FDLR rebels at Goma.

Education: Third World Military Academy. (This is roughly equal to Western Trade School, with the Basic Military Skill Program taking the place of one of the two Trade School Skill Programs, and W.P. Automatic Pistol taking the place of W.P. Automatic Rifle. In addition, Ugandans will have Language: English as an additional primary skill; Burundians and Rwandans will have Language: French as an extra primary skill; in either case the character is literate.)

Sex: Male.

Age: At least 20 years old.

Height: Adults average five feet, eight inches (1.73 m).

Weight: Better fed than the enlisted troops; typically 145 pounds (65.9 kg).

Hit Points: 16 at first level, +3 per level. **S.D.C.:** 20.

Armor: Flak jackets and Kevlar helmets (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 80).

P.P.E.: 11

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Typical Bonuses: +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +1 to pull punch, and +2 to roll with impact. Combat bonuses shown for first level; higher level soldiers will progress normally for Hand to Hand: Basic.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Climbing 55%/45% +5%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Language: English [Ugandan] or French [Burundian or Rwandan] 65% +5%, Literacy: Native Language (Central Bantu) 85% +5%, Mathematics: Basic 60% +5%, Pilot: Automobile 75% +2%, Running, Speak Native Language (Central Bantu) 90% +5%, W.P. Ancient (Knife, Spear, or Sword), W.P. Automatic Pistol, plus one other civilian or military skill program.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Land Navigation 36% +4%, Prowl 25% +5%, Sing 35% +5%, Track Animals 20% +5%, Wilderness Survival 30% +5%, plus one other of choice.

Equipment/Power Armor/Bionics/Robotics: Tokarev semi-automatic pistol with four full magazines, one bush knife or machete (1D6+2 damage), mess kit, two camouflage utility uniforms ("tiger stripes"), military boots, two olive drab IL canteens with carriers, encrypted walkie-talkie, flak jacket and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 80), camouflage utility uniform (two sets; "tiger stripe" pattern; plus boots), one fragmentation grenade, one smoke grenade, gas mask with one filter, camouflage poncho, olive drab load-bearing harness with four magazine pouches and fanny pack, infrared goggles, and binoculars (low magnification).

Colonel Brigitte Beaudoin

Brigitte Beaudoin grew up a shy nerd, joining the Canadian Army more to get away from her overbearing parents than for any other reason. She found confidence and purpose as a military police officer. Returning to college to obtain her commission, she met her husband, an Inuit who was also majoring in criminal justice. Falling in love with him and his outdoors lifestyle, young Brigitte balanced her military career, her growing family (six children), and her new-found passion for mountain climbing, hunting, and kayaking. Brigitte even earned a civilian pilot's license to travel the wilds of northern Canada with her family. Like most Canadian officers, Brigitte lacks combat experience and is in no hurry to get any; this deployment as a UN peacekeeper was to "punch the ticket" and get her on the fast track to promotion to brigadier general. Failing that, she plans to retire from the military and join her husband in their growing business of exporting caribou meat to China and Japan.

Honest, compassionate, intelligent, and religious, Brigitte will do what she can to support the heroes without risking the soldiers under her command in a pitched battle. Her unit was/is due to leave the DRC in 16 days as part of a normal troop rotation, so her primary concern will be to keep her soldiers alive and departing on time. She is well aware that the



BRT could possibly outfight her inexperienced troops in the jungle and that the DRC's army is worse than useless. Her response to the BRT's sack of Goma will be to break contact, head for Kalermie, and dig in, all the while pleading for a brigade of US Marines to intervene.

Colonel Brigitte Beaudoin

Alias: "Colonel Bibi" due to her initials, "B.B."

Alignment: Principled.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 11, M.A. 13, P.S. 9, P.P. 13, P.E. 10, P.B. 13, Spd 20.

Experience Points: 16,500

Level: Five.

Race: Human/Caucasian/Nordic.

Education: Master's Degree (Military Studies).

Sex: Female.

Age: 42

Height: Six feet (1.83 m). **Weight:** Thin, 165 pounds (74 kg).

Hit Points: 29. **S.D.C.:** 19.

Armor: Hard armor vest and and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 150), painted blue, with "UN" stenciled in white.

P.P.E.: 9

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses of Note: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +3 to parry and dodge, +3 to pull punch, and +3 to roll with impact.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Business & Finance 80%, Climbing 85%/75%, Computer Operation 85%, Criminal Science 80%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Intelligence 73%, Language (Chinese) 95%, Language (English) 95%, Language (Inuktitut) 95%, Language (Japanese) 95%, Language (Russian) 95%, Law (general) 70%, Mathematics: Basic 90%, Military Etiquette 80%, Pilot: Automobile 93%, Radio: Basic 90%, Read/Write Native Language (French) 98%, Research 95%, Running, Speak Native Language (French) 98%, W.P. Automatic Pistol, W.P. Automatic Rifle.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general) (gained at 3rd level), Cook 60%, Dance 50%, First Aid 65%, Hunting (gained at 3rd level), Land Navigation 52%, Pilot: Airplane 66%, Pilot: Motorboat 75%, Play Musi-

cal Instrument (clarinet) 55%, Prowl 47%, Swimming 70%, Track Animals 45%.

Equipment/Power Armor/Bionics/Robotics: Browning 9mm pistol with four full magazines and holster, Swiss Army knife, two one liter canteens with camouflage carriers, hard armor vest and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 15, S.D.C. 150, painted blue, with "UN" stenciled in white), four camouflage utility uniforms, two pairs of boots, blue poncho with "UN" stenciled in white, encrypted satellite telephone, bedroll, camouflage load-bearing harness with four pistol magazine pouches and fanny pack, insect repellent, and a first aid kit.

SPECIAL: Colonel Beaudoin is always accompanied by a squad of UN soldiers for personal protection and always has a long-range radio operator close by. In the field, she will travel by armored personnel carrier, although she is normally at her headquarters.

Typical UN Enlisted Soldier (Western)

Though well-educated and well-trained, most Canadian and Western European soldiers lack the combat experience that American soldiers have. These UN troops are honest and do not condone genocide, trafficking in illicit goods, or abuse of civilians or prisoners. However, as much as they intend to perform security and peacekeeping tasks, they have no motivation to die for Africa. When facing serious military opposition, their standard procedure is to back off and wait for diplomats to negotiate a peaceful resolution.

When cornered by a superior military force, their initial reaction will be to surrender, relying on UN and home country diplomacy to secure humane treatment and eventual release. The BRT's slaughter of UN prisoners will be a rude shock, prompting the rest of the UN troops to seek to avoid contact with the BRT, but to fight for their lives if surrounded. Compared to the DRC's soldiers, Western European troops are paid lavishly: €1,250 per month [US\$1,687.50]. When working side by side with the DRC army, the DRC troops are not shy to ask these "rich whites" for everything from food and water to cigarettes, ammunition, boots, MP3 players, prepaid SIM cards, etc. The UN troops know better than to give anyone anything.

Names: Soldiers from France and the Quebec province of Canada will have French names. Canadian soldiers from other provinces of Canada will have English names. Belgian soldiers will have Dutch or French names.

Alignment: Any; most tend toward Scrupulous.

Attributes: I.Q. 10, M.E. 10, M.A. 10, P.S. 11, P.P. 10, P.E. 11, P.B. 10, Spd 23.

Level: The Canadians and Europeans have far less combat experience than comparable American troops: Privates and corporals tend to be first level, sergeants second, and senior NCOs third or fourth.

Race: Human, about 94% Caucasian, with 6% other.

Education: Military (standard HU2 education level); most are paratroopers, so their Military skill program is as follows: Camouflage, Land Navigation, Parachuting, Swimming, and Hand to Hand: Expert.

Sex: 92% Male, 8% female.

Age: 18-45, with the senior, career military personnel being older than the junior ones.

Height: Adults average five feet, ten inches (1.78 m).

Weight: Athletic; typically 160 pounds (72 kg).

Hit Points: 15 at first level, +3 per level. **S.D.C.:** 20.

Armor: Hard armor vests and Kevlar helmets (A.R. 15, S.D.C. 150), painted blue, with "UN" stenciled in white.

P.P.E.: 8

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Typical Bonuses: +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punch, and +3 to roll with impact. Combat bonuses shown for first level; higher level soldiers will progress normally for Hand to Hand: Expert.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Camouflage 30% +5%, Climbing 50%/40% +5%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Land Navigation 46% +4%, Literacy: Native Language (Dutch, English, or French) 80% +5%, Mathematics: Basic 55% +5%, Military Etiquette 45% +5%, Parachuting 50% +5%, Pilot: Automobile 70% +2%, Running, Radio: Basic 55% +5%, Speak Native Language (Dutch, English, or French) 85% +5%, Swimming 60% +5%, W.P. Automatic Rifle, plus one skill program of choice (+5%). As an additional primary skill, French Canadians gain Language: English 60% +5%, English Canadians and Dutch Belgians gain Language: French 60% +5%, and French Belgians (Walloons) gain Language: Dutch 60% +5%.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), First Aid 45% +5%, plus six others of choice.

Equipment of Note: 5.56mm assault rifle (FN F2000 Belgium, C7 Canada, or FAMAS France) with integral low-power telescopic sight; bush knife (1D6+2 damage), two 1L canteens with camouflage carriers, hard armor vest and Kevlar helmet (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 150, painted blue, with "UN" stenciled in white), four camouflage utility uniforms, two pairs of boots, one fragmentation grenade, one smoke grenade, one blue poncho with "UN" stenciled in white, bedroll, camouflage load-bearing harness with six magazine pouches and fanny pack, one day's worth of food, insect repellent, and first aid kit.

SPECIAL: Soldiers with the W.P. Heavy Weapons skill will have either a 40 mm underbarrel grenade launcher, a medium machine-gun, an 81mm mortar, or a rocket launcher. The exact types of weapons will vary with the country of origin, but most will be of comparable range and firepower to US weapons of similar caliber.



Fulani Nederlotta

Fulani Nederlotta was born in the United States to a mixed Dutch-Italian father and a Lebanese mother. Fulani grew up in a typical upper-middle-class home, excelled in school and loved water sports. In college, Fulani initially studied medicine before switching to music and world languages. She put her medical skills to use, volunteering as a paramedic

at the local rescue squad until she finished college and began her musical career in earnest. A few months before her graduation, Fulani's extraordinary attributes began to manifest themselves in full. Suddenly wildly popular, Fulani gave in to selfishness and vanity as Dame Agua, superstar.

Unbeknownst to anyone, a hospital mix-up accidentally exposed Fulani to a cocktail of experimental anti-cancer medications while she was still in her mother's womb; it is this exposure that led to Fulani's mutant powers. However, since her powers are neither flashy nor requiring conscious thought, no one – not even Fulani herself – seems to realize that she does indeed have super abilities. Even her Karmic Power didn't manifest itself until Fulani fell in love with Hal Tyler and re-embraced a Principled lifestyle.

It was her Karmic Power that saved Fulani when she was shot point-blank in the head by a terrorist in Paris. Now Dame Agua is a potent force for good in the world through her music and her advocacy for peace. The BRT didn't know she was with the DeBothas until just after the ambush was over. Now the general allows Dame Agua to keep and nurse "her" baby, Saffier, and to assist the SISTa nuns in caring for injured or ill BRT guerrillas. Dame Agua's prestige, impeccable character, magnetic personality, and genuine concern for the well-being of every human being she meets have made her hugely popular with the BRT's headquarters personnel and thus impossible for anyone in the BRT to want to harm her. The general plans to release her unharmed at some point; he is just looking for the most opportune moment.

Fulani Nederlotta Stats

Alias: Dame Agua (stage name).

Alignment: Grew up Principled, slipped to Anarchist, then returned to Principled after the Paris attacks.

Attributes: I.Q. 21, M.E. 27, M.A. 27, P.S. 13, P.P. 13, P.E. 11, P.B. 25, Spd 10.

Experience Points: 10,640

Level: Four.

Race: Human/Mixed (Caucasian and Arabic).

Education: Ph.D. in Music and World Languages.

Sex: Female.

Age: 27

Height: Five feet, five inches (1.65 m).

Weight: Normally thin, but recently gave birth: 130 pounds (59 kg).

Hit Points: 31. S.D.C.: 76.

Armor: None.

P.P.E.: 20

Attacks per Melee: Two (no hand to hand combat skill).

Bonuses of Note: +2 on initiative, +2 to strike, +3 to disarm, +5 to parry, +1 to dodge: +1, +3 to Auto-Dodge (the act of dodging does not count as a melee attack), +7 to roll with impact, and Knockout on the roll of a Natural 20 (lasts 3D4 melees).

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: Mutant.

Cause of Mutation: Accidental encounter with "strange stuff." No unusual physical traits.

Major Super Ability: Karmic Power (HU, pages 278-279). Opponents have no bonuses to strike Fulani.

Minor Super Ability: Extraordinary Mental Affinity (HU, page 231).

Minor Super Ability: Extraordinary Mental Endurance (HU, page 231).

Minor Super Ability: Extraordinary Physical Beauty (HU, page 232).

Primary Skills: Art 87%, Biology 82%, Business & Finance 87%, Computer Operation 92%, Dance 82%, Language: French 98%, Language: Gaelic 98%, Language: Latin 98%, Language: Spanish 98%, Mathematics: Basic 97%, Paramedic 92%, Pilot: Automobile 99%, Play Musical Instrument (violin) 87%, Read/Write Native Language (English) 98%, Research 98%, Sing 87%, Speak Native Language (English) 98%, Writing (lyrics) 77%.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Body Building and Weight Lifting (gained at 3rd level), Cook (chosen a second time at 3rd level, professional quality) 67%, Fishing 62%, Photography 57%, Pilot: Sailboat 82%, Pilot: Water Scooter 72%, SCUBA 72%, Seduction 60%, Swimming 72%, TV/Video 44%.

Equipment of Note: Sensible African safari outfit, and baby care items.

Note: All other personal items have been confiscated by the BRT.



Vincent Claude Laval

Vincent "Vichy" Laval is a former French Marine paratrooper who, after 25 years of service, retired and became an African gun-runner. Charming and strong-willed, Vincent is absolutely without conscience, willing to sell guns and information to anyone, for the right price. Vincent keeps most Western intelligence agencies off his back by providing information about African warlords and other gun-runners to the French intelligence agency, the DGSE. Vincent maintains the look of a professional military man, keeping himself fit with a regimen of regular exercise. He has contacts with the French U.N. Battalion near Goma. He provides them clean prostitutes and luxury items in return for information about U.N. efforts to arrest war criminals – information he then sells to his FDLR *genocidaire* clients so that they can keep buying his weapons to kill more civilians.

The FDLR pays Vincent in blood diamonds. His small fleet of transport aircraft are adept at landing at improvised jungle airstrips and air-dropping deliveries. Vincent normally wears business suits to business meetings and his "African safari" outfits when not meeting clients. He travels on the ground via his armored SUV and by air via his H120. Vincent always has two imposing bodyguards with him; their stats are identical to third-level Western UN soldiers, with their extra skill program being Physical. He keeps all his business data on his laptop, which he

keeps with him at all times. While it is hard to hack (-35%), the contents are not encrypted.

Vincent Claude Lavalle Stats

Alias: “Vichy” Lavalle.

Alignment: Anarchist.

Attributes: I.Q. 14, M.E. 21, M.A. 19, P.S. 14, P.P. 15, P.E. 12, P.B. 8, Spd 27.

Level: Five.

Race: Human/Caucasian/French/Norman.

Education: Military (standard HU2 education level); French paratrooper.

Sex: Male.

Age: 52

Height: Five feet, ten inches (1.78 m). **Weight:** 160 pounds (72 kg).

Hit Points: 29. **S.D.C.:** 32.

Armor: Custom concealed (A.R. 13, S.D.C. 55) or custom Class IV Hard Armor (A.R. 19, S.D.C. 350).

P.P.E.: 11

Attacks per Melee: Five.

Bonuses of Note: +2 on initiative, +3 to strike, +4 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punch, +3 to roll with impact, Karate Kick: 2D4, Roundhouse Kick: 3D6, Leg Hook: No damage, knockdown only.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Camouflage 50%, Climbing 70%/60%, Find Contraband & Illegal Weapons 60%, Hand to Hand: Expert, Land Navigation 62%, Literacy: Native Language (French) 98%, Mathematics: Basic 75%, Military Etiquette 65%, Parachuting 70%, Pilot: Automobile 78%, Running, Radio: Basic 75%, Speak Native Language (French) 98%, Swimming 80%, W.P. Automatic Pistol, W.P. Automatic Rifle, W.P. Heavy Weapons, and W.P. Submachine-Gun.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Business & Finance 55%, Computer Operation 60%, First Aid 65%, Recognize Weapon Quality 45%, Language (English) 70%, Language (Russian) 70%, Prowl 45%, Body Building/Weight Lifting (gained at 3rd level), Language (Bantu; gained at 3rd level) 60%.

Equipment of Note: Seven expensive, custom-tailored business suits with custom concealed armor (A.R. 12, S.D.C. 55), 7 “African safari” outfits with custom concealed armor (A.R. 12, S.D.C. 55), concealed shoulder holster, .357 Desert Eagle Mark XIX semiautomatic pistol with red-dot laser sight and 2 full 9-round magazines loaded with .357 magnum hollow point rounds, Swiss Army knife, fancy writing pen with concealed mace chemical spray (range: 5 feet/1.5 m, capacity: two sprays, see HU2, page 342 for effects), satellite phone, and ruggedized, top of the line laptop computer with biometric security.

Armored luxury SUV (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 800, armored self-inflating tires, Speed Class 12) with concealed compartment containing custom Class 4 Hard Armor; 5.56mm FAMAS assault rifle with integral low-power telescopic sight, red-dot laser, and M203 40mm underbarrel grenade launcher; load-bearing harness with 18 ammunition pouches (12 full 30-round rifle magazines, 6 full 9-round pistol magazines) and two bandoleers of 20 40mm grenades each, radio pouch, first aid kit, and 3L CamelBak.

4 Antonov-26 turboprop passenger aircraft (A.R. 6; S.D.C. 500; Speed Class 17; range: 1,584 miles [2,534 km] empty, 683 miles [1,092 km] with maximum load; crew: 5; capacity: 40 passengers or 19,798 pounds [8,909 kg] of cargo).

1 Airbus H120 business helicopter (A.R. 6, S.D.C. 300, Speed Class 11, range: 440 miles [704 km], crew: 1, passengers: 4).

Sergei Ilyich Sokolov

Sergei “Smiley” Sokolov is a former Russian policeman who later became an officer in the Russian KGB. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Sergei became an illegal arms merchant. A strong-willed technophobe, Sergei vaguely resembles a muscular Santa Claus. He still has contacts with Russian intelligence services and feeds them information on the side. Sergei keeps all his business records written in code in his ledger, which he keeps on his person at all times. He is the only independent gun-runner supplying the BRT; their only other source is direct shipments from Uganda, which could compromise Uganda’s role. Sergei’s small fleet of transport aircraft are adept at landing at improvised jungle airstrips and air-dropping deliveries. He normally wears business suits to business meetings and his “African safari” outfits when not meeting clients. He travels on the ground via his armored SUV and by air via his H120. Sergei always has two imposing Russian bodyguards with him; their stats are identical to third-level Western UN soldiers.

Sergei Ilyich Sokolov

Alias: “Smiley” Sokolov.

Alignment: Aberrant.

Attributes: I.Q. 19, M.E. 17, M.A. 11, P.S. 14, P.P. 10, P.E. 10, P.B. 9, Spd 8.

Level: 5

Race: Human/Caucasian/Russian.

Education: Trade School.

Sex: Male.

Age: 57

Height: Six feet, five inches (1.96 m). **Weight:** 260 pounds (117 kg).

Hit Points: 32. **S.D.C.:** 43.

Armor: Concealed (A.R. 10, S.D.C. 50), but has access to Class IV Hard Armor (A.R. 17, S.D.C. 280).

P.P.E.: 7

Attacks per Melee: Four.

Bonuses of Note: +1 on initiative, +1 to strike, +1 to parry and dodge, +2 to pull punch, and +3 to roll with impact.

Natural/Mutant/Power Category/O.C.C. Abilities: None.

Primary Skills: Criminal Science 75%, Cryptography 65%, Find Contraband & Illegal Weapons 62%, Hand to Hand: Basic, Intelligence 68%, Interrogation 80%, Literacy: Native Language (Russian) 98%, Law (General) 65%, Mathematics: Basic 85%, Pilot: Automobile 88%, Radio: Basic 85%, Speak Native Language (Russian) 98%, Surveillance Systems 70%, W.P. Automatic Pistol, and W.P. Automatic Rifle.

Secondary Skills: Athletics (general), Business & Finance 60%, Recognize Weapon Quality 50%, Language (English) 75%, Language (French) 75%, Prowl 50%, Running, Body Building/Weight Lifting (gained at 3rd level), Language (Bantu; gained at 3rd level) 65%.

Equipment of Note: Seven expensive, custom-tailored business suits with concealed armor (A.R. 10, S.D.C. 50), 7 “African safari” outfits with concealed armor (A.R. 10, S.D.C. 50), concealed shoulder holster, silenced .380 Makarov semi-automatic pistol with two full, 8-round magazines, and satellite phone.

Armored luxury SUV (A.R. 14, S.D.C. 800, armored self-inflating tires, Speed Class 12, concealed compartment containing AKM and six fragmentation grenades).

4 Antonov-26 turboprop passenger aircraft (A.R. 6; S.D.C. 500; Speed Class 17; range: 1,584 miles [2,534 km] empty, 683 miles [1,093 km] with maximum load; crew: 5; passengers: 40).

1 Airbus H120 business helicopter (A.R. 6, S.D.C. 300, Speed Class 11, range: 440 miles [704 km], crew: 1, passengers: 4).

Game Master Notes

WARNING: For Game Masters' Eyes Only. Players, to read beyond this point reveals important plot twists and info that player characters should not know. To read on is to spoil the adventure for yourself. Stop.

The BRT is no longer to the south of Bukavu, but pre-recorded the videos to make it look like they were. Instead, they donned DRC uniforms and maneuvered north to get into position to attack Goma.

The BRT attack on Goma is well-planned and set to take place on a moonless night, two days from the time the players receive their mission to stop the general. Commercial satellite imagery and DRC rebels with GPS apps on their mobile phones will give the BRT the exact artillery coordinates for all their targets in the UN compound as well as the Goma airstrip. If not stopped, rebel DRC soldiers will help 1,000 BRT fighters sneak into Goma via a "training exercise" whereby DRC soldiers will ride trucks into the jungle half-full and return overflowing with soldiers in DRC uniforms. Once inside Goma, the combined BRT/rebel DRC force will infiltrate the UN compound and plant command-detonated bombs in the DRC brigade headquarters and the Goma airstrip. On signal, BRT heavy mortars will hit the UN compound's barracks, command post, and main gate with precision fire with tear gas shells, followed immediately by illumination rounds. That will be the signal for the villains to detonate their bombs and rush the UN troops. Meanwhile, the BRT heavy mortars will shift their fire, bombarding the loyalist DRC forces and the Goma airstrip with high explosive-fragmentation rounds, making it seem that the initial explosions were simply well-aimed mortar rounds. The heavy mortars will illuminate the airstrip whenever an aircraft is heard, enabling the BRT's anti-aircraft teams to engage the targets with SA-7b missiles and pickup-mounted ZPU-2 machine-guns. Once the UN compound is secured, the combined rebel force will sweep through the DRC loyalist positions, seize the airstrip, and then surround and exterminate the Goma refugee camp, using their heavy mortars to "soften up" the targets as needed with high explosive-fragmentation shells and what remains of their tear gas. The rebels will then film their propaganda videos as they carry off into the jungle all the weapons, ammunition, food, equipment, medicine, vehicles, and valuables they can haul.

After a successful attack on Goma, the rebels will leave behind one of the Belgian nuns, stripped naked but alive, in what remains of the refugee camp. She will be tied (not nailed) to a cross, given a crown of barbed wire and a sign, and situated where she can be photographed facing the greatest number of corpses. The sign will be in French and in English: "*Ainsi ont été les coupables punis: œil pour œil, dent pour dent. Que tous nous Bantous vivent maintenant dans la paix, l'unité et la fraternité!*" Thus have the guilty been punished: an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. May all we Bantus live now in peace, unity, and fraternity!" Phone calls and videos sent to multiple international news organizations will let rescuers know where she is once the rebels have cleared the area. A successful Crime Scene Investigation, Intelligence, or Medical check will note that the rebels went out of their way to ensure that the nun (Sister Claire Savorgnan de Brazza, age 68) would remain alive for the maximum impact on the world media.

Although the nun's body will bear the marks of 39 lashes, they will all be superficial flesh wounds. Her cross will have spikes on top, to prevent Africa's buzzards from perching and eating her flesh; she will even have an IV bag with a dose of insulin to keep the diabetic nun from going into shock. Of all the SIsAs nuns, Sister Claire's health was the most fragile and thus was the most likely to die of natural causes from the rigors of a fast-moving guerrilla campaign. The BRT's decision to release her strongly indicates that the BRT rebels do not want to kill the hostage nuns. On camera, Sister Claire will say she forgives the BRT for what they did to her, but that they must make peace with the families of those whom they killed and seek their forgiveness as well.

Off camera, Sister Claire will cooperate with heroes and UN forces seeking to rescue her fellow nuns. She can confirm that the brutality shown to them was all on the first day of capture and filmed in multiple locations, but after that they were fed well and no longer brutalized; that the nuns were always kept in a group, usually near or at the BRT's headquarters; that at any given time, half the nuns were held in chains, while the other half were put to work as medical assistants to the rebel army (all the SIsAs are trained nurses and doctors); and that the rebels warned the nuns that if any nun tried to escape, resist, or shirk her medical duties, one of the chained nuns would be killed. Sister Claire correctly surmises that the BRT is desperately short of trained medical personnel and thus intends to keep the SIsAs for the long term. Sister Claire can also give the heroes a good description of Malvoisine Bagosora and knowledge of her Body Weapons power but not her others.

As soon as the BRT leaves Goma, the Burundian Rwandan-Ugandan "Joint Security/Rapid Intervention Brigade" (see Mission Briefing item #13, above) will enter DRC territory, ostensibly "at the invitation of the people of Goma, to deliver humanitarian aid and to protect them from bandits and war criminals." True to their word, the joint force will distribute food and water, keep the utilities working, and patrol the area within 20 miles (32 km) of the city. They will *not* allow UN forces to return to Goma. Their initial refusals will be on the grounds of the safety of the UN personnel, saying things like, "Retreating DRC troops heavily mined the airstrip; it is not safe for you to land your aircraft here."

Once that has been proven to be false (the DRC military does not have land mines in its inventory), their official story will be, "After you proved incapable of protecting yourselves and the people of Goma, our fellow Bantus invited us to come and protect them. Your services are no longer needed here." Proving that story false should not be difficult; clearly the joint force was mobilized and put on standby, ready to move in *before* the city fell to the BRT. Evidence that the Burundian, Rwandan, and Ugandan governments are colluding with the BRT will be vehemently denied and met with the counter-accusation that the UN was colluding with *genocidaires* to destabilize Rwanda and Burundi and wipe out the Tutsi people.

The BRT will release a video showing all the 1,500-2,000 UN personnel it captured in Goma and in the ambush it set west of Bukavu (if the heroes didn't warn the UN about it). Each hostage will be recorded giving his/her name, rank, and nationality. The BRT will show images of captured classified UN documents showing that the UN was aware of "blood diamond" corruption in the DRC military; of the presence of *genocidaires* (Hutu war criminals with ties to the former regime of Rwanda) in the Goma refugee camp; and of the fact that these *genocidaires* had turned the refugee camp into a guerrilla base from which to launch raids into Rwanda. The BRT will then claim that the UN must be supporting such criminal activity, since they knew about it but didn't stop it. (Not true: while the UN supplied the Goma camp with humanitarian supplies, the DRC military ran the camp; it was they who were bribed to turn a blind eye to the *genocidaires*; the UN was trying to use diplomatic pressure to stop it.)

The BRT will demand the immediate withdrawal of the remaining UN personnel from Rwanda, Burundi, and the DRC. The BRT will offer to release the UN hostages to a "neutral third party" (Ugandan or Rwandan military) if the UN complies with their demand. However, the BRT will declare that for each day that their demand is not met, one-tenth of the UN hostages will be killed. To demonstrate their resolve from the very first day, the BRT will have captured Hutu DRC soldiers with machetes hack to death 10% (150-200) of the UN soldiers in the first video and in each daily press release thereafter. The first day's victims will be the captured UN officers, as "they are the ones who are the most guilty of these war crimes." This will psychologically bond the captured Hutus with the BRT ("you are Bantu like us, you have struck a blow against the Europeans like us, you are one of us"). It will also deprive the remaining captured UN soldiers of the leadership they would need to plan a mass escape.

Pieter DeBotha's convoy was guarded by South African mercenaries paid for by the DeBotha Diamond company. If Gerd DeBotha is

good, then he hired the mercs so he could be assured that his grandson had top-quality protection in that dangerous part of the world. If Gerd is evil, then he hired the mercs because he didn't want the UN around while Pieter was trafficking in illicit goods or was sacrificed in the name of business.

The baby does not actually belong to Dame Agua! She lost hers to a stillbirth a few days before she went to Africa, a fact she kept secret but was going to announce to the world when she and the DeBothas arrived at the Kamaniola refugee camp. Instead, the convoy was wiped out. Agua was holding baby Saffier when she and the DeBothas were captured; the BRT rebels made the mistake of asking whose baby it was after they let their prisoners know that they would kill the DeBothas. She and the DeBothas lied to save Saffier's life. Even if Gerd is evil and wanted Pieter dead, the BRT's killing of his great-grandson Marcel and great-granddaughter Odette was not part of the bargain; in fact, any deal to kill Pieter was with the mercenaries, not the BRT.

Whether or not Gerd is good, he feels that his great-grandchildren's murders are an outrage and that the BRT must be punished. Paying US\$10 million to rescue Dame Agua and "her" baby Saffier from the clutches of these extremists is nothing; he would make the reward \$100 million if he did not think it would make it too obvious whose child it really was. Good or evil, Gerd will stop at nothing to get his great-granddaughter back.

Major General Nkurunziza knows that the baby is a DeBotha. First, the baby has steel-gray eyes, like his father and grandfather. Dame Agua and Hal Tyler both have hazel eyes. Second, the general retrieved the DeBothas' travel documents (passports and airline tickets). He allows Dame Agua to maintain the fiction that the baby girl is hers, as it plays well to the international media and his rebel force has no lactating females who can feed the little hostage; however, the general knows well that Saffier is a means of secretly pressuring the DeBotha family. Thus, his propaganda videos continue to show that Dame Agua is well-treated, but not free to go; she will stay as a "guest" of the BRT to ensure that the United States does not intervene.

Once the UN troops are withdrawn or eliminated, the general intends to release Dame Agua unharmed, but he will reveal to the world the real identity of baby Saffier, demanding the DeBothas pay €100 million (US\$135 million) in ransom ("reparations to the Bantu peoples for your family's rape of our continent"). Of course, releasing Dame Agua would require the BRT to acquire a wet nurse for Saffier, one who is free from HIV – a disease that is ravaging sub-Saharan Africa. To acquire such a wet nurse, the BRT would have to round up a half-dozen lactating DRC women (easy) and then arrange the delivery of HIV testing kits into the middle of the jungle (highly unusual); such a delivery may betray the location of the BRT's headquarters.

If the UN forces in Goma are defeated, the BRT will turn its attention south to engage the UN troops south of Bukavu. While the UN soldiers are better trained and equipped, the BRT troops are more highly motivated and flush from their success at Goma. Without their logistics base and airstrip, the UN forces will be out of supplies, while the BRT will have all they need from the captured UN stocks. The UN commander will be faced with the choice between a risky all-or-nothing counter-attack to retake Goma or an orderly retreat south to Kalermie, on the western shore of Lake Tanganyika. Unwilling to die for Africa, the UN will retreat, harassed all the way by the BRT.

The UN will form a strong perimeter to guard the town and the airstrip, and the BRT will put the city under siege. Low-level violence will continue (primarily mortar and rocket attacks, with some small-unit raids), as much for propaganda effect as to probe the UN defenses for weakness, while the BRT loudly proclaims it will "turn Kalermie into the UN's Dien Bien Phu." If, after two more weeks, the heroes still have not stopped Major General Nkurunziza, the UN will agree to withdraw its troops (by air from the airstrip or by boat to Tanzania).

Reinforcements? Heroes will likely want to know what friendly military units are nearby that could help. Here's the situation (and it's not good):

Other DRC Forces: If Goma falls to the BRT, no DRC unit will agree to go to there, knowing full well that if the BRT can capture and slaughter well-armed, well-trained European troops, what chance will the FARDC's ill-disciplined rabble have? If the commanders of these troops are somehow coaxed/bribed into moving their forces to the Goma area, it will be like adding grease to the fire: at the first sign of heavy fighting, half of the Banyamulenge are likely to change sides, while the rest of the soldiers will most probably drop their weapons and flee. Fully supplying and equipping any one of these brigades for combat will cost US\$18 million and will only result in the BRT collecting more spoils of war when the DRC drops, sells, or abandons it.

Fresh UN troops? The Canadian battalion at Goma was/is due to depart in 16 days as part of the normal troop rotation. Its replacement is the Bangladeshi 7th Independent Infantry Battalion (IIB), under the command of Major Sumon Rehman. The lead elements of the 7th IIB are already arriving in Kinshasa by UN-contracted commercial aircraft. The 7th IIB is/was scheduled to begin five days of acclimatization and area briefings in Kinshasa before being flown to Goma airport. The BRT's sack of Goma will put a halt to those plans. So long as the BRT is active in the vicinity of Goma, Major Rehman and the Bangladeshi government will refuse to send their battalion there, on the grounds that they are peacekeepers, not war-fighters. (If for any reason the Bangladeshis come into play, their stats are similar to the DRC's soldiers, except they are all fully supplied, not corrupt, and at least 18 years of age; however, they are just as unmotivated.)

Send the Marines! No. Too easy. There *are* US Marines nearby (13th Marine Expeditionary Unit [Special Operations Capable], commanded by Colonel V. J. "Brute Dog" Krutis), operating off the coast of Somalia, ostensibly assisting the international naval effort to hunt down Somali pirates affiliated with al-Qaeda. While the Marines will be happy to share intelligence with properly-cleared heroes, requests for the Marines' presence will be denied, no matter how persuasive the heroes are. Why? Because they are actually doing another *extremely* high-priority mission, the details of which cannot be revealed to the heroes at this time. (I like throwing unanswered questions into my adventures; it gives me opportunities to add hooks and links to further adventures. G.M.s are free to invent their own reason the Marines are too busy to help; my favorite is this: "We were taking out a mad scientist who was making a biological weapon of mass destruction in Somalia. While we were successful in capturing the scientist and destroying her lab, two of her lab assistants are still at large with seven vials of possibly weaponized virus...")

There has to be somebody! If the G.M. is feeling generous, then make the following UN unit available: the Nepalese 2nd Independent Infantry Battalion (900 soldiers, commanded by Major Bishal Tamang), which has just been relieved by the Nepalese 5th Independent Infantry Battalion in – here's the catch – southern Rwanda. Sure, it's closer than any other UN unit, and the Nepalese are troops of quality, but the Rwandan government will do its diplomatic best to prevent the Nepalese from heading west to interfere with the Burundian-Rwandan-Ugandan plan to take over the DRC. Ruses will include "FDLR terrorists mined the road," "you lack the proper paperwork," and "we had to seal the border to prevent terrorists from crossing over to attack us." No matter how diplomatic the heroes are, the Rwandan officials will use every possible *plausibly deniable, non-violent* means to prevent the Nepalese troops from heading west. The best way to get around Rwandan obstructionism is to make it look like the Nepalese are flying back to Nepal via Tanzania; once in Tanzanian airspace, the UN aircraft can easily head west and land in Kalermie, DRC. (Major Tamang will think of this if the players don't.) Arranging the airlift will take four days, or only two if a character succeeds on a Business & Finance skill check (one check per player, no retries allowed) to contract four large civilian aircraft willing to fly into a potentially hazardous area with little notice; the UN will foot the US\$4 million bill. (If the Nepalese come into play, treat them as Western UN troops, except their motivation is good and one of their skill programs is used to add W.P. Knife, Body Building/Weight Lifting, and Hand to

Hand: Martial Arts. Nepalese soldiers have a long martial history and are renowned for being tough and extremely deadly in close combat with their standard-issue kukri knives.)

Thinking Outside the Box, Part 1

Joseph Kony, the archenemy of Major General Nkurunziza, has approximately 1,500 LRA guerrillas dispersed in the jungle five days' march north of Goma. Sylvestre Mudacumura has 5,000-6,000 FDLR guerrillas dispersed in the jungle within 100 miles (160 km) that could also be mobilized to fight within three to five days. Both are eager to get the ICC to cancel its arrest warrants against them; they may even send emissaries to any UN official willing to listen to propose an alliance in return for immunity from prosecution. The UN's official answer will be "no." If the players are seen meeting with FDLR/LRA emissaries, or worse, actually broker a deal with the evil warlords, it will be a public relations disaster for the UN. The Ugandan military response will be sharp: one full division (approximately 10,000 troops) will enter the DRC "in accordance with the ICC warrants to arrest the international war criminals Joseph Kony and Sylvestre Mudacumura as well as any DRC or UN personnel found to be aiding them." This force is already near the border, conducting "training exercises" (see Briefing Item #13, above), but will need two days from the discovery of actual or perceived FDLR/LRA-UN collusion to mobilize fully and intervene.

Thinking Outside the Box, Part 2

The BRT's rallying cry and *raison d'être* is their opposition to Hutu *genocidaires* in the region and their perception that Belgium, France, and the UN are complicit in the deaths of nearly a million Tutsis. What would happen if the heroes captured the FDLR military leader, Sylvestre Mudacumura, his principal lieutenants, and/or large numbers of FDLR guerrillas? If the players don't mind the BRT executing the FDLR captives, it would be easy to arrange a prisoner exchange: Sylvestre Mudacumura for Dame Agua, his lieutenants for the SISa nuns, and FDLR fighters for UN soldiers (one for one). Clever heroes whose alignments forbid giving prisoners to genocidal executioners could arrange a deal with the general's silent bosses, the governments of Burundi, Rwanda, and Uganda, transporting the FDLR captives to Rwandan territory for internationally-monitored fair trials, in exchange for those governments' "diplomatic support to secure the release of the UN and non-DRC hostages from the BRT." (Or, in other words, "We super-heroes know that Major General Nkurunziza is your proxy; we'll give you something you want in exchange for something we want.") Such a move would be equally successful; the terms of the exchange would be the same. Alternately, the heroes could try to nab the LRA's Joseph Kony and/or the FDLR's main gun-runner, Vincent "Vichy" Lavalley; however, as they are not the primary targets of the BRT, they can only be exchanged for Dame Agua and the nuns, not the UN soldiers. Persuasive heroes could try to parlay a prisoner exchange into a BRT pledge not to execute any more UN soldiers, but such a diplomatic feat would require *three* successful checks from an M.A. Trust ability, or a Business and Finance, Law, or Military Etiquette skill. While the above-mentioned "people skills" may have different slants (i.e., force of personality, trade negotiation, international law, or an appeal to soldierly honor and customs), they will follow the same general progression: the first check will be to *establish credibility* ("We have brokered and honored a deal that benefits us both, so you can trust us to honor future deals"); the second will be to *offer enticement* ("The more UN captives you kill, the fewer bargaining chips you have to get the prisoners you really want – the *genocidaires*"); and the third will be to *issue a threat* ("We are committed to bring to justice *all* war criminals: FDLR, LRA, and, if necessary, BRT"). If the players are smart but have characters who lack people skills, they can request a skilled negotiator from the UN, the DeBotha family, or their employer.

Adjustments and Complications

Nothing is ever easy, not even published adventures that have been read by players who have copies of *The Rifter*®. G.M.s who desire to adjust the level of challenge have many options; the following are given to spark their imagination. Some items are listed as both good and bad, so literate players won't necessarily know if a non-player character's offer of help is genuine. Game Masters, feel free to add or reduce superhumans to the mix as is appropriate to your campaign and player characters.

Helpful Heroes: That \$10 million reward has enticed additional heroes. These good guys have the skills and motivation to help the players, making the adventure easier.

- **The Ghost Gunners:** This duo is comprised of "Ghost," a hunter/vigilante, and "Gunner," a Hardware: Weapons Expert. Between the two of them, they have the manhunting skills and the firepower to augment any team of heroes.
- **FSI Mercenaries:** The FSI wants to avenge the massacre of its employees and gain vindication for the loss of a VIP under their protection. They will help the heroes in any way possible in order to get back at the mad general. They can offer first-rate intelligence, significant firepower (up to 60 well-trained "operators" and 4 helicopter gunships), as well considerable logistical support (armored SUVs, interpreters, military equipment, supplies, transport aircraft, weapons, etc.).
- **Special Man:** Melvin Maynard's mom says he is special. He *does* have six minor super abilities: Clock Manipulation, Heightened Senses (Hearing, Smell, Taste, Touch), and Supervision: Advanced Sight. This first-level mutant has a high school education, ability scores between 9 and 13, and a .38 Special revolver. Though an amateur, Melvin is honest, loyal, and a big fan of Dame Agua. Melvin is fluent in English, French, Russian, and (oddly enough) Central Bantu. He is a solid candidate for a long-term role as a humorous sidekick.
- **Dr. Theodoric Papagiorgio:** This Greek-American superhero is an associate member of WASH and a very professional crime-fighter. He is a third-level psionic who has a Ph.D. in Criminal Science. He knows W.P. Automatic Rifle and the *Ninjas & Superspies*™ martial art form Fong Ngan Kung Fu. His mental powers, skills, and UN contacts would make him a great asset for any team of heroes lacking investigative skills.

Not-So-Helpful "Heroes": That \$10 million reward has enticed other would-be bounty hunters and mercenary super-soldiers or super beings to join the fray. The problem with *these* "heroes" is that they are not inclined to help the players. Even if these would-be bounty hunters don't directly try to obstruct the players' efforts, they are certainly in competition with the heroes for the \$10 million reward. Depending on how honorable/dishonorable they are, these competitors may greatly complicate the players' efforts to stop the mad general and save the innocent.

Here are a few examples:

- **The Ghost Gunners:** Same as above, but maybe they're only pretending to help the players so they can get to the hostages first and keep the reward for themselves. They may, in fact, use non-violent "dirty tricks" to ensure that *they*, and not the players, get to rescue the hostages. Such dirty tricks may include spying on the players to steal their information, allying with the players with the goal of betraying them later, planting false information to get the players out of the way while *they* try to effect the rescue, etc.
- **FSI Mercenaries:** Same as above, but here they are willing to cross the line between hero and anti-hero. They will spy on anyone, double-cross anyone, and shoot anyone to get back at the mad general. If possible, they will rescue Dame Agua and the nuns so that the world will not condemn them for razing entire villages of suspected BRT hideouts.

- **The Mad Swede:** He thinks he is a Norse god, but keeps changing his mind about *which* god. He thinks Dame Agua is Brünnhilde. He thinks that he is fated to save and marry her. He thinks he has super abilities. He doesn't... or maybe he does have a few minor ones. He is certainly strong but delusional. His only real skills are Singing and W.P. Axe. He will bully anyone he perceives is obstructing his "rescue," which may – depending on his mood – include any locals who don't tell him where "Brünnhilde" is (Congolese don't speak Swedish). This crazy man will tirelessly traipse around the jungle with his gleaming scale armor and his gigantic, superior quality battleaxe (see HU, page 132), joyfully singing all four acts of Richard Wagner's *The Ring of the Nibelung* in Swedish.
- **Princess Voluptuosa:** This young heroine is honorable and well-meaning, but absolutely clueless. She will *not* work with any male heroes, condemning them as chauvinist pigs (whether or not they actually are): "You are just perpetuating the stereotype of the violent man who must fight another violent man to gain ownership of a woman! Well, we women don't need a man to be mistresses of our own fate!" Princess Voluptuosa plans to use her flying super ability to zoom around until she sees Dame Agua, then slap and chastise the mad general until he agrees to release the hostages. Knowledgeable military sources have voted this super-hero "Most Likely Not to See Anything Through the Triple-Canopy Jungle" as well as "Most Likely to Die By Automatic Weapons Fire If She Somehow Does Stumble Across the Rebels."
- **Papal Nuncio:** The Vatican seeks a non-violent way to get its nuns back and avoid another genocide. Convinced that diplomacy and moral persuasion is the answer, the papal nuncio (Vatican ambassador) for the DRC is crisscrossing the jungle to meet with all factions, armed only with formidable diplomatic skills and goodwill. This man is most likely to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Ironically, he is also most likely to be in the right place at the right time, assuming that he does not fall prey to criminals or bandits (robbed or kidnapped), or get assassinated by one of the rebel factions (with or without an attempt to frame an opposing faction). If by some miracle he does somehow rescue Dame Agua, the Vatican will dedicate 100% of the reward money to humanitarian projects to alleviate the suffering of the families of the people killed in the conflict.
- **Extra Villains:** Depending on the mix of experience, skills, and super abilities the players' team has, the G.M. may need to add extra villains to make this adventure challenging. Some ideas include:
- **Witch Doctors:** Practitioners of minor magic.
- **Congolese Bandits/Criminals:** Heroes with nice cars driving through the lawless jungle may encounter opportunistic gunmen who like taking other people's belongings. Alternately, repeated failed Intelligence skill checks may cause the heroes to mistake independent traffickers of "blood diamonds" or local bandits for the heroes' intended targets (BRT, FDLR, LRA, or RCD), which can end up wasting much precious time. Fortunately, these bandits/criminals are not very tough (same stats as DRC soldiers), and only 25% of them have guns, with most of their guns being revolvers, single-barrel shotguns, or bolt-action rifles. Those without guns mostly wield machetes, with a few having spears, short bows, and/or knives.
- **Another FARDC Rebellion!** One or more DRC military units mutiny. The mutineers may or may not be allied with one of the DRC factions (BRT, FLDR, RCD). They will attack nearby FARDC units that are still loyal to the government. If the rebellion *is* allied to one of the factions and is widespread enough, these mutineers may march on the capital of Kinshasa to effect a *coup d'etat*.

- **Surprise!** Major General Nkurunziza has super abilities such as Gem Powers, and/or Physical Training, or a magic item such as the *Mask of Kibuka*. **Note:** Kibuka is an East African war god; Game Masters are free to assign magic powers to it as they see fit to give the players an appropriate level of challenge.
- **Evil Mercenaries:** These BRT hirelings could range from normal humans with Military Specialist education (e.g., North Korean special forces) to one or more super-villains. The G.M.'s favorite recurring super-villain could make an appearance here. Or introduce a few new super-baddies.
- **Ugandan Military Intelligence:** Uganda has a fairly competent military intelligence service, which would have an interest in helping the BRT destroy the FDLR and take over the DRC. Ugandan intelligence personnel may spy on the UN and/or the heroes to give the mad general advance warning of any action against the BRT. If the heroes have a high-percentage Intelligence skill and are interested in a little "war of the shadows" (intelligence versus counter-intelligence action), having them dodge and/or counter Ugandan surveillance and hacking may heighten their enjoyment of the adventure. Alternately, if the heroes have godlike super abilities to where combat is too easy for them, they may find a more appropriate level of challenge trying to chase down an elusive mad general who always seems to know how to stay one step ahead of them...



Resolution

Once the players look into this situation, it becomes clear that Major General Nkurunziza seeks to murder thousands of Hutus, take over all the blood diamonds in the area, use these resources to take over the DRC, and then overthrow all the other governments of sub-Saharan Africa to

create a mighty dictatorship comprising a third of the continent. What is even more disturbing is that the governments of Uganda, Rwanda, and Burundi are complicit in this plan.

If the heroes stop the general from plunging the poor and long-suffering area into another genocidal war, they should gain the acclamation of the world community as well as a well-earned reward.

Awarding Experience: Note that there are several potential mass murders in this adventure: Hutu civilians, captive UN soldiers, captured DRC troops, any LRA/FDLR personnel offered in prisoner swaps, etc. As usual, players who stop or prevent mass murder should get the 500-1,000 experience points for “Critical plan or action that saves the entire group or many people” (see HU2, page 27). This reward should be given for *each* mass murder they directly prevent or stop.

Fame: Characters who successfully complete the mission and who do not mind being in the limelight will be famous for 1D6 months, unless they do something to be famous longer. On the plus side, add 12% to any Charm/Impress, Trust/Intimidate, or Seduction skill or ability check while famous; WASH members will also gain twice the normal financial donations and information tips (*The Rifter*® #62, pages 52-53). On the minus side, a famous character can expect to be followed and/or harassed at all hours of the day and night by 0-10 (3D6-8) reporters, paparazzi, admirers, stalkers, etc.

Basic Reward: Rescuing baby Saffier and Dame Agua is worth US\$10 million from the DeBothas, plus 4D6 x US\$1 million from Dame Agua’s adoring fans.

Added Reward: Dame Agua, if she survives, will write a song about the heroes’ exploits, featuring them prominently in the associated music video. She will split 100% of the profits of the song evenly three ways between SISa, WASH, and the heroes’ group. Such a song will earn each of the three groups a total of 2D4 x US\$500,000 per month for the first two months, 2D4 x US\$100,000 per month for the next 10 months, then 2D4 x US\$10,000 per month thereafter.

Read all about it! Book rights are worth money, too. If the characters have a professional author write their book, it can be published within six months, netting them royalties worth a total of 2D4 x US\$50,000 per month for the first two months, 2D4 x US\$10,000 per month for the next 10 months, then 2D4 x US\$1,000 per month thereafter. If the characters succeed on a Business & Finance skill check, then they can negotiate for twice the above royalties (one check for the group, no retries). Resourceful characters who write the book themselves will need to succeed on fifteen Writing skill checks (writing and editing) and one Business and Finance skill check (marketing), with each attempt requiring 40 hours of work, in order to gain ten times the above royalties.

Movie stars? Movie rights can be worth big money. If the players have someone else script, film, and produce a full-length movie of their adventure, it can be in theaters within a year and a half, netting them royalties worth a total of 2D4 x US\$500,000 per month for the first two months, 2D4 x US\$100,000 per month for the next 10 months, then 2D4 x US\$10,000 per month thereafter. A successful movie will double the profits of any book or song. Resourceful characters who seek to produce their own movie will need to front US\$3.4 million in production costs and succeed on four Writing (scripting), sixteen T.V. & Video (filming and editing), and six Business & Finance (casting, producing, and marketing) skill checks, with each attempt (successful or not) requiring 40 hours of work and US\$100,000 in additional production costs. Successfully producing the movie themselves will net the players *twenty times* the normal movie royalties.

Maps

These locations are real-world cities and towns. You can find them online via Google Maps (maps.google.com), which offers excellent satellite imagery and relief maps.

Bukavu (latitude/longitude): 2° 30' 30" South, 28° 51' 39" East.

Goma (latitude/longitude): 1° 40' 45" South, 29° 13' 22" East.

Kalermie (latitude/longitude): 5° 56' 0" South, 29° 12' 0" East.

Kamaniola (latitude/longitude): 2° 46' 0" South, 29° 0' 0" East.

Descriptions of Weapons

Chinese Type 63-1 Mortar: Caliber: 60 mm; range: (minimum) 310 feet (94.5 m), (maximum) 5,085 feet (1,550 m); damage: (high explosive) 2D8x10 on impact, 2D8x5 out to 20 feet (6 m), 3D6 at 21-80 feet (6.4-24 m); capacity: single shot, muzzle-loaded; rate of fire: one shot per action; length: (barrel) 2 feet (0.61 m); weight: 26.6 pounds (12 kg); W.P.: Heavy Weapons. This light mortar can also fire the following ammunition types: illumination (light radius 1,000 feet [305 m] for 30 seconds [two melee rounds]), smoke (radius 15 feet [4.6 m] for 60 seconds [four melee rounds]), and white phosphorus (smoke out to 30 feet [9 m], plus incendiary effects as follows: damage: 2D6x5 on impact, 5D6 out to 10 feet [3 m], 2D8 at 11-30 feet [3.3-9 m]). This weapon is normally serviced by a crew of three, but can be operated by a single person. It is normally disassembled into four parts for easier transport by foot soldiers: baseplate, barrel, bipod, and sight. It takes eight actions to assemble or disassemble, three actions to emplace, and one action to aim in (or to adjust aim). Once it is ready to fire, it only takes one action to fire each round.

South African GV5 Howitzer: Caliber: 155 mm; range: (minimum) 1.86 miles (3 km), (maximum) 24.23 miles (39 km); damage: (high explosive) 7D10x100 on impact, 2D20x100 out to 100 feet (30 m), 1D100x20 at 101-328 feet (31-100 m); capacity: single shot, breech-loaded, separate charge and shell; rate of fire: one shot every 2 melee rounds; length: (barrel) 22 feet, 10.6 inches (6.975 m); weight: 30,313 pounds (13,640 kg); W.P.: Heavy Weapons. This heavy howitzer can also fire the following ammunition types: illumination (light radius 2,000 feet [610 m] for 120 seconds [eight melee rounds]), smoke (radius 30 feet [9 m] for 120 seconds [eight melee rounds]), and leaflet (3,000 leaflets). While other ammunition types are possible, the MONUSCO South African artillery battery is not supplied with them. This weapon is serviced by a crew of six and includes an integral power plant to assist loading, emplacing, and maneuvering the howitzer. Each shell weighs 100.5 pounds (45.2 kg).

Notes on Indirect Fire: Indirect fire is notoriously difficult: -10 to hit with the first round, with the penalty dropping by 2 for each successive round fired at the same stationary target (i.e., -10 for the first shot, -8 for the second, -6 for the third, -4 for the fourth, -2 for the fifth, and 0 penalty for every shot thereafter). Each miss requires one action to adjust the aim of the weapon before it can be fired again. Once a hit is secured, the mortar may be fired at that target without penalty and without need to adjust aim, so long as the target and the shooter don’t move.

Resources

Blood Diamond (movie preview): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yknIZsvQjG4>

Blood Diamonds (Global Witness website): <https://www.globalwitness.org/en/campaigns/conflict-diamonds/#more>

Blood Diamonds (TIME magazine article): <http://time.com/blood-diamonds/>

Burundian Genocide: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Burundian_Genocide

Congolese Rally for Democracy (RCD): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rally_for_Congolese_Democracy

Earth Made of Glass (documentary of Rwandan genocide): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RJU-zBKe4uI>. In this documentary, the current President of Rwanda (Paul Kagame) blames France for the genocide.

FDLR: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Forces_for_the_Liberation_of_Rwanda

Hotel Rwanda (dramatization of Rwandan genocide): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dd8rX5Dy_Q

Hutu-Tutsi Conflict Explained (PBS NewsHour report): http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/africa-july-dec99-rwanda_10-08/

Kony 2012 website: <http://invisiblechildren.com/kony-2012/>. This is an excellent resource that details just how evil Joseph Kony of the LRA

is. Since the characters just happen to be in the area and there is an ICC warrant out for *this* warlord's arrest, too, maybe that could be the *next* adventure – or an interesting side quest for the current one, hmmm?

Lord's Resistance Army (LRA): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lord%27s_Resistance_Army. As of 2012, several international military campaigns to eliminate the LRA failed to destroy the organization but reduced its numbers from nearly 3,000 combatants to around 200-250, dispersed into squads of 10-20 rebels each. The lack of a major effort since 2013 probably allowed the LRA to rebuild significantly, so for this adventure it is assumed to have about 1,500 personnel and to have moved from the Central African Republic back into the DRC.

Map of Bantu peoples: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bantu_languages#/media/File:Niger-Congo_map.png

MONUSCO background: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/background.shtml>. Of note is the UN's decision to draw down and terminate the MONUSCO mission, per the DRC's request.

MONUSCO senior leadership: <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/monusco/leadership.shtml>. While most of these senior leaders would normally be in the DRC capital of Kinshasa, safely away from the drama in and around Goma, the G.M. may feel it appropriate to place one or two of these senior officials in Goma to aid the players (giving advice, authorization, information, and/or resources), harass the players (denying them authorization and/or resources, and/or placing restrictions on their operations), and/or become another VIP hostage of the BRT.

Q&A: Congo's M23 Rebels (BBC report): <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-20438531>

Rwandan Genocide: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwandan_Genocide. Note that the current President of Rwanda (Paul Kagame, a former chief of Ugandan military intelligence) may have been complicit in the genocide as well.

Shake Hands with the Devil, by Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire, Canadian Forces (Random House Canada, 2007). LtGen Dallaire was the commander of the United Nations Forces that were in Rwanda at the time the genocide erupted. In his book, Lieutenant-General Dallaire argues that when his requests for support were denied, he had inadequate forces to stop the killing, but that he and his troops did the best they could to save all they could.

Sylvestre Mudacumura (FDLR leader): https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sylvestre_Mudacumura. He is yet another African warlord with an ICC warrant for his arrest for war crimes and crimes against humanity. Maybe this could be *another* adventure or an interesting side quest for the current one?

Tears of the Sun (movie preview): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCEuSjWRJdU>

Note: Clips from the above movies make great “news clips” to show the players during the “mission briefing” to get them to visualize the chaos and devastation of modern genocide in Africa.

Gohjjunk

A Wilderness Community in the Pecos Badlands

Optional Material for Rifts®

By Brett Caron

A guide to a new setting within Rifts® North America, the small but influential community of Gohjjunk. Great for use with *Rifts® World Book 14: New West*, *Rifts® World Book 15: Spirit West*, *Rifts® World Book 13: Lone Star*, *Rifts® World Book 1: Vampire Kingdoms*, *Rifts® World Book 28: Arzno – Vampire Incursion*, *Rifts® World Book 11: Coalition War Campaign*, or *Rifts® World Book 35: Megaverse in Flames*.

Introduction

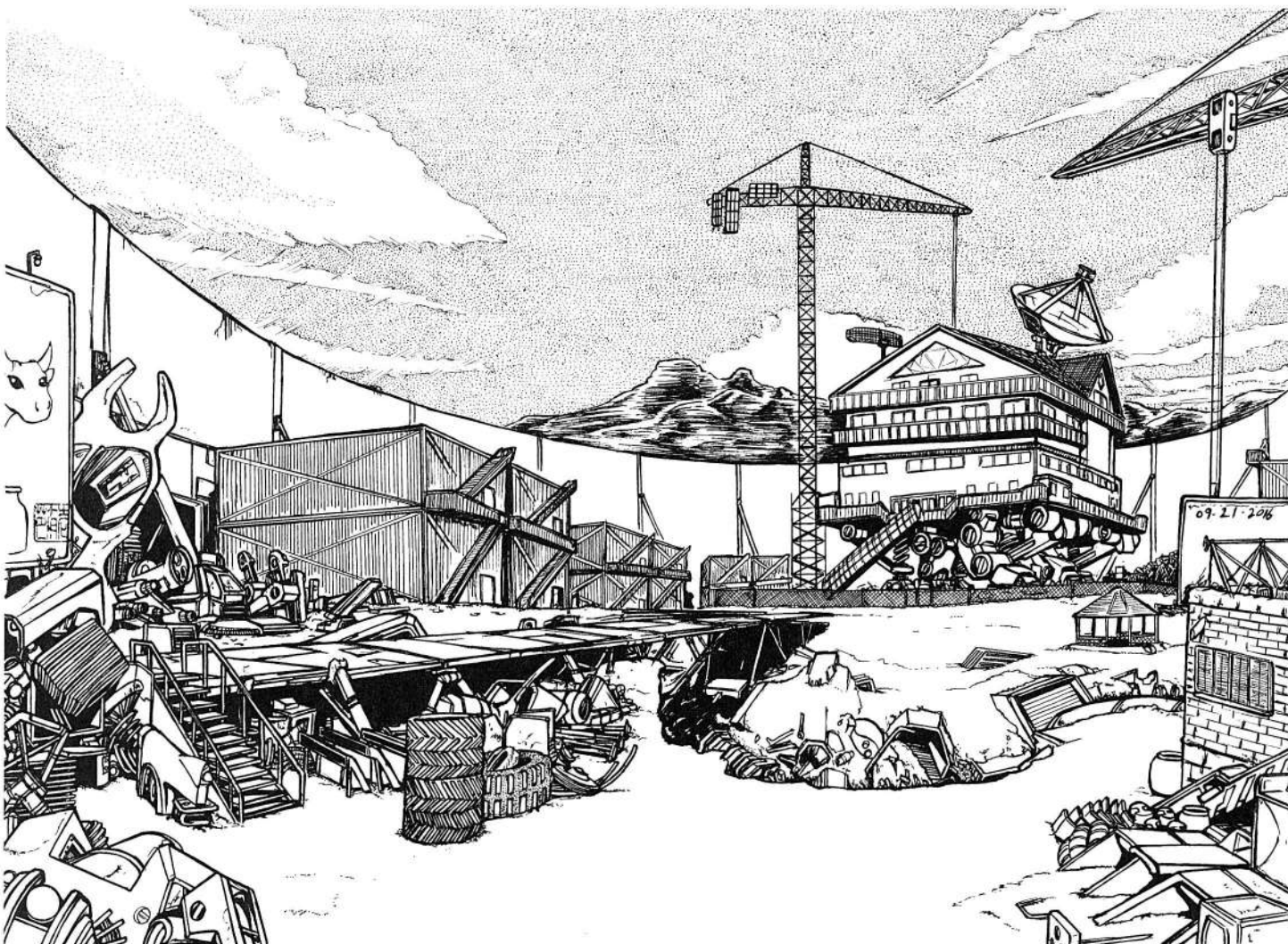
In the northernmost wastes of the Pecos Empire, close to Odessa and the southern edge of the Coalition State of Lone Star, a colossal mound of windswept sand and junk has stood for more than a century. In the Badlands, it's known as the Junkyard. When or how the huge mass of debris and scrap came to be there in the desert is a mystery, but it existed as early as the latter half of the Two Hundred Year Dark Age which followed the Coming of the Rifts. Some Rogue Scholars familiar with the area maintain that it was related to one of the Zombie Plagues, others that a demented dragon hoarded it over many years. A few claim that it was an ill-fated attempt to clean out the detritus of the Great Cataclysm so survivors could begin rebuilding without obstructions. No one knows for sure.

Whatever the reason, the Junkyard existed for decades in relative obscurity, except among the roving bands of Pecos bandits who occasionally cannibalized scrap and parts. The Junkyard became a sort of communal ‘watering hole’ to keep their vehicles running and their armor intact. All that came to an end with the arrival of a cagey human who planned to exploit the resource of the Junkyard for her own gain. Her name is Bowlock, and it's a name now infamous among the Pecos banditry and surrounding communities alike.

Eleven years ago, Bowlock and a cadre of cutthroat mercenaries came to the Junkyard to set up shop. They claimed the territory as their own, uprooting the few Fennodi and other beings who used the ruins of ancient vehicles as shelters. Some were murdered, others lived – but as slaves. Bowlock is a big believer in free labor and if she had one, the Trash Queen's motto would be ‘waste not, want not.’

Arriving with her crew, including a young but talented human Operator, an insectoid D-Bee, and the handful of his kind under the latter's command, Bowlock quickly set up the border wall protecting the visible mound of the Junkyard. Since the uppermost portion is relatively small, this work went quickly – after that, the mercenaries she brought with her merely had to fortify and defend the camp from Pecos raiders. Even with the water available courtesy of a nearby field of alien cacti, the community still seemed shaky. For a while, anyway.

Over time, Bowlock carved out a niche in the ecosystem of raiders and settlers scraping by in the Pecos Empire. There are substantial water deposits underneath the Junkyard, but they require intensive purification to filter out the myriad toxins and contaminants from the junk itself. Once this was up and running, Gohjjunk became a somewhat self-sufficient hub in the Badlands. Offering bargain-basement prices for repairs



and spare parts to the roaming warlords of the area, she managed to build a client base out of these bloodthirsty maniacs!

Eschewing most technology, the Native American and Psi-Stalker tribes near Gohjjunk have had little contact with Bowlock and her scoundrels. But seven years ago, before the Harmony's population began to really explode, Bowlock was considering whether she wanted to try and enslave the nearby Tohono O'odham people. She was aided by a Psi-Stalker named Weeping Wind, a traitor in the ranks of the Death Whispers tribe and close friends of their Indigenous neighbors.

The attempt failed and Weeping Wind was driven from the ranks of his people, exiled and cursed for life. Bowlock couldn't be happier with the result. The addition of the Psi-Stalker has only made Gohjjunk stronger and the Harmony have proven the extra 'primitive' slaves practically worthless. Wind has proved his usefulness more than once in sniffing out potential threats and ending them before they can get too close to Bowlock, including at least one vengeful magician and a Tohono O'odham Shaman. He feeds off the Harmony when bored or hungry, but takes forays into the wilderness to seek larger game – sometimes he hunts the Death Whispers or the Tohono O'odham just because he can.

The Harmony

The real key to Bowlock's success is the fact that she operates almost entirely on the backs of D-Bee slaves. Most are the descendants of those she had with her when she seized the Junkyard in the first place. There are hundreds of them working in Gohjjunk, day

and night. Their short, squat frames lug huge pieces of scrap back and forth, sweating stinking ichor from between the folds of their wrinkled, pebbly skin. In their buzzing, clicking language they call themselves the Harmony.

The Harmony are a species descended from something that perhaps once resembled a beetle, but they're covered in rhinoceros-like skin and patches of sensitive, waving hairs. They have six strong limbs which function equally well as hands and feet, similar to Earth chimpanzees. Slightly shorter than average human height, a Harmonic is almost as wide as it is tall. Large, shiny tusk-antlers sprout from the sides of their heads – these appendages are used both for nonverbal communication and defense. Their bulging, mantis-like eyes are green and reflective – combined with their friendly and curious demeanor, some find them sort of cute in a goofy way.

What makes the Harmony special is the link they share. Each individual Harmonic is connected to all others in proximity by a mental link – but one that is distinctly different from a 'traditional' psychic telepathic bond. Although each is a fully conscious, sapient being, they share a gestalt mind, a socialist drive to better the species. Only Pfab appears to be immune to this, and abuses the link by enforcing this offshoot of the Harmony to do his bidding. They obey happily, and are actively engaged in their own slavery as long as they are under his sway.

The Harmony's greatest strength is also their greatest weakness – their relentless optimism. Their sense of self-interest is the polar opposite of Bowlock's – it has everything to do with the Harmony, and nothing to do with any individual Harmonic. They trust each other implicitly. Thus, they are led in this case by a pied piper who steers them with darker intentions.

Harmonic R.C.C. – Optional Player Character & NPC

Also Known As “Drug Bugs” due to their goggle-eyed look.

Alignment: A strange case. Although in many ways Harmonics act as if Scrupulous or Principled, they do not share human morality and will exhibit behavior that many beings would find disturbing. This can make them act as if Aberrant, Miscreant, or Anarchist. Often, a specific offshoot of the Harmony will develop a personality that leans one way or the other, but when offshoots encounter each other, they invariably blend into an amalgamate of the previous two groups, leaning Anarchist if blending a good and evil offshoot.

Attributes: I.Q. 2D4+4, M.E. 2D6+2, M.A. 3D6+6, P.S. 2D6+20 (Augmented), P.P. 2D6+2, P.E. 4D6+4, P.B. 1D6+1, Spd 2D6+2.

Size: 5 feet to 5 feet, 6 inches (1.52 to 1.67 cm).

Weight: 200 to 300 pounds (90 to 135 kg).

Hit Points: P.E. x 3 plus 10 per level of experience.

S.D.C.: 2D4x100 plus 20 per level of experience, due to their tough skin, dense bone structure, and redundant organs.

P.P.E.: 2D4x10!

Disposition: Incredibly positive, upbeat, friendly, and optimistic. The Harmony bear no other creature any ill will, but will always act in the best interest of the Harmony as their first priority. They pride themselves on honesty, efficiency, and a sort of genetic altruism for their own kind. Any threat or objective standing in the way of a Harmonic and the will of the Harmony will be removed one way or another.

Average Life Span: 2D4+2 years. Physical maturity is reached in 3 months. The Harmony reproduce asexually, and have no concept of sex or gender. Every 417 Earth days, a Harmonic releases 1D4 spores from a special tentacle at the base of its neck. Under the right (cool, dark, damp) conditions, up to 75% of the spores will gestate into another Harmonic within 1D4+1 months (1D8+1 months if not under ideal conditions), but most of the time it is only a 25% success rate. Pfab and Bowlock have drastically increased this yield.

Natural Abilities: Excellent IR and UV vision (270 degree field of view), but grainy and poor color vision otherwise. Excellent sense of smell and taste (identify scents 70%), including pheromonal communication similar to the Xiticix. Range of hearing is similar to humans except for more infrasound (detect tremors, footsteps 60%). Can hold their breath for up to 10 minutes, and can operate freely in low-oxygen environments like high altitudes. Their hides are mildly photosynthetic, and provide them with some energy and oxygen to supplement their dietary needs. Pheromones and language make up much of their communication, since the range of the mental link is not infinite, but the bond they have evolved will eventually render their previous modes of communication vestigial over eons.

Groupmind: All Harmonics have the equivalent of Telepathy and Empathy with other Harmonics. This ability is constant, at no I.S.P. or P.P.E. cost. It has a range of about 1,000 feet (305 m) and is undetectable by magic or psionics designed to detect psionic powers in use. It is a self-contained network to which only the Harmony are privy.

In addition, reading a Harmonic’s aura will reveal only the following:

- An impression of many minds, somewhat similar to that of a multiple personality or a possessed person.
- No psychic ability.
- High P.P.E., but no magic.
- No accurate level of experience.
- Health; sick, injured, or well.

R.C.C. Skills: Native Language 98%, Land Navigation (+10%), Climbing 60%, Swimming 60%, Paired Weapons, Tracking (humanoids or animals) 50%, Play Musical Instrument (singing and tusks) 85%. In addition, each Harmonic may select 4 Secondary Skills, and another Secondary Skill at each level of experience. Harmonics may use the highest skill percentage of any Harmonic connected to the groupmind, even if they do not possess the skill. Gohjjunk’s Harmony have

picked up Salvage, Basic Mechanics, Computer Repair, Basic Electronics, Recycle, Excavation, and Automotive Mechanics.

Available O.C.C.s: Not applicable. Their alien mentality and low life span mean that the Harmony are not able to select an O.C.C. in the same way as another character.

Experience Level: In small offshoots like the one in Gohjjunk, 2D4+1. In larger offshoots, the average experience level increases to 2D4+3, and in the largest communities it skyrockets to 3D4+3!

Attacks per Melee: As per Hand to Hand: Basic if taken as a Secondary Skill, or 4 attacks with another at levels 7 and 14. If one Harmonic in the groupmind has Hand to Hand: Basic, they all do (up to their current level of experience).

Damage: As per Augmented P.S. (punch or kick does 1D6 + P.S. damage bonus in S.D.C., power attacks deal 1 M.D.). Tusks deal 3D6 S.D.C. + P.S. damage bonus and 1D6 M.D. on a power attack. When using weapons, the Harmony dislike projectile weapons, explosives, and Vibro-Blades (too noisy) but love lasers. Remember, if any Harmonic in range has a W.P., the entire groupmind shares it.

Bonuses (in addition to attribute bonuses): +1 on initiative and +2 to save vs Horror Factor for every 2 Harmonics involved in combat, +1 to strike, parry, and dodge, +4 to pull punch, +6 to roll with punch, fall, or impact, +2 to save vs disease, and +2 to save vs possession.

Vulnerabilities: Aside from the hazards of their sometimes childlike outlook on the world, they suffer double damage from electricity-based attacks and are susceptible to psionics (reflected in their lack of bonus to save vs psionics and mind control). They also require lots of food, water, and/or sunlight to function at full strength for long periods of time – about 50% more than a human being (more than 8 hours of strong sunshine per day will reduce the extra amount needed by half).

Psionics: None.

Magic: None, although they can use Techno-Wizard items.

Standard Equipment: Adventurers will possess a 50 foot (15.2 m) climbing rope and tools, wooden stake, flint and steel or matches, air filter or gas mask, canteen (2 days), food (2 days), and two weapons of choice if they possess any W.P.s, along with one reload for each weapon.

Habitat: Although the conditions for their gestation are preferably dark, damp, and cool, they thrive in many different environments and can be found anywhere, from deserts to coasts, mountains, or rainforests.

Alliances and Allies: Only the Harmony, but any offshoot will work with outside forces or individuals to better the group. Can be swayed if convinced of the potential benefits of an alliance.

Rivals and Enemies: Xiticix will attack and kill them on sight! Other than that, none to speak of except those who wish to take advantage of the Harmony’s naiveté or simply exterminate them for being non-human.

Gohjjunk, circa 110 P.A.

The visible mound of the Junkyard is long gone, but the high walls of Mega-Damage scrap are still there to protect the community (and reinforced – now boasting 100 M.D.C. per 20 foot/6 m section of wall). However, as they picked away at the mound, Bowlock and her overseers made a startling discovery. Only a small portion extends above the surrounding desert scrub – like an iceberg, the vast majority of the Junkyard lay below the surface.

Having exhausted the above-ground junk, Bowlock’s focus has shifted to excavation of the underground portion of the Junkyard. In doing so, she has discovered that at least the first several square miles underneath Gohjjunk is nothing but more Junkyard! It will take decades to unearth everything, and she is considering how to expand her supply chain to feed and house hundreds more of the Harmony to meet the increased demand. Money isn’t a problem – Bowlock’s back-and-forth with the local gangs means she’s become sort of a proxy arms dealer, offering credits

for weapons and gear and selling it back to those who come in for refits or repairs for a profit (if the Black Market got wind of this, El Oculta would certainly have something to say about it). Weeping Wind enjoys dealing with the warlords he respects, but Bowlock is becoming worried he'll lose respect one day and make a move she can't recover from.

Aside from hosting the occasional new gang or upstart local warlord come to negotiate with Bowlock, Gohjjunk is quiet even when it's very busy. The Harmony work themselves to the bone, bustling to and fro around the compound and transporting useful parts and materials for the human workers, sorting the rest for Gohjjunk's use or transport to neighboring kingdoms. The place is literally abuzz, but the nature of the sound tends to make it a dull omnipresent drone when the Harmony are around in large numbers, and the effect is almost calming to some. Although Pfab works the Harmony extremely hard, at night the majority of resting D-Bees can be seen in groups outside their hab-containers, singing peaceful melodies and scraping their tusks together to create a beautiful symphony under the stars.

Bowlock, now grossly overweight and definitely more of an indoor person, has her fingers in a lot of pies these days. She has a lucrative deal with Mayor Divillo of Karimyo which nets the Honey King a monthly shipment of gasoline in exchange for beef, cattle, and fertilizer from his ranch. Although Bowlock quite likes the Anteater of Karimyo, the sentiment is definitely not mutual and Divillo would love to stick it to the disgusting, arrogant human. Although she still deals in slaves, the success of the Harmony breeding program means Bowlock only buys and sells them to the Pecos warlords rather than keeping them for herself (although impressive individuals may be kept for her personal staff).

Another deal recently fell into Bowlock's expansive lap, exciting her dreams of fortune and power – but it could be her most dangerous venture yet. Rumors have been circulating around this swath of Pecos about a new community that seemingly sprung up out of nowhere 200 miles (320 km) to the east of Gohjjunk. The inhabitants call it Nowhere, and several months ago, a group of representatives came to visit Bowlock to discuss potential trade between the two kingdoms.

Nowhere is ruled by a consortium of Techno-Wizards known as BlueFuture Industries, and they loudly claim they can provide all the outlying communities of the Pecos Empire with 'unlimited energy' from the ley lines scattered sporadically across the badlands. The representatives, led by one of the Techno-Wizards themselves, approached Bowlock about the possibility of running a pipeline of P.P.E. energy directly to her front door. After hours of negotiation and explaining the unheard-of concept, there was an attack on Bowlock's complex that the Nowhere party defeated almost singlehandedly. Impressed, Bowlock became entranced with the idea. And with Weeping Wind distracted by a mischievous dragon hatchling secretly supporting the group, she was equally entranced by the magic of the Techno-Wizard and signed on the spot.

While the pipeline is under construction, Bowlock has dedicated a sizable fraction of her workforce to sending any unusable scrap off to Nowhere for processing (no fewer than 1 truckload per week, sometimes 2 or 3). This is a major stipulation of the Techno-Wizards, and one that Bowlock is happy to accommodate. She's now in talks to retrofit her salvage operation with brand-new Techno-Wizard tools and machines which BlueFuture insists will increase her profits tenfold. What these Techno-Wizards intend after the pipeline is constructed, or even the nature of this potentially world-changing technology, is anyone's guess.

Population Breakdown

(Never more than 750 individuals.)

56% The Harmony (working 24 hours a day in 12-hour shifts).

37% Human workers (mostly sorting junk or assisting the Operator).

5% Overseers and defenders (human and D-Bee).

1.5% Pecos bandits and raiders (human and D-Bee).

0.5% Visitors (human and D-Bee, mostly adventurers who aren't Pecos bandits).

Places of Note

Gohjjunk is a small community, despite its large worker and slave population. There aren't very many places to go, and one must always be careful to avoid any Pecos raiders who happen to be in town for repairs. Bowlock's house is away from the main thoroughfare, as are the hab-blocks used by the Harmony and other workers. Other residences are scattered between Bowlock's place and the hab-blocks. Vehicles not being repaired at Corri's are left in a lot near the west entrance to town, looked after by some of Bowlock's people.

Bowlock's Place, "The Big House"

The expansive compound Bowlock uses as a command center is part southern mansion, part office, and part communications relay. The lime-green house (her favorite color) stands apart from the rest of Gohjjunk, separated by a high chainlink fence and armed guards. This is where Bowlock holds court for visitors and oversees operations at the Yard. In recent years, she leaves her home less and less. The building is very tough (same M.D.C. as the exterior walls) and Bowlock has had it continually upgraded through the years in case of the Harmony revolting against her.

Bowlock's kitchen is run by Ayy Bi, a reptilian D-Bee with amazing scent and taste receptors, who constructs elaborate banquets for the debauched slaver on a daily basis. Bowlock pays for all sorts of rare ingredients to be brought in by caravan or teleportation, as well as fine fabrics and furniture. Visitors are also treated to five-star cuisines in huge portions, set out by Harmonic servants who clean and manage the household. The rest of the staff are human and D-Bee specialists (dentist/Body Fixer, tailor, etc.) who live in basement apartments.

There is a wing of guest rooms for important visitors and a lot around the back for their vehicles. Contains a long-range radio and extensive surveillance equipment used to monitor the goings-on in the Yard and the rest of Gohjjunk.

The Junkyard

The gutted remains of the Junkyard's protruding mound make up 75% of the space inside Gohjjunk's exterior walls. An interior wall runs along the edge of the Yard, separating it from the rest of the city. Only two entrances and exits are present – one for workers, and one for vehicles. Security isn't that tight, but there are guards at every post around the clock since the Harmony work 24 hours a day.

With the revelation that most of the Junkyard is underground, the activity has only increased. The Harmony have excellent vision for working underground and seem to have an affinity for the anthill-like tunnels being excavated underneath the town. As the Junkyard becomes more like a mine than a simple salvage operation, the space beneath Gohjjunk is quickly becoming a series of bizarre technological catacombs – a quarry in progress, with loads of junk brought up from underneath to be sorted and then carried to Corri's shop on the other side of the hab-blocks.

The underground labyrinth is already causing problems for Bowlock's operation – burrowing monsters like Canyon Worms are now an issue for worker teams, not to mention the myriad subterranean demons and Earth Elementals which burrow to create their lairs. Bowlock doesn't have the staff to handle the increased security, and has taken to hiring adventurers and traveling mercenaries to provide some temporary relief for her overtaxed defense forces.

Corri's Custom Carriages

From its humble beginnings as a single cargo container hollowed out for use as a garage, Corri's 'Triple C' Op-shop has grown by leaps and bounds. It now boasts ten times as much space, a full robot and vehicle repair bay, a separate workshop for mundane technological items (toast-

ers, computers, miscellaneous equipment) as well as weaponry, and another large workshop dedicated solely to sorting and refurbishing scrap that the Harmony have picked out of the Junkyard.

Many items are recovered relatively intact, requiring only a few parts and a vigorous cleaning, but others are valuable only for one or two parts and the rest are disposed of or melted down. Now that Bowlock has brokered the deal with Nowhere for the leftovers to be sent away to the Techno-Wizards, Corri is breathing a sigh of relief at all the freed-up space she has.

This won't last for long. Gohjjunk's operations will continue to outpace the space they have available, and Corri will see her newly-uncluttered shop once again become the scrap-filled nightmare it was before. She doesn't spend much time at the CCC, but when she does she can be found either in the 'office' above the sorting floor or in her corner of the vehicle bay, where her favorite hovercycle and 'bot are kept.

Repair costs are as per *Rifts® Sourcebook One, Revised* (page 36), but are always 10-20% higher than the listed price unless Bowlock has personally indicated that someone is a preferred customer. Corri herself will grant discounts of up to 15% if she feels like it, but since she's often mired in depression and/or drinking off-site at the Holey Cow, she rarely takes such a hands-on approach to the operation.

The Holey Cow

The sign above the door of this run-down watering hole, the only one in town, is a cartoon cow with bullet holes in the udder, leaking milk into several glasses.

Run by an unscrupulous human named Jak Trak (an ex-CS Grunt turned mercenary, retired for 8 years), the Cow caters to everyone. In Gohjjunk that means any visitors who are in town as well as the regulars, mostly mean-drunk mercenaries and overseers or workers trying to drown their sorrows. The Harmony have no taste for alcohol, so they rarely frequent the place.

The menu is sparse, and depends on a few factors. If Weeping Wind and his hunting parties have brought back any game, a thin stew is commonly available, with roasts and meatloaf on particularly good days. There is also water, a small back stock of Psi-Cola (only 11 bottles left), and cactus juice (comes virgin or alcoholic) from the field nearby. The locals call those dark-green alien flora 'blacktus' and the hallucinogenic syrup it produces 'black eye juice,' due the strange side effect of turning a user's eyes much darker than usual. The drink is extremely popular among the Harmony, and Bowlock ensures a constant supply is delivered to the hab-blocks to keep them compliant. (**Note:** The groupmind of the Harmony means that each of their hallucinations and euphoria are shared amongst the group, making the 'trip' even more surreal and exciting!)

Fights are common, but are usually taken into the street to resolve themselves. Even the Pecos raiders have a modicum of respect for Gohjjunk and its single bar, and know if they were banned then they'd have nowhere to drink when the gang is in town next. As a result, they feel somewhat protective towards the bar and will shout for scuffles to be taken outside. Sometimes a simple disagreement will find the parties picked up and carried outside by a dozen or more Pecos raiders, before they are allowed to continue.

The Blocks

These are simple habitation units rigged from old shipping containers. The better ones (Block A, for humans and non-Harmony D-Bees) have air recyclers and plumbing – the best of the bunch even have windows. Even these simple comforts are a step above what the Harmony receive.

The others (Blocks B and C, for the Harmony) have almost no amenities. The Harmonics accept this as their lot in life, and feel no outrage. They use outhouses and outdoor washing facilities.

Block D is mostly empty, as spare as Blocks B and C, and is used to keep undesirables (whether they are prisoners, unruly workers and slaves, or just visitors who Bowlock doesn't want in her home).

There are 6 more containers buried nearby, and they serve as the nurseries for larval Harmonics still gestating. The cool, damp conditions are exactly what they need to grow at a prodigious rate. These produce 6D6 new Harmonics per month (they are worked to death at a rate of 2D6 per month).

Aside from the above, many of the mercenaries-turned-overseers including Corri, Weeping Wind, Pfab, and others, have their own houses. These are mostly cobbled together from scrap with the equivalent of late 20th Century technology by virtue of Corri's (assistants') hard work.

People of Note

Bowlock

“The Fat White Snake,” “Trash Queen of Gohjjunk”

The daughter of a pair of Chi-Town Lofties slowly squandering the wealth of their high-born families, Danielle Bowlock quickly became bored with their hedonistic, cloistered lives and wanted more. She began toying with Low-Levelers children, using servants to manipulate them with money or promises into bringing her forbidden pre-Rifts books and artifacts. Her parents, oblivious to their daughter's escapades, treated her like a princess.

Over time, she became bolder and bolder. But when she unexpectedly manifested minor psionic powers as a teen, everything changed. Her father, a devout human supremacist and bigot, was devastated. He all but disowned her after the bar code was tattooed on the back of her neck. Worse, under the increased ISS scrutiny surrounding her registration, Bowlock's misadventures came to light.

She emptied a good portion of her parents' accounts and used her Low-Levelers connections to strike out into the 'Burbs and start a new life. Meanwhile, her disgraced parents were quietly executed. Ten years later, having burned through most of her stolen fortune, Bowlock found herself in Arzno.

It didn't take her long to understand that outside Chi-Town and other cities, most people survived by scavenging and repurposing the ruins of the old world. Bowlock had come to Arzno to rope together a team who could lay claim to the rumored Junkyard and corner the market in Pecos. She was having a hard time of it, mostly because her haughty attitude had not faded even after the decade of travel (of course, with the credits she had available, even those years had been spent pampered and well-defended).

With help from a naive, young Operator who showed Bowlock kindness at her lowest moment, she met a disgruntled D-Bee named Pfab who shared her thirst for dominance. They hatched a plan to use the Harmony as their labor force, cutting costs on everything but the skilled personnel required for sorting and refurbishing the junk. The three set out for the Junkyard with their mercenaries, riding out the last of Bowlock's cash on the way there. The rest is history.

On the backs of her slaves and workers, Bowlock has regained some semblance of the lifestyle she used to enjoy. Her banquets are legendary, and her inner circle enjoy many of the comforts others see in places like Manistique or Kingsdale. She hates the Pecos Badlands, and mostly leaves her compound only when she must travel and spares no expense on magical teleportation services if she can get them. Behind her back, her workers joke that the only way to get her out of her home would be to set her dinner at the front gate.

Still, Bowlock is ruthless, conniving, and a gifted businesswoman. She knows the art of the deal, and is good at working in provisions which result in advantageous favors and bargains later. She's richer now than she has been since leaving Chi-Town, and secretly dreams of return-

ing home – but these flights of fancy are quickly disregarded. She has more power here than she ever had before, and if there's one thing more important to Bowlock than money, it's the feeling she gets from forcing others to do her bidding.

Quick Stats: Bowlock

Attributes: I.Q. 16, M.E. 10, M.A. 19, P.S. 11, P.P. 7 (used to be 13), P.E. 9, P.B. 7 (used to be 14), Spd 8 (used to be 12), 44 Hit Points and 21 S.D.C.

Alignment: Miscreant evil.

Disposition: Condescending, often flaunting her civilized upbringing in the faces of... well, everyone in this neck of the woods. She has a genuine sense of humor though, and a sharp wit that disarms many prospective clientele – that and her (fake) Southern belle accent. Her characteristic belly laugh is legendary. Enjoys toys and trinkets, shiny jewelry, fine clothing (her personal tailor makes them on-site), and creature comforts.

Skills: Speaks and is literate in American, Spanish, and French 90%, Imitate Voices & Sounds 80% (mostly mimicking regional accents and speech patterns), Barter 72%, Radio: Basic 80%, Basic Math 80%, Sensory Equipment 70%, Surveillance 75%, Wardrobe and Grooming 78%, ID Undercover Agent 68%, Gambling 65%, Gambling (Dirty Tricks) 48%, Streetwise 52%, Roadwise 62%, Appraise Goods 70%, Computer Operation 82%, History: Post-Apocalypse 70%, W.P. Blunt, Knife, Energy Pistol, Handguns.

Combat: Carries a Wilk's derringer (1D6 M.D., range 400 feet/122 m, 3 shots), but when venturing out of her compound she favors a polished Wilk's 320 laser pistol (1D6 M.D., range 100 feet/30.5 m, 20 shots, +2 to strike on an aimed shot), a silver-plated revolver (4D6 H.P. (silver), range 150 feet/46 m, 6 rounds, +1 to strike on an aimed shot) and a Vibro-Knife (1D6 M.D., silver-plated). Hand to Hand: Basic (5 attacks). Has an Altara Armor of Ithan amulet (100 M.D.C. for 10 minutes, 3 uses per day and recharges every 24 hours).

Psionics: A Minor Psychic with the powers of Object Read and Machine Ghost. 47 I.S.P.

Equipment: Mostly carried by her servants, she hates holding things. Has access to hundreds of thousands of credits.

Jirrl'klozz'pfab

“Pfab the Overseer”

Leaning heavily on a staff of battered Mega-Damage steel topped with a speaker box, this grizzled Harmonic's skin has faded to a light lavender and his eyes are cloudy and myopic. His distinctive limp singles him out from the rest of the Harmony, but even without it he is obviously the oldest by far. The other overseers know him as Pfab; none of the Harmony have names except him. This is because, unbeknownst to anyone, Jirrl'klozz'pfab is not truly one of the Harmony at all.

In fact, Pfab is a Psymbiote (see *Rifts® World Book 12: Psyscape* for details) who has been manipulating this particular offshoot of the Harmony for more than a decade! The small green-brown slug is nestled snugly between some of his aging host's skin folds, and requires a Perception Roll of 23 to notice. The Psymbiote's natural ability to establish a symbiotic bond has resulted in Pfab tapping into the Harmony's mental link.

After he escaped from his enslavement to the Splugorth, Pfab left the Three Galaxies for Rifts Earth and has now become obsessed with the concept of slavery. He was a dangerous, deluded being even before he bonded himself to the Harmony, and constant exposure to their groupmind has eroded his sanity even further. The continuous chattering and feelings of the Harmony's gestalt superconsciousness has got Pfab convinced he is some kind of god, a puppeteer controlling hundreds of minions.

The unique nature of the Psymbiote's natural defense mechanisms and the Harmony's bond means that despite his prodigious psionic pow-

ers, Pfab does not register as psychic even under the careful scrutiny of Weeping Wind or any other Psi-Stalkers, mystics, and other methods of detection! Wind knows *something* is up with the old Harmonic, since he still feels it when Pfab uses his powers nearby, but it's never enough to pinpoint the Psymbiote's true nature.

Pfab's duties keep him busy; he spends much of his time using Hypnotic Suggestion and Empathic Transmission through his host to affect the groupmind of the Harmony and keep them working. The rest of the Harmony accepts this, since their minds cannot comprehend that one of them would be separate from the whole and working against the greater good of their species. Pfab's host is nearing the end of its life cycle, and he must soon decide whether to reveal his secret to Bowlock (who is worried about what will happen when Pfab 'dies') or to try and make it seem as if a younger Harmonic has taken over the role of Overseer.

What Pfab doesn't know is this: if the Harmony's population increases past 1,000 individuals, the groupmind will be strong enough to shake free of his influence and the aliens will likely kill everyone in Gohjjunk to secure the site for themselves. If this proletariat revolution happens, Pfab will abandon his host and flee using whatever means available – but there's a good chance he won't escape the Harmony's wrath.

Quick Stats – Pfab the Overseer

(Statistics in parentheses are the current Harmonic host.)

Attributes: I.Q. 21(8), M.E. 17(7), M.A. 16(17), P.S. 2(22 Augmented), P.P. 1(9), P.E. 3(27), P.B. 2(5), Spd 7 ground and 70 underwater(11). 9 M.D.C. (181 H.P., 900 S.D.C.). 22 P.P.E. (40 P.P.E.) and 167 I.S.P.

Alignment: Diabolic evil.

Size: 6 inch (15 cm), green-brown slug with thin tendrils (host body is normal for Harmonics, but old and faded in luster with a severe left limp).

Disposition: Always seems a little distracted, like he has more important things to do than talk to you right now. It's a side effect of the groupmind connection, but the rest of the Harmony does not suffer from it so severely. Despite his psionic powers of empathy he is a sociopath who does not care for the feelings of others. Sarcastic, vindictive, and spiteful, but also generous when he thinks highly of someone or feels grateful for their help. He usually attempts to read or probe non-psychics using telepathy and empathy, but tries not to play his hand too early when dealing with other psychics. Only communicates through the language translator on his staff unless someone uses the Tongues spell or can understand any language like some demons can.

Skills: Understands American, Spanish, and Demongolian at 88%, but has no skills to speak of besides Interrogation 98%, Lore: Demons and Monsters 65%, and the host's skills of Harmony native language 98%, Land Navigation (+10%), Climbing 60%, Swimming 60%, Paired Weapons, Tracking (humanoids or animals) 50%, and has access to the Harmony's skills.

Bonuses: +1 on initiative (+7 with Sixth Sense), +3 to strike (+4), +4 to parry (+6), +5 to dodge (+8), +6 to roll with impact, +2 to save vs psionics, +7 to save vs magic, +12 to save vs poisons, toxins, gases, +9 to save vs disease.

Combat: Uses his psionic powers or an NG-57 ion blaster (3D6 M.D., range 500 feet/152 m, 10 shots per clip and is extra painful to the Harmony), but tries to conceal his powers whenever possible, directing the Harmony nearby to fight and die for him.

Psionics: Bio-Manipulation, Bio-Regeneration (super), Telekinesis (super), Hydrokinesis, Hypnotic Suggestion, Deadened Pain, Death Trance, Mind Block, Group Mind Block, Group Trance, Healing Touch, Impervious to Fire, Levitation, Presence Sense, Psi-Sword, Psionic Invisibility, Psychic Body Field, Psychic Diagnosis, Psychic Surgery, See Aura, See the Invisible, and Sixth Sense.

Equipment: Wears custom half-armor (50 M.D.C. main body, 20 per limb) and helmet (30 M.D.C.). His staff has 20 M.D.C. and deals 2D6+7 S.D.C.

Weeping Wind

“Kinslayer,” “Slave-Hunter of Pecos”

In exile, Weeping Wind has chosen a life as the head of security for Bowlock’s new enterprise. Too bloodthirsty and cruel for the Death Whispers even before his betrayal, his sadism now has free rein and he hunts, maims, or kills the Harmony on a whim. Wind helped to develop the nurseries which grow the D-Bees at such a prodigious rate, and knows they breed much faster than he kills them. He thinks of it like trimming the hedges.

At this point, Wind is definitely leaning on his natural abilities in the course of his service to Bowlock. He fancies himself a black knight, and still wears the Death Whispers’ traditional war paint around his eye sockets and down his mouth and chin. He seems continually on the prowl, daring anyone to challenge him. A few gunslingers and Pecos raiders have taken him up on his attitude, and all of them are now dead. Wind doesn’t care about an ‘honorable’ duel in the street, and will tear someone to pieces with his Vibro-Claws anywhere in Gohjjunk if he feels like it.

Only Bowlock or Pfab can talk him out of it if he gets it in his mind to provoke a spellcaster or psychic, and even then he’ll still disagree with whatever they say in a disrespectful manner whenever they’re in earshot. Now that he’s had more contact with the local Pecos gang leaders, he’s beginning to understand when that might not be a good idea. But if he senses weakness, Wind follows his instincts.

He can be found anywhere in Gohjjunk in the course of his duties, which are mostly to protect the town and hunt game (dinosaurs to feed the human and D-Bee overseers, and canyon worms to feed the Harmony as ground-up slop). However, these excursions are increasingly just to sate his own hunger to inflict pain and suffering on others. He and his cronies will sometimes attack lone or small groups of travelers for fun.

Quick Stats – Weeping Wind

Attributes: I.Q. 9, M.E. 13, M.A. 10, P.S. 21, P.P. 17, P.E. 14, P.B. 15, Spd 24, 70 S.D.C., 33 H.P. 93 I.S.P.

Alignment: Diabolic evil.

Disposition: Easily offended, and quick to anger. Never trusts anything supernatural, mages, or other psychics. Believes Psi-Stalkers to be a superior race to humanity, with himself above all others of his kind much like Pfab seems above the Harmony. His time spent helping Pfab engineer the nurseries has got him interested in crude eugenics. Always alert and ready for action when strangers are around, and is frequently hostile and provocative in conversation.

Skills: Radio: Basic 70%, Horsemanship 90%, Pilot Hovercraft 75%, Read Sensory Equipment 55%, Weapon Systems 65%, Climbing 60%, Swimming 75%, Tracking (anything) 80%, Sniper, W.P. Knife, Sword, Blunt, Handguns, Rifle, Energy Pistol, Energy Rifle.

Bonuses: 6 attacks, +2 on initiative (+8 Sixth Sense), +3 to strike (+4), +6 to parry (+8), +8 to dodge (+11), +10 to roll with impact, punch, or fall, +6 to pull punch. Saves vs psionics on a 6+, +4 to save vs magic, +8 to save vs Horror Factor, +7 to save vs mind control, +5 to save vs possession.

Combat: Uses a Forearm Integral Weapon System (5D6 M.D. single or 1D6x10 double blast particle beam, range 500 feet/152 m, 30 shots, and 3D6 M.D. Vibro-Claws) which he salvaged from a dead CS Juicer, a point of pride for Wind. Otherwise, he uses silvered weapons to fight demons and vampires and a JA-11 laser rifle (2D6 or 4D6 M.D., range 4,000 feet/1,219 m, 60 shots; and 6D6 S.D.C./H.P. for hand-loaded 7.62 mm silver rounds, range 2,000 feet/610 m and loaded one at a time), plus has an assortment of grenades and a Neural Mace.

Psionics: Sixth Sense, Clairvoyance, Sense Evil, Telepathy, See Aura, Object Read.

Senses psychic and magic energy within 110 feet (33.5 m). If any psychic powers or spells are used the range increases to 1,000 feet (305 m). Tracking psi-energy is performed at 40%, or 80% if powers are being used.

Can sense supernatural creatures 60% within 200 feet (61 m). If it uses its powers, the range increases to 1,400 feet (427 m). Similarly, tracking supernatural creatures is 50% when not using their abilities and 82% when they are. Recognizing a specific scent later is 40%.

Equipment: Wears Gladiator armor (70 M.D.C.). Rarely wears a helmet except when in serious trouble – he enjoys the hunt more without it. Carries a handful of Tohono O’odham and traditional magic amulets, all trophies (bonuses included above).

Corri

“Baby Boperator,” “Corri the Crap Collector”

When Corri Hargreaves was just starting out as an apprentice to an established Arzno Operator, she was frequently chastised for taking shortcuts. She ignored the old man and was eventually fired when a robot she had worked on malfunctioned and crushed a Cyber-Knight’s horse. Jobless and homeless, she wandered the streets until she came across a drunken Bowlock – sprawled in the trash outside a bar on Victory Row. Bowlock offered her a hundred credits to get her back to the Riverside Hotel, and their partnership was born.

Bowlock, who had been fund-raising in Arzno for her expedition to the Junkyard, recognized an opportunity to recruit the young Operator to her cause. Corri, of course, embellished her credentials to get the job, but her interview was something of a formality. Both women were desperate.

Since then, Corri has regretted her decision more than once. Gohjjunk is a lonely, dangerous place, and her job is boring. (She gets her assistants to do most of the work and spends her days tinkering with her favorite vehicles – an NG Cobra Turbo hovercycle and a Titan Reconnaissance Robot.) She spends most of her free time getting drunk at the Holey Cow, and can be found there most evenings. She’s managed to save a few thousand credits here and there, and if offered the opportunity to move somewhere new, she might jump at the chance, but at the end of the day, Corri is lazy. She won’t take chances if she can just slack off and stay comfortable.

The expansion of the underground Junkyard’s excavation is terrible news. Corri watched the Junkyard shrink with a certain glee – eventually, this job would be done, and she could get out of here. Now that Bowlock is gearing up to expand their operations, Corri is dreading how long she might be stuck here in Gohjjunk. Her drinking is getting worse and it’s only a matter of time before Bowlock decides that it would be better to promote one of Corri’s assistants and send Weeping Wind to put the Operator out of her misery.

Quick Stats: 3rd level Operator O.C.C. I.Q. 14, M.E. 6, M.A. 6, with all other attributes normal human, 9-12.

Disposition: Bored and dull. Always looking forward to the end of her shift, and slacks off whenever possible. Will make promises she can’t keep, since she avoids confrontation. Runs to Bowlock if she’s in any trouble and relies heavily on the other woman to get her out of jams.

Skills: All relevant Operator skill knowledge, plus the ability to improve or ‘soup-up’ machines.

Combat: Doesn’t like fighting, but does like shooting from very far away. Will run for high ground or cover and blast away with a heavy vehicle-mounted weapon (+3 to strike).

Pecos Gang Leaders and Other Groups in the Gohjjunk Area

Through a combination of ruthless self-interest and business savvy, Bowlock no longer has to defend Gohjjunk from the Pecos raiders – in fact, they will come to her aid to defend their shared resource from demonic attacks during the Minion War and other threats! Disputes and conflict among the gangs and tribes are still rife, however; Gohjjunk simply remains a neutral ground in the ongoing skirmishes and feuds.

Sunny's Wildcarts

Sunny is a Crazy with an obsession for fast cars, speed, and mayhem, and his gang follows him fanatically. He's among the first to answer Sabre Lasar when he calls for warriors, and loves fighting vampires. His crew treats him like a messiah of some ancient speedster legend of the Badlands.

Sunny's Insanities: Phobia: Cats, Affective Disorder: Death Wish, Power by Association: Power Word ("Gottagofast!"), Obsession: Danger & Speed (loves it), Phobia: Books.

He has more Crazies than most gangs in the area (20%) and the rest of his raiders favor minor bionic augmentation whenever possible – Sunny's pushing for Bowlock to bring in a Cyber-Doc ASAP. Sunny's motorcycles and hovercycles are minimal; they run a mix of hover, tracked, and conventional automobiles and trucks (many gutted out to act as APCs for assault troops using pintle-mounted heavy weapons). They stick to the southwest of Gohjjunk; Sunny has good relations with Bowlock, and would be her best customer if she traded in cybernetics.

Their colors are green vehicles and body armor, and they use the emblem of an MOM-implanted skull within a steering wheel. There are 1D4x5+5 members in any raiding party, and their full strength is 75+3D6.

The Pistol Ears

Making their living mostly through extortion of the smaller outlying communities and preying on Badlands travelers using ambush tactics, these are 'traditional' bandits. They scrape by on whatever credits they can get, and are yet to hit their 'big score' to establish a fearsome reputation. Still, they get bolder all the time.

The Pistol Ears are led by a ruthless gunslinger named Iguana Mossington, a chameleon-like D-Bee with no mercy (92 M.D.C., P.P. 26, +5 on initiative, and opponents are -1 to hit her for every melee round she spends without moving, to a maximum of -6 to strike). The first time a ganger (or anybody else) talks back or disrespects Iguana, she takes a shot at their ear from 500 feet (152 m). The next time, it's 400 feet (121 m). This keeps up until they lose the ear – or the head.

The gang has a mix of trucks and cycles, and contains another 1D4+1 novice gunslingers that Iguana is teaching the trade. Their emblem is a pistol, the barrel shooting out a tongue to catch a fly. No set gang colors. 3D4x3 members in a bandit group, full strength is 2D6+50.

Smiler Wingbuster's Hotrods

Smiler has made a name for herself as a real thorn in the side of the Coalition. A former Psi-Bat Burst, she knows CS tactics and strategies as well as how to counter them. She and her gang of jetpacking lunatics use a lot of plasma weapons, including Naruni tech. They adopted the name Wingbusters after Smiler took down a Super SAMAS using nothing but her psionic powers and a grav pack. She wears the toothy bottom half of the helmet as a face mask. Naruni sells the Hotrods gear at bar-

gain basement prices because they annoy the CS so much, but the gang still has a substantial debt with the interdimensional arms dealers – just the way Naruni likes it.

Sunny's Fire Warlock lieutenant's name is Anlyth Phaendar, but he prefers *Bahzhakiam*, which means 'Tempest of Flame' in Elvish. He's an exuberant young Elf (only 77 years old) with a flair for the dramatic. Bahzhakiam also aids them with healing and resurrection of fallen Hotrods using the Flame of Life spell. He leads many (70%) of their raiding missions personally.

Combat: 40 M.D.C. body armor, but usually begins a battle by Bursting Into Flame for the additional M.D.C. and damage. Directs Elementals and Hotrods while he gloryhogs with flashy magic and fragmentation missiles. 124 P.P.E.

Bahzhakiam frequently chimes in during Smiler's strategy sessions with suggestions to up the psychological impact of their attacks. So far, he's proven helpful – but as far as Smiler's concerned, he's quickly getting too big for his britches. She has to decide soon whether he's too valuable to kill, or too dangerous to let live.

The Hotrods specialize in ambush tactics, springing traps via concealed stealth armor and mobile heavy weapons teams. They rarely do anything with the gear, selling it to Gohjjunk and funneling most of the credits back into the Naruni's pockets.

They wear red and black, and their emblem is a burning, grinning skull. Random bands are 1D6+1 troops, concerted attacks are 3D6+6 plus Fire Elementals, with a total strength of 2D6+45.

The Death Whispers

These Psi-Stalkers are one of several groups who make their homes near the ley line running east-west about 20-50 miles (32-80 km) south of Odessa. They are the tribe from which Weeping Wind originated – he was too bloodthirsty and cruel for them, preferring to hunt sentient beings instead of the usual prey (desert monsters and demons). There is a standing death sentence on Wind's head among these people.

The Death Whispers are led by Eye of Deadly Storm, a well-rounded leader who keeps his people out of fights he doesn't think will benefit the group. For the same reason, he has previously led them to fight for Sabre Lasar against the Coalition or the vampires. They make extensive use of cavalry and hit and run attacks, with a mix of modern and ancient weapons (they still trade with Karimyo and Bonky Heights, but won't take advantage of Bowlock's recent arms dealing).

They wear mostly animal and monster hide, bleached or dyed blue whenever possible (camouflage in the desert and on the rare Pecos ley lines). Their warriors paint black over their eye sockets and mouths, and their emblem is a pair of black lips. Average band is 3D6 individuals (often mounted), total size 6D6+90 individuals (75% can fight). If Eye of Deadly Storm were to declare war, their numbers would be bolstered by up to 50% of the Tohono O'odham's warriors.

Tohono O'odham

This tribe of Native American people were known as the Papago Indians for centuries until the Great Cataclysm swept away North American civilization and brought them back to the roots of their culture. Forsaking their demeaning name of the last few centuries, they are once again known as the Tohono O'odham, which translates to "Desert People." Their current chieftain is Kubjuwi Gohk, a wise and level-headed elder who has cultivated a strong relationship between the Tohono O'odham and the Death Whispers Psi-Stalker tribe – if either tribe were to ever officially declare war on an enemy (or have war declared on them) then the other would certainly come to their aid.

Another thing that the Tohono O'odham and the Death Whispers have in common is a mutual hatred for both Bowlock and Weeping Wind. Neither has forgotten the betrayal of the sadistic Psi-Stalker and both tribes refuse to have any dealings with Gohjjunk.

The average number in a party of Tohono O'odham is 2D6, and 50% of the time these will be mounted hunting or scouting parties. The tribe

numbers 4D6+120 individuals in total (35% of these can be called upon as warriors). In times of trouble, the Death Whispers will lend aid in the form of up to 50% of their warriors, 75% if the threat is supernatural in nature!

(See *Rifts® World Book 13: Spirit West* for details on Shamans and other Native American magic and O.C.C.s.)

Hook, Line, and Sinkers for Gohjjunk and the Surrounding Area

In addition to the following, there are opportunities for players to function as temporary help contracted ad-hoc to clear threats out of the underground Junkyard, which Bowlock prefers to outsource (since she doesn't want to risk her own mercenaries who have been with her for years).

Joyride

Hook: A pack of 6D6 Tectonic Entities are raising hell in Gohjjunk, constructing bodies of M.D.C. scrap and laying waste to everything in sight! They seem to be trying their best to capture any of the Harmony and steal them away – bolting for the north. Players may be nearby or in Gohjjunk itself, but the commotion means they'll become aware of the disturbance.

Line: Unable to deal with this themselves, Bowlock and her subordinates send out a radio broadcast to any adventurers and bandits in the area, with a large bounty for any returned Harmonics. Weeping Wind suspects a Shifter, and is leading a search party to the north to uncover the foul mage's lair and destroy them.

Sinker: There is indeed a Shifter behind the summoned creatures, but he is a comparatively low level mage (4th) – however, the Shifter is in turn being controlled by a Mindolar demon! The beast, who already has at least 1 slave amongst the humans of Gohjjunk, believes that if it can make even just one Harmonic its servant then it may control the entire Harmony!

(Ironically, this is not far from the truth of how the Harmony are currently enslaved – the Mindolar suspects this, but has no proof.)

If the Mindolar is successful and any enslaved Harmonic returns to the group, it will result in a battle of wills between the two powerful psychic controllers – winner take all! If the Mindolar wins this contest, only killing it will break the demon's influence and return the Harmony to Pfab's control – if both are dead or gone, the Harmony will be free.

Edison's Meatwagon

Hook: The players are approached by Yousef, a charismatic Mind Melter who claims to be working for BlueFuture, the consortium of Techno-Wizards at Nowhere. He offers them work, saying that BF is concerned about pathogens and parasites carried by the Harmonic laborers and how they might affect the people of Nowhere. BF medical personnel want to test this, but don't want to scare Bowlock away. But what if it could be a danger to the entire biosphere of Earth? (Yousef will make extensive use of Empathic Transmission and his naturally high M.A. to try and persuade the characters.) The players must get to Gohjjunk and help!

Line: BlueFuture will pay 5,000 credits for each dead Harmonic that the players can hide in any outgoing scrap shipments to Nowhere – or simply smuggle out of town. If they are caught, the Mind Melter will plead ignorance with Gohjjunk slavers and offer to take the player characters back to face the Techno-Wizards' interrogation. (In all likelihood,

he'll let them loose not far out of town instead so they can try again or pay them off.)

Sinker: Yousef is lying. BlueFuture doesn't have problems with alien disease; they have a labor problem. The Harmonics seem like a perfect solution due to their obedience, birth rate, and high P.P.E. Nowhere's resident rogue scientists want to know more about how the Harmonics achieve their unity. Is it pheromonal? Ultrasonic frequency? Infrared networks? Their ultimate goal is to recreate the effect, then clone (or capture) themselves an army of workers who can fully utilize Techno-Wizard machinery for the mass production of their devices!

Wind will kill anyone he suspects of interfering with Gohjjunk's business, but most of the overseers are half-oblivious to dead Harmonics and may not put two and two together. If Bowlock learns about BlueFuture's plans, she might reconsider their deal. She might even try and kill the player characters just to tie up loose ends, but if they have proven helpful she will give them free repairs and refueling before sending them on their way. If they are instead successful at their task, Yousef will meet them in the Badlands to pay them before teleporting away with any Harmonic corpses using a magic scroll.

Windfall

Hook: A group of Death Whisper Psi-Stalkers and Tohono O'odham are plotting to kill Weeping Wind during his next hunting expedition. But because Wind knows their tactics and capabilities inside and out, the tribes' clairvoyants have determined that without the assistance of outsiders they will be unable to put this monster down once and for all.

Line: The Death Whispers and Tohono O'odham will send envoys to one of the other neighboring kingdoms (Karimyo, Bonky Heights, Odessa, or even Nowhere) to recruit the help they need. They will pay handsomely (which is to say, whatever barter they can afford plus Native American fetishes and other exclusive magic items) and the players will have earned the goodwill of these noble warriors. They know where and when Weeping Wind will be leaving with his hunting party – it's up to the players to decide how best to handle it.

More importantly, Nowhere has received intelligence about the unfolding plot and will send a representative to offer additional aid – a handful of magnetic, baseball-sized TW 'tags' which act as the markers for a set of conventional medium-range missiles (after activation and planting, the missile arrives 1D3 melee rounds later)! With the Psi-Stalker out of the way, Nowhere's future dealings with Gohjjunk will prove that much easier.

Sinker: During the attack, all groups are surprised by the arrival of a pair of Tyrannosaurus Rex ridden by Simvan *also* wishing to avenge themselves on the rogue Psi-Stalker – but they don't care to work with anyone else and will attack everything they encounter!

Weeping Wind will not go down easy. If the battle is hopeless, he will always choose to flee and fight another day. If that's not an option, he will die fighting rather than surrender.

These adventures may be supplemented by existing World Books. How does Gohjjunk factor into the CS plans for expansion and pacification of the Pecos Empire as part of the Campaign of Unity? What if Desmond Bradford hears of these strange hiveminded D-Bees and sends agents or military forces to recover some (replace Nowhere with the CS in the 2nd Hook, Line, and Sinker)? What about when the Minion War spills out into the ley line network of the Pecos Badlands and affects the pipeline being constructed for Gohjjunk? As always, use your imagination and have fun!

I am Legion, Episode V

An Adventure and Official Source Material for Splicers®

Concept developed by Chris “Slappy” Kluge and Charles “Chuck” Walton II

Written by Chris Kluge

Illustrated by Charles Walton II

Devourer Created and Written by Lance Colley

Mechanic and Tempest writing assist by Todd Spencley

Note: For Part I, see *The Rifter*® #71-72 Special Double Issue, page 86. For Part II, see *The Rifter*® #73, page 63. For Part III, see *The Rifter*® #74, page 40. For Part IV, see *The Rifter*® #75, page 67.

At the end of the last episode, the players were left with two choices:

Choice A: If the players decided to skip the secret weapons facility rescue attempt, they will pretty much be on their own. They will still have Drake Benton, Anderson Long, and the Badger on their side, but the Stalker War Mounts will leave them to go help their friends back at the Lab. Worse yet, they will miss out on the impressive amount of ordnance scattered throughout the facility and instead will have to rely solely on the weapons and equipment they had when they first left the underground haven. Should the players elect to avoid the weapons facility then this will conclude the episode for them and they will proceed to Episode VI (*The Rifter*® #77). Please feel free to have the player group seek a temporary refuge and hunt for food as they plan their attack on the Factory Walker. Also feel free to utilize any of the new Legion units within this episode's article as new opposition along the players' way to the Factory Walker. Don't force them to go if they are too reluctant or battered.

However, if your group seems on the fence or needs some encouraging persuasion, then please utilize Drake Benton. Have him grow more concerned over Legion and what else she could do with all the Bio-Tech in the facility, and what could inevitably be used against them if they don't intercept her attack on the facility. Will this be a missed opportunity that they will never forgive themselves for? How would the Great House feel if they learned that the player group opted to not go and rescue a targeted Engineer that Legion plans to meld into her Factory Walker?

Choice B: If the players decided to return to the weapons facility, the resources they should be able to gather will largely depend on how successful they are. Fully stopping the invasion force will gain them the enormous thanks and support of Martin, Isaac, and all the facility's defenders. The Lab itself will be a total loss either way, and the Engineer will need to be moved, but if Legion's attack is stopped, Isaac and the majority of the survivors will lend their support to the final assault against the Factory Walker while Martin, the Saint, and a handful of defenders will stay behind to coordinate a slower more careful evacuation of the Engineer.

Even if the players go to the Lab and are unable to save the Engineer, then they will likely still walk away with some powerful weapons and a few extra survivors to help them in the final attack. If by chance Legion successfully captures the Engineer Dante, then every survivor will join in the final assault to hopefully recapture him before Legion can merge his body with the Factory Walker. Legion will keep her minions hunting through the facility to exterminate any stragglers even after successfully capturing her prey, so exiting the facility will still be a challenge. Even if the players should fail, it will be noted by high clearance personnel that the players made a valiant, heroic attempt and are not only trustworthy but also invaluable heroes. Should the players elect or be convinced to go back to the weapons facility, then please proceed.

To the Rescue

Game Masters, this part of the adventure runs like an old-fashioned dungeon crawl, except with one major twist. The twist in this particular dungeon crawl is that the player characters do not have to enter the Lab through the front door (although they can if they choose). The Badger gives the player characters a great deal of freedom concerning how they approach the facility. They can tunnel into any room from nearly any angle. They can burst through a wall, come tunneling up through the floor, or even come crashing down through the ceiling. While storming into a room will likely give the players the element of surprise (+4 on initiative), it could also lead to disaster. The Badger can only detect the seismic vibrations emanating from a room, it cannot determine who or what is in each room until it breaks through.

Keep in mind that the entire facility is in complete chaos, and the easiest rooms for the Badger to home in on with its seismic sensors also happen to be the rooms that are embroiled in the most intense combat. These rooms are all marked with an “S” on the **Secret Weapon Facility Map**. The Badger can attempt to find a less active entrance point, but it only has a 60% chance of successfully locating any room not marked by an “S.” On a failed roll, the Badger enters a nearby room of the Game Master's choosing. The Badger can tunnel out of any room just as easily, but if it is locked in combat at the time, the War Carrier will be pretty vulnerable for one whole melee round as it attempts to dig an escape route.

While Legion should be the player characters' primary concern, she is not the only threat. Some of the more experimental creations grown at the Lab are also running loose throughout the facility, wreaking havoc on both sides. The section below describes what is happening in each room of the facility (refer to the **Secret Weapon Facility Map**). In addition to the list of enemies and survivors battling it out in each area, listed in the room's description are all the treasures that are hidden among the rubble. This list is broken into two sections; the obvious items scattered about in plain sight and the hidden items that require some thorough searching in order to uncover. Many of these items are concealed on the bodies of the dead or buried under piles of debris. They may take some effort to find, but there are many treasures to be had if someone is willing to take the time to look for them.

For every five minutes the player characters take to sift through the area, they can roll percentile dice on the hidden items table for that room 1D6 times (this is the number of items the group gets, not how many items each individual receives). Unfortunately, time is not really a luxury the players have. In addition to the forces listed in each room, Legion also has minions patrolling the area looking for survivors.

For every five minutes the players spend searching, they must also roll on the **Random Patrol Table** below to see if one of Legion's patrol teams stumbles upon them. A few notes concerning these patrols: they only show up once the room has been cleared (they normally do not add to the current forces of the room, but Game Masters can feel free to

summon them as reinforcements if appropriate), roll initiative as normal to see if the patrol gets the drop on the player characters or not, and all patrols will attempt to fight the player characters to the death and will pursue them wherever they go (unless the players prevent this by collapsing any entranceways or tunneling out using the Badger).

Random Patrol Table:

01-30% Lucked out. No additional patrols enter the area.

31-40% A lone Collector enters the area and immediately attacks the player characters. Legion also has reinforcements nearby and will send them in as they become available. An additional Collector will show up every minute until all player characters are destroyed or they flee the room.

41-50% A small pack (1D6+1) of Legion's Blood Hounds are ferreting out any Resistance fighters attempting to regain any defensive positions within the facility. Two of the augmented Gorehounds are damaged (reduce main body by 50%), all others are walking along the ceiling and walls, searching for targets. No reinforcements are nearby, though any major, loud explosions has a (25%) chance of attracting a Lone Collector.

51-60% Four Collectors burst into the room and attack. No reinforcements are available nearby so once the room is cleared, no additional minions will arrive.

61-70% Three Amalgam Gunspiders scurry into the room and split up in an attempt to flank the players. They crawl across the walls and ceiling (at a surprisingly fast pace) in order to seize the high ground advantage, which gives them an additional +1 to strike. Game Masters can use the stated Gunspiders armament or can determine what type of Bio-Tech firearms and human faces Legion incorporated into their bodies.

71-80% A pair of Rapier Coils enter the room and attack. On their own they are only a minor threat, but their function is to scout out prey for the deadly Hunter Cyborgs that released them. If the players cannot successfully flee the area within one melee round, they will come face-to-face with these two Hunters.

81-90% A Hunter Cyborg armed with a Burner (see *Splicers® RPG*, page 134) or a Terror Thumper Amalgam (Game Master's choice) is going from room to room igniting corpses to ensure they are dead when it stumbles across the player characters.

91-95% Three Mechanic Cyborgs are carrying Fusion Borg robot parts and are being escorted by several Collectors and 1D6+1 Steel Troopers. If the player group is not discovered they will continue to transport the parts to a staging area deep within the facility. If discovered, the Mechanics and the Collector will continue onward, while the Steel Troopers attack the player group.

96-100% Several wounded Defenders (One Tempest and Roughneck (Level 4-5) or 1D4 Biotics (Level 4-6) have entered into the area of the player group and need medical attention badly (reduce their M.D.C. to half or less). Fortunately, they are accompanied by a Samaritan Gore Hound (see *The Rifter®* #74, page 56) and need the player group to buy them just a little time (2 melee rounds per soldier) to heal. Regardless of their condition, they value the player group and will assist in the fight against Legion and her invading hordes. The Samaritan and the defenders will also tag along and support the group as needed.

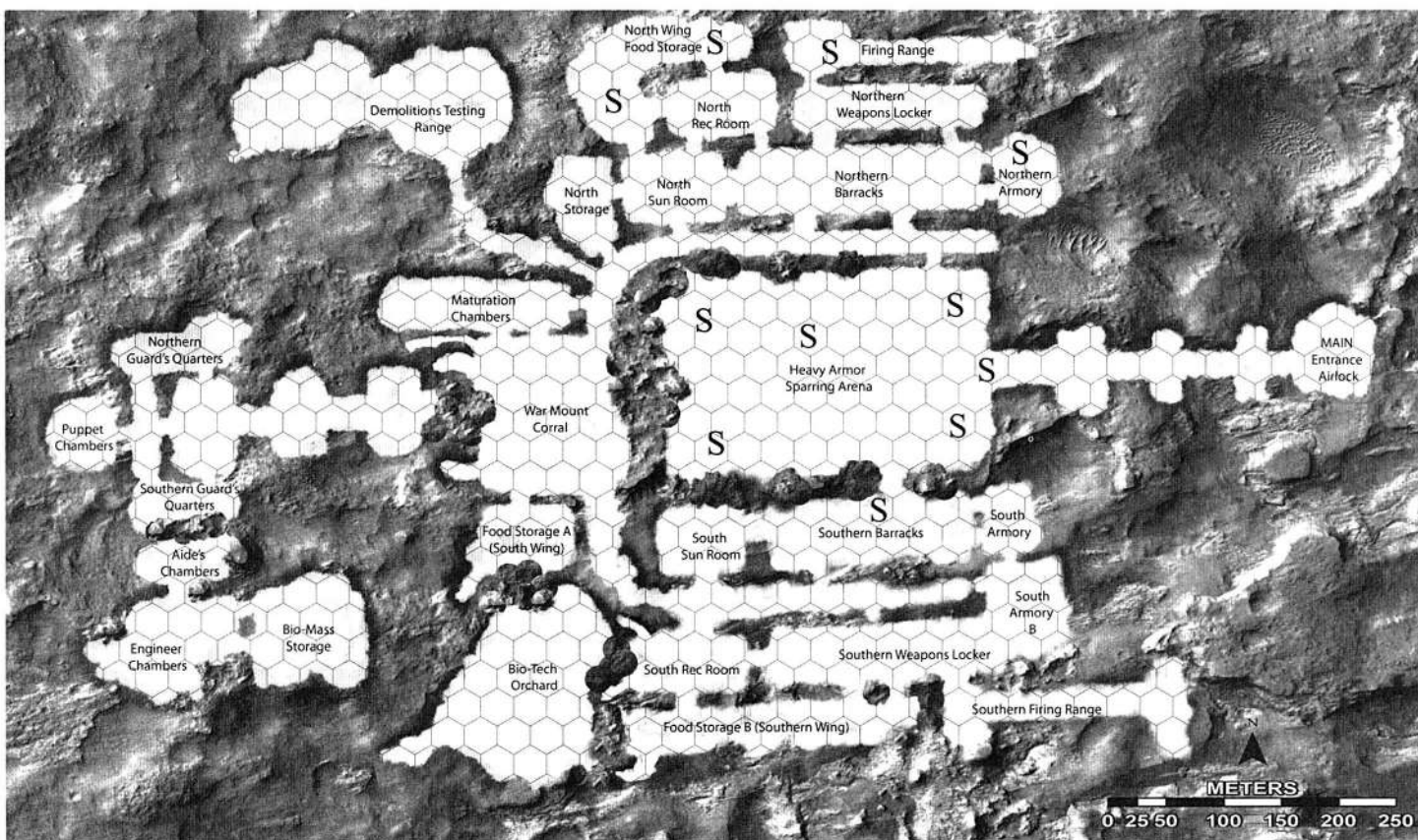
Current State of the Lab

Bell Lake: If the player characters want to enter the Lab through Bell Lake (or if they want to split up and send part of the group through the lake), they will not be able to take the Badger with them. The Badger is too heavy and is not capable of swimming. If it entered the lake it would sink to the depths too quickly and be crushed within minutes. Unless the player group wants to take the time to build a permanent tunnel for the Stalkers to follow, they will likely have to enter the facility through the airlock. Bell Lake is swarming with Legion's minions, but they are

mostly going about their business and are not expecting any Splicers to be in the lake. A constant stream of Collectors are shuttling other minions and munitions down to the facility to support the assault. There are also three Legionnaires that seem to be cruising about in random patterns. Their mission is to relay Legion's signal to the attack force inside, so they will not risk themselves under any circumstance. They are weaving through the water on their wing boards in continuous evasive patterns, and if they are threatened, they will simply increase their speed and erratic dodging. They will not attack under any circumstance. There are plenty of other minions in the water to deal with any attackers (about 6D6 at any given time).

Airlock: Legion's forces pried open the doors to the airlock and rushed into the facility so quickly that only the handful of defenders already in the airlock were able to mount any kind of defense. Unfortunately, they were drastically outnumbered and were quickly cut down before they could inflict much damage. The array of Spine Pods built into the walls of the room destroyed or damaged dozens of attackers, but eventually, they too were neutralized and Legion was able to seize complete control of the entrance. All of the walls were blasted to pieces in order to kill the Spine Pods. Their bloated bodies are sprawled out all across the floor stacked on top of the dozens of melted robotic minions they sprayed with their powerful organic acid before being silenced. The battle destroyed most of the Glow Cells in the room, which combined with the thick smoke from the firefight, has significantly reduced the visibility in the room. It is clear that the airlock took a serious pounding during the initial breach but it is still intact. The airlock door, however, is another story. Legion wanted to preserve the door to keep the facility from flooding which is why she had her minions pry it open rather than blast it apart. Unfortunately, pulling these doors open ripped many of the muscles and tendons that enabled the door to seal itself completely. While it is mainly in place, it can no longer hold back the crushing weight of the lake and thousands of gallons of water are continuously pouring into the room. It is being drained out nearly as fast as it is coming in, but the water level is about four feet (1.2 m) deep and steadily rising. Anyone accompanying the player characters with knowledge of the facility (like Drake Benton or the Badger pilot) will inform them that the "pumpers" are holding back the water the best they can, but they will not be able to last much longer. Eventually, they will shut down and the facility will flood. Drake suggests collapsing the entrance to the facility to hopefully stop the flooding. Unfortunately, the group will first need to deal with the rather sizable force waiting for them. This is not only the first link in the chain, but it is also the remote staging area for the entire assault. As such, this room is loaded with minions. The pair of Legionnaires in this room act as the primary relay for Legion's consciousness. Eliminating them quickly (before any other Legionnaires could rush back to the airlock to take their place) could completely shut down the entire assault in one fell swoop. Of course, accomplishing this feat is highly unlikely due to the sheer number of minions within the airlock. In addition to the combat models, there are also eight *Mechanics* busily assembling Fusion Borgs. These enormous brutes were too large to enter the facility on their own, so they had to be brought down in pieces and re-assembled within the airlock. One Fusion Borg has just been completed and is counted among the room's assault force. The constant flooding has washed away the acid sprayed by the Spine Pods and extinguished all of the fires. This is helping to clear the air and increase visibility, but with only a handful of Glow Cells remaining, visibility is still limited to about 10 feet (3 m) for normal vision and 30 feet (9.1 m) for enhanced Bio-Tech and technological sensors. Note that the airlock took a major pounding, but most rooms in the facility are in a similar state. The intense combat throughout the complex has damaged walls and extinguished Glow Cells that once illuminated the facility quite nicely. Most rooms are in tatters with rubble strewn about everywhere, corpses from both sides littering the ground, and the already darkened chambers made even more so by a constant smoky haze.

Main Entrance Hallway: This is where the first real battle between Legion's assault force and the facility's defenders took place. Unfortunately, this is also where the defense force discovered their remote



detonators were completely useless. Legion was right that this gave her forces an advantage, but she drastically underestimated just how much resistance these Splicers were capable of generating even without the claymore barricades. The piles of robots filling the hallway are a testimony to the skill, training, and power of the facility's defense force. Legion expected to roll over them like a wave, but instead her forces slammed into a brick wall of fierce resistance that stopped them dead in their tracks. However, the seemingly endless supply of relentless minions slowly chipped away at the defenders until they were forced to retreat, but they bought the rest of the facility enough time to make preparations. It is difficult to tell just how many minions fell in the attack because they are stacked five to fifteen feet (1.5 to 4.6 m) high in twisted piles of slag all throughout the passageway. It makes for a tight squeeze in some spots, but the continuous chain of minions passing through from the airlock staging area has blazed a decent path.

(Game Master Note: Buried under all this debris are the bodies of a few dozen Splicers, their gear, and one lone signal disruptor. If the players make the connection that Shauna marked the disruptor with the same scent as what is on her letter and have someone in their party with enhanced senses, they can search for the signal disruptor by rolling percentile dice. It is difficult to find, but not impossible. Shauna's clue about it being located in the second kill room drastically narrows down the search. On a roll of 01-30%, their search turns up the proverbial needle in a haystack. On a failed roll, they can keep searching, but this will take another five minutes, which means they will need to roll on the random patrol table. If they destroy the signal disruptor in this tunnel, then the explosive barricades in the tunnel become usable again as do the collapsible tunnels surrounding the airlock and rooms 3, 4, 18, and 19.)

Only seventeen explosive barricades survived the initial assault. They are mostly buried beneath piles of shattered robots, but this only adds to the explosive shrapnel created by detonating them. Each barricade inflicts 4D6x10 M.D. to a 20 foot (6.1 m) area. Standing near one of these un-detonated barricades just before the third kill room (the room close to the Arena) is one lone Legionnaire. He is probably one of the most vulnerable links in the signal relay chain. If he is destroyed quickly enough before a Legionnaire from the airlock or Arena can rush to take

his place then all minions in the assault force will deactivate. Eventually, a Legionnaire from the airlock will replace this broken link (along with 4D4 defenders), but the Splicers throughout the facility will be able to inflict significant damage on their disabled opponents before they can be reactivated. This translates to the minion tally in every room (except the airlock) being reduced by twenty-five percent. Destroying the signal disruptor and using a remote detonator from one of the fallen Splicers to blast the Legionnaire standing by the barricade will inflict tremendous damage. It is so close to the barricade that the blast will be an automatic critical strike which may not kill this enormously powerful cyborg, but it should weaken it substantially.

(Game Master Note: The player characters still possess two Shell Bombs. That is some major firepower, and some players might want to use this explosive payload to break the chain quickly and easily. This could possibly work much better than any of them would guess, but it is a risky choice to make. Not only does this give the players one less shot when they take on the Factory Walker, but they might get caught in the blast if they cannot tunnel out of the way in time. Detonating a Shell Bomb will kill everyone in the airlock, passageway, and Arena and completely collapse all three rooms. This instantly breaks Legion's signal relay chain, and with the rooms collapsed, she will be completely unable to reestablish it. This is the quickest way to end the threat, but possibly the most dangerous. Drake and any other NPC will highly discourage this tactic.)

Heavy Armor Sparring Arena: The Arena holds the last remnants of the Splicers team that first met Legion's assault force in the passageway. They fell back to the west side of the Arena to regroup with reinforcements and started collapsing passageways with heavy weapons fire to hopefully contain the threat just a little bit longer. They started with the southern passageways, so when Legion's minions flooded into the room, she quickly decided to direct the bulk of her forces into the Southern Wing while she still had the chance. Hundreds of robots poured through these doorways before the Splicers were able to seal all four shut. Legion then directed her attention to keeping the northern path open while she tried to crush the Arena's defenders. There is still one lone passageway into the Northern Wing that a steady stream of minions

continues to enter. The Splicer defenders are trying their best to close it, but Legion keeps sacrificing Collector after Collector to take any hit meant to collapse the tunnel. While they have not been able to completely block off Legion's invasion, their efforts have given the rest of the facility a chance. Without their sacrifice, the Lab would have fallen within minutes. It is shocking and amazing that any of them are even still alive. These last defenders are doing their best, but they will fall soon enough. The only thing that has kept them going this long are two of the Lab's Heavy Combat War Mount designs, the *Goliath* and the *Silverback* (see *The Rifter*® #74, pages 64 & 67). The massive armored gorilla and gigantic Bio-Tech bear are smashing robots left and right while the other Splicer defenders blast any robots that successfully flank them or climb on their backs. To the west of the defenders lying in the rubble of the collapsed tunnel is the second signal disruptor. It is surprisingly easy to find if someone knows what to look for, but none of the Splicers in this facility even know they exist. Destroying this tiny device will give the Splicers in the Engineering Hallway full access to the remaining explosive barricades. This will be an enormous help when Legion's forces break through, but there are so few left that it will not be enough to turn the tide. Hanging back from the action of the south side and north side of the Arena are two Legionnaires. Only one is required to continue the chain. The second one is there to fill in any holes that might develop if another Legionnaire happens to fall. They will not engage unless attacked directly, and even then they will try to break away as soon as possible and let the other minions deal with the threat.

Northern Hallway: The Northern Hallway is under Legion's control. All resistance in this corridor has been pacified and Legion's minions are free to move from the Arena to the War Mount Corral where they are gathering in preparation for a final push towards the Engineering Chamber. There is a permanent force of eight Collectors and four Hunters defending the hallway to ensure that it stays clear, but there is also a pretty steady string of additional minions entering the hallway on a regular basis (about 1D4 every melee round). Most are heading to the new staging area in the War Mount Corral, but many are being directed into the Northern Wing to seek out and destroy any remaining Splicers. Legion wants to make sure there are no threats at her back before she makes her final push for the Engineer.

Northern Barracks: The former home to the defenders of the Northern Wing is now home to a Legionnaire and his force of defenders. They cleared this room quickly in the first phases of the assault and then established a fortified position in the center of the room to defend this vital signal relay point. If this Legionnaire goes down, then every minion in the Northern Wing goes down as well until a Legionnaire from the Arena can take its place.

North Storage: The signal disruptor in this room allowed Legion's forces to quickly shatter any organized resistance from the Splicers in the Northern Wing, and its continued operation pretty much guarantees their doom. Collapsing tunnels and funneling the enemy through controlled corridors is a key component of their defense plan, and without their explosive charges, their plans quickly fell apart and they were slaughtered in droves. The survivors scattered across the area in a desperate attempt to survive, but Legion's minions greatly outnumber them and are hunting them relentlessly. It is only a matter of time before they are all wiped out completely. If the player characters can destroy the signal disruptor in this room and get the word out to the survivors via Bio-Comm, they may be able to seal off sections of the facility and trap Legion's minions. They could still be saved, but if the signal disruptor is not destroyed then they will all fall for sure. The room itself has already been swept clean of survivors. Legion's minions came through and torched every survivor and corpse (to ensure they were dead) as well as every remaining suit of Bio-Tech armor. Legion patrols will still periodically check this room to ensure no survivors have doubled back. Anyone spotted in this room that is not a charred corpse is attacked on sight.

Northern Armory: The huge stockpile of weaponry in this room is allowing the handful of survivors to put up quite a fight, despite the overwhelming odds. They are blasting away at Legion's minions on the shore from within the nutrient pool itself. These Splicers went straight

for the most powerful experimental creations they could find, and these bizarre weapons gave them the edge they needed. Of course, the dozens of dead Splicers floating throughout the nutrient pool makes it clear that these defenders may be dishing out punishment, but they are taking it as well. The Proto-Host wearing armory attendants are continuously searching through the storage racks and dropping fresh weapons in front of the defenders. They fire each weapon until it is completely empty and then chuck the spent weapon over their shoulders. There is already quite a large pile of fully charged weapons in front of them and piles of spent weapons around them. Most of Legion's robots are getting chewed apart before they can make it into the pool, but dozens have. So far though, these minions have also been destroyed before they could get too close, but the sheer number of robots that continue to pour through the door will eventually overwhelm them all. The Dreadnaught leading this group is holding a vial of a special virus called *Meltdown*. This weapon of last resort was designed to quickly spread through the nutrient tank and poison every Bio-Tech creation that absorbs the fluid. Within minutes of being infected with this virus, any Bio-Tech weapon, device, or Living Body Armor will dissolve into a pool of organic sludge (Host Armor, Biotics, Gore Hounds, and War Mounts are not affected because they do not absorb the nutrient fluid of sustenance). The Dreadnaught is waiting until the last possible second before he has to liquefy the armory, but that moment seems to be coming soon.

Northern Firing Range: When Legion first breached the facility, the defenders unleashed all of the War Mounts from the War Mount Corral. Most were rounded up to be used for organized defense, but a small percentage either slipped away in the chaos or were released to go hunt down robots on their own. During the assault, a handful of these "wild" War Mounts were eventually funneled into the Northern Firing Range. Legion hoped that once these beasts were cornered they would be easier to eliminate, but all it did was make these mounts fight back more ferociously. They are trapped and will likely fall, but they have already taken down dozens of minions and will likely drop dozens more before they fall. If the player characters can get behind this attack force and liberate the trapped War Mounts, they will have some grateful and powerful allies. G.M.s, choose the array of surviving War Mounts that you want to be in the room and their conditions accordingly.

Northern Food Storage: A hideous creature is ransacking the food storage and gobbling up everything in sight. It also seems to be eating the corpses of fallen Splicers and War Mounts. Of course, it also appears to be destroying Legion's minions (and quite effectively) as they enter the room. Whatever this thing is, it is even more nightmarish than Legion's Amalgams. It looks like a mound of flesh covered in dozens of writhing tentacles and massive mouths filled with razor sharp teeth. Also sprouting up from within the blood-coated flesh are what looks like human faces, arms, and legs as well as Bio-Weapons and Bio-Tech limbs. It is busily devouring food and fighting the machines that are pouring in from the south. If the players enter from the northern entrance, then there is a good chance they will not be noticed by the beast (01-75% chance) unless they attack it first. If they enter the room by tunneling in with the Badger, then there is a 01-50% chance they will be spotted and attacked. The creature is growing quickly as it eats and it will need to exit this room by squeezing through the entranceway. If the players flee the area immediately, they will not be pursued by this monster. However, should they be spotted or stay for more than one melee action, the Devourer will attack and pursue them tenaciously (see stats for *Devourer Amoeba*).

Northern Rec Room: The Northern Rec Room seems quiet at first, but it holds a deadly threat that is dispatching anything that enters the room, man or machine. There are piles of Splicer corpses and robots sprawled about the room. All of the corpses are covered in huge bites, claw marks, and acid burns. Anyone familiar with the *Abomination War Mount* (see *The Rifter*® #30, pages 47-50) will quickly recognize its handiwork. It turns out that not one, but two Abomination War Mounts have claimed this room as their territory. They got spooked when they were released from the War Mount Corral and ran off to find a safe spot they felt they could defend easily. Apparently, they considered the Northern Rec Room the perfect place. They disabled every Glow Cell

in the room to make it easier for them to hide. This combined with their Stealth Fields makes them incredibly difficult to find. If the player characters spend more than one minute in the room, then both Abominations will attack. They automatically have initiative. They will strike quickly and then attempt to fade into the darkness before anyone can retaliate. They will continue to use these hit and fade tactics until the players leave the room, kill the War Mounts, or subdue them. If the Abominations can be successfully subdued, then a Packmaster or Outrider may be able to calm them down and get them to fight on the players' side. **Game Master's Note:** If you do not have *The Rifter*® #30, please feel free to substitute the two Abominations for two *Grendel War Mounts* (see *Splicers*® RPG, pages 118-121), and enhance them with Acid Blood, Stealth fields and Suction Cups and Gripping Hairs.

Northern Sun Room: This room is filled with dozens of robots that have come in from the hallway and are lining up for their chance to storm the Northern Food Storage and try to take down the monstrous creature (See *Devourer*) that is gorging on the facility's supplies. The Glow Cells in this room have been destroyed, cloaking the room in darkness except for the light spilling into the southern entrance from the hallway and the muzzle flashes coming from the Northern Food Storage. The bodies from a Splicer squad are scattered about the room, literally. Something ripped them to pieces. From the amount of blood splattering the walls, they were likely torn apart while still alive.

Northern Weapons Locker: Very little is occurring here. 1D4 Steel Troopers and 1D8 Skitter Pods are scurrying back and forth from the Northern Barracks to try and support the falling machines that are fighting in the firing range against trapped War Mounts. There are a few machines that are being repaired by Mechanic Amalgams in the middle of the floor, but no major concentrations are located here. Most of the forces are focusing on the Northern Armory and the Northern Firing Range. This room is more of a staging area between the two rooms.

Demolitions Testing Range: This room is out of range of Legion's signal, so no minions are able to enter the area. However, that does not mean the room is safe. Deep inside the range is a Skinjob ransacking and looting the demolitions cache, loading as much explosives as he can onto his Demolition Harness and backpack. The Skinjob's physique and gear should look very familiar to the player group. It is *Zhong Kui*, call sign "Ghost" (see *The Rifter*® #71-72, pages 137-138). However, once he turns around to face the group, he reveals that he is no longer the same Ghost that the players once knew. His face appears to be fitted with a sleek metallic visor instead of eyes and a grill-like muzzle with six Small Collection Tentacles (same as Legion's Collector, see *The Rifter*® #71-72, pages 110-111) writhing about. Ghost will speak in the usual sultry yet raspy, computerized Legion voice, "Still here trying to do your part, ts... ts... ts... I'll give you till the count of ten before I come get you..." but it will flicker with static and come in and out. Ghost's appearance will quickly fade as he and his customized Gorehound, "Cao," begin their hunt of the players.

If the players decide to leave quickly they will hear the sinister Skinjob's voice slowly counting down over the players' Bio-Comms, starting from number ten. Should the players seek to recover any of the demolitions ordnance, they will find that there are plenty of cabinets still loaded with Bug Bombs, Conventional Explosive Charges, Chigs, Mega-Bug Bombs, Migs and Squigs. In large aquarium tanks built into the wall, the players can see the foggy tanks are halfway filled with dirt, alien like plants and roots, and with large feeding worms squirming about with bite marks in them. In one of the corners however, there are several Scutigera Mobile Migs lying on one another, with just their long, hairy antennae moving about. A massive shelf along the same wall has multiple (2D6) Receptor Mounds (all types) and several Eye See You self-propelled grenades. Such heavy ordnance may help the players and the Defenders take out many of Legion's forces, so it's a worthy cache, but Ghost and Cao have been guarding this sector and will make it hard work for the players to leave with any of these items.

Ghost and Cao will strike quickly and stealthily, playing a cat and mouse game, strategically harassing and hunting the players one by one. Never seeking a true kill, just tormenting them with wounds to slow

them down. Though Ghost might steal items, or detonate tunnels, or trigger explosives to flush the players out into the open just for kicks, he gets his real amusement by teasing his quarry as he hunts. Ghost will use scare tactics like waving a high-frequency dagger across a player's throat without them seeing it. He'll allow other players to glimpse the blade moving slowly across the throat of another player and quickly fade away before the observing players can say anything. These psychological terror games should make the players extremely jumpy and VERY paranoid. Players should always feel as if something just slipped past them, or blew on their shoulder, or whispered something very low into their ear. They should second guess themselves at times, wondering if something just moved into the shadows, when in fact there is nothing there or perhaps there was something there that has quickly moved. G.M.s, have some fun scaring your players with Ghost and Cao. Also note, unlike most of Ghost's Deluvane allies who have been completely lobotomized, Ghost pleaded with Legion to spare his sanity in exchange for him to willingly serve her as a test subject. She sort of compromised, as he said that she could exploit his talents by allowing him to show her various weak points and vulnerabilities of her enemies. Legion fully trusts no one, but she is intrigued with what her first Skinjob can offer her, so she has augmented him somewhat but she has given him more liberty than most of her minions. So just because Ghost is out of range with Legion at times, doesn't mean that he will be swayed from her objectives.

Demolitions Test Range Hallway: Only signs of massive explosions, shrapnel, tattered pieces of charred Bio-Tech armor and blood trails are seen in this dimly lit hallway.

Maturation Chambers: This room's walls are covered with bio-organic tubing that connects to many honeycomb-like chambers filled with nutrient fluids, and umbilical chords that connect to various Bio-Tech items and embryonic creatures inside. Legion's minions (2D6 Collectors and 1D4 Mechanics) are courrying away as many Bio-Tech items and sleeping War Mounts, as they can, especially new experimental designs. Four Steel Troopers, a one-armed Slicer and one badly damaged Hunter (reduce M.D.C. to 50%) are standing guard over this ant-like cargo train of Collectors and Mechanics, while another Hunter continues to rip more Bio-Tech items from their gestating cocoons and hands them to Collectors wrap up in the nanotube webbing before they are quickly carried off. Majority are familiar weapons that the group has already seen and or at least tested, but there are still quite a few items they have not seen before. The floor is covered in the thick, pink nutrient fluid that is spilling from the ripped opened sacs along the wall. There are several Biotics, Tempests and War Mount embryos (majority being Mantis Cannons), still growing that have not been opened yet. Only a few (1D4+2) Gore Hounds would be mature and functional (each having only 3 attacks per melee round for up to 1D4 melee rounds) as they will be groggy if immediately awakened. At least two of the Gorehounds are enhanced with stealth fields and one can be a Samaritan if the G.M. chooses (see *The Rifter*® #74, page 56). This atrocity must be stopped, but not at the risk of not rescuing the Engineer, Dante. Coordinated efforts will need to be devised quickly to either recapture these stolen Bio-Tech items or to destroy them before they make it back to the Factory Walker and can be instituted into Legion's wicked creations against the Resistance. Who knows how many items may have already been ferried back to her.

G.M. Note: If the players attack openly, the Collectors and Mechanics will not engage them no matter what. They will scatter and race to any exit they can with any Bio-Tech items they are carrying or can pick up. The Hunters, Steel Troopers, and Slicer will charge every member of the player group to try and capture them. However, the Hunters, unlike most of Legion's minions, may seek to kill a player character, so be careful. If the players are appearing to be overwhelmed, allow several wandering defenders to rescue them before being killed, but don't make it too obvious or easy for them.

War Mount Corral: The majority of the robots (Collectors, Steel Troopers, and Skitter Pods being the mainstay) that enter the facility are making their way to this room. All the War Mounts have been cleared out of this room (one way or another), and now Legion is using it as a

staging point for her final push towards the Engineering Chambers. As such, this room is completely packed with robots, cyborgs, and Amalgams, with more arriving every minute. When the Splicer defenders realized their remote detonators were not functioning, they used nearly all of their conventional explosives held in storage to collapse the tunnel leading towards the Engineer. It slowed Legion down, but it did not stop her. She now has teams of Collectors burning three separate tunnels through the bedrock to reconnect this passageway. None of the Defenders misinterpreted that this would stop Legion, but it did give them a bit more time to harden their defenses. The final confrontation will begin shortly, and no one has any illusions about their chances of surviving either. This room holds the two Legionnaires among the assault force that are the final links in the relay chain. Killing them both will shut down every robot in the room, but going after them would be suicide. When the attack begins, these cyborgs will hang back at the rear of the assault force with a significant protective detail to ensure no one sneaks up behind them and cuts the chain.

Southern Sun Room: This room appears to be riddled with gunfire holes, explosions and various machine parts. A few charred Roughneck carcasses lie atop of heaps of fallen machines, collectors. Half the Glow Cells are still active along the ceiling and provide some light along the entrances. Streams of water are leaking into this room from various punctures and flooding the floor (one foot/0.9 m deep thus far) and reveal blood mixing in with the water.

Lurking in the shadows, clinging to the wall, near the ceiling, is one of Legion's Chimera Amalgams. It has been devouring the meaty remains of a Mantis Cannon. The piercing noise of the Mantis Cannon's carapace being bitten and cracked open with its flesh splashing into the water below, should echo in this room and let the players know that they are not alone in here. Before anyone can fire on the feeding Chimera, two additional Chimeras move along the ceiling and begin their descent. There is a tunnel 17 feet (5 m) up in the western edge of the wall that leads from the Southern Sun Room into the southern hallway that leads to the War Mount Corral. Noise and shadowy movements from the tunnel indicate that there is something else moving inside, but it remains to be seen. **G.M. Note:** A female voice will cry out for Drake to help her, (if Drake is among the player group). The voice will come from behind the mask of one of the Chimeras, and it will plea for a rescue and try to give all sorts of clues that she is within one of the Chimeras and that it is not too late to save her. That her body is safe and is encased inside a synthetic, rubber-like seal protector and that Legion is using her as a shield. She will scream, cry and even moan to reveal how much she is suffering which will drive Drake Benton into an uncontrollable rage, as he yells that it's his wife's voice! Drake will begin lashing out at anything that stops him from getting to that Chimera. Drake will do his very best to stop anyone from destroying the Chimera that he believes contains his wife's body. Unfortunately, as all three Chimeras spring and pounce across the walls and in and out of the shadows, while fighting the player group, this tactic will be very confusing for Drake and the players to keep track of the "correct" Chimera. Players will be hard pressed to subdue Drake and to fight the Chimeras.

If Drake is NOT with the group then please feel free to substitute *Outrider*, November Lexington of the House Deluvane strike team that attempted to help the player group in episode one (see *The Rifter*® #71-72, page 132), instead of Benton's wife.

G.M. Note: This is another one of Legion's sinister games that she enjoys and is akin to "3 card monte," also known as *Find the Lady*. Legion will even have the Chimera open up its helmet to slightly reveal the beautiful face and she will cry out and plead with anyone to save her. What's worse is if the right Chimera Amalgam is trapped and the helmet is forced open, it will reveal the face and neck buried deep into the Amalgam's main body, but it will also be clear upon close inspection that she is way beyond anyone's saving as bionics, cords and wires are hardwired into her neck and that there is no human body. Everyone will be forced to accept this horrific reality of what Legion has done and Drake will put her down. This scene should be very emotional for the player group and should continue to reveal why Legion must be stopped.

Southern Barracks: While Legion's forces were able to quickly scatter the Lab's defenders in the Northern Wing, they encountered much greater resistance in the Southern Wing. Shauna only had a limited number of signal disruptors in her possession, so she was not able to plant one in the Southern Wing. Legion knew this, which is another reason why she funneled so many minions into the Southern Wing during the initial breach. Legion anticipated that the Splicers there would have full access to the hundreds of pounds of high explosives planted throughout the area, but Legion hoped she could overcome this advantage through sheer weight of numbers. While this did happen to a certain extent, taking the Southern Wing was far more taxing than Legion expected. When her minions first swarmed into the area, the Splicers went into action and executed the counter-siege strategies they had drilled hundreds of times with near perfect precision. Every step forward cost Legion dearly, and as soon as it looked like she would gain the upper hand, the Splicers collapsed the passageway into the room, destroyed the few robots that were left on their side of the barricade, and retreated to their next rally point. Legion grew tired of their tactics and eventually just started digging straight through the bedrock, but loses were still high as her minions bottlenecked while trying to exit the tight tunnels and were torn apart. This continued on from room to room until all the defenders had to fall back and regroup in the Bio-Tech Orchard to make their final stand. Aside from the Orchard, Legion has pretty much seized control of the Southern Wing from the Splicer defenders, but there are other threats wandering the area that are proving to be more difficult to neutralize than she anticipated. When Legion's forces reached the Arena, the Splicers blew the locks to all the cage doors in the Gladiator Pens so the deadly beasts they normally used for practice could be used as cannon fodder against the invaders. These creatures had no stake in beating Legion so they generally just scattered. Many were cut down by Legion as they fled, others turned to fight, but many did get away and hid throughout the Lab. As the bulk of Legion's forces in the Southern Wing pressed on to pin down the Splicer defenders, a handful stayed behind to secure this room. With the entrances to this wing collapsed and the defenders on the run, Legion did not expect any resistance to her rear flank, but something slipped past her notice. When the players enter this room, they find a giant armored squid engaged in battle with a squad of robots. Despite the size of this beast (nearly one hundred feet/30.5 m from the top of its head to the tip of its tentacles), it is able to zip around on the ceiling with surprising speed and agility. It is tossing Legion's minions around like rag dolls and sporadically pulling some up to its enormous beak to take powerful bites. If the squid takes around fifty percent damage, it will try to flee the room, but none of the other rooms in this wing really offer much sanctuary (see *Squid Combat Beast*).

South Armory: This is where the Southern Defenders store their Host Armor (Living Body Armor is kept in the nutrient pools in the Armory). Most of the Splicers in the facility surprisingly own multiple suits of armor. Standard issue is one suit of Host Armor and one suit of Living Armor, but some Splicers had additional suits they were using to test experimental enhancements, which is why so many suits of armor were left in storage even after all the defenders suited up. It looked like Legion tried to destroy these leftover suits when she discovered the room, but was stopped prematurely. Two Hunter Cyborgs armed with plasma flamethrowers roasted dozens of suits of Host Armor before someone gunned them down from behind. The blast marks look like they came from energy weapons so it is difficult to tell if they were killed by Splicers or friendly fire. Either way, their work was cut short before they could destroy the last ten suits of Host Armor. Most of the suits are still standing in their normal spots, but several others are sprawled out on the floor after taking a few stray shots. The scene looks pretty self explanatory, but it is truly another one of Legion's tricks. She even destroyed her own minions to sell the lie. Legion set the scene to trap any stray Splicers that might wander back to this room to gather their backup armor. Hidden in three of the suits of Host Armor are some of Legion's newest creations known as Highjackers. These skeletal robots slip their way inside suits of Host Armor and extend special probes into the living armor's nervous system to seize control of the suit. They wait until the

player characters get all the way into the room before springing the trap. One will attack first to draw their attention, and when the group directs their attention towards this Highjacker, the other two will jump up and attack the group from behind (automatically wins initiative). As the players destroy suits of Host Armor, the Highjacker inside will burst out of their shattered armor and attempt to climb into a fresh suit of Host Armor nearby. It takes three melee actions for a Highjacker to climb inside a suit of Host Armor and another two melee actions for it to seize control. They are pretty vulnerable at this point, but the other Highjackers will work to cover the other robot as it slips into a new suit. If the players flee the room, the Highjackers will pursue them wherever they go.

Southern Hallway: This hallway was rocked by a tremendous explosion that collapsed a third of the tunnel and left the rest of the area in tatters. Most of the Glow Cells are out and the hallway is filled with a thick mixture of dust and black smoke. Visibility is about 10 feet (3 m) for normal vision and 30 feet (9.1 m) for enhanced Bio-Tech and technological sensors. This devastating blast was intentionally triggered by the Splicer defenders. During the initial phases of the invasion when everyone learned their remote detonators were neutralized, some creative Splicers came up with a plan to surprise the invaders. They gathered hundreds of pounds of explosives from the storage room and seeded them throughout Food Storage. Even though their remote detonators continued to function, they decided to spring this trap anyway. When the Splicers first fell back to this hallway, they split into two groups. The smaller group dropped back to Armory B and the larger one headed towards Food Storage. The plan was to lure Legion's minions into this room, hold them as long as they could while more gathered, and then detonate the entire region. Most of Legion's minions took the bait, but not nearly as many of them as they would have hoped. The reason the defenders chose this room for the ambush site was so the explosion would have the added benefit of collapsing the passageway that led to the War Mount Corral. This selfless act trapped the southern defenders, but it gave the rest of the Splicers a little more time to prepare (which is really all they could do at this point). Everyone has sworn to protect the Engineer with their life, and if their sacrifice gave the rest of the defenders a chance to save him, then they would gladly seal off Legion (and themselves) from the rest of the facility. The blast did take out a great deal of minions, but the dust and smoke kicked up in the explosion also turned the Southern Hallway into the perfect place to hide the lone Legionnaire responsible for relaying Legion's signal to the rest of the robots assaulting the Southern Wing. Legion stationed a dozen robots throughout the hallway to guard the Legionnaire. They are spread thin throughout the hallway so that they do not point to the Legionnaire's exact location, but they will quickly rally around it if it is threatened.

Bio-Tech Orchard: The surviving Splicer defenders have fallen back as far as they can. The collapsed entrances to the Southern Rec Room and Southern Food Storage are now the last remaining barricades between the Splicers and certain death at the hands of Legion's overwhelming might. They have watched Legion tunnel through multiple walls already so they know it is only a matter of time before she breaks through, they just do not know where. The Splicers equipped with Seismic Sensors can tell that the Collectors tunneling in from Southern Food Storage are pretty much coming straight through, but the ones coming in from the Rec Room are a little bit harder to home in on. They definitely are not coming straight through, but the movement of nearly one hundred robots in the two rooms combined with all the digging makes pinpointing them nearly impossible. The Splicers have prepared the best they can. They are ready to face whatever comes through (and hopefully from wherever it may come). They know Legion will give them no quarter (taking no prisoners) and offer them no chance to surrender. They will fight to the last man and they will do a hell of a lot of damage before that last man goes down. They are all assembled in the middle of the room within a quickly erected fortification built from Mega-Damage resin. Piled in the center of this fortification are hundreds of Bio-Tech weapons that they were able to salvage from the Armory. The floors around this fortification are seeded with hundreds of Trench Foot Mines and Migs, with the greatest concentrations along the outside walls. Wherever Legion's

forces enter the room, they will receive quite an explosive welcome. The defenders are prepared to die to protect the Engineer. Their only regret is that the facility's only Saint is trapped in this room with them. Her escape route got cut off when the invasion first started, and she had no choice but to stick with the Southern Defenders until the end.

Southern Rec Room: The Southern Rec Room holds the bulk of Legion's remaining forces in the Southern Wing. Legion has two separate teams of Collectors tunneling towards the Bio-Tech Orchard. They are building massive tunnels in order to allow several minions to exit each tunnel simultaneously. It will enable Legion's forces to pounce more quickly when they break through into the Orchard, but the excavation is taking more time than Legion would have liked. She knows the longer she takes the more entrenched the Splicers will be, but she feels this plan is the best way to destroy them all quickly. Her forces digging through from Southern Food Storage will draw the fire of the Splicers, then her main force will break through directly overhead and rain down death on any entrenched positions. Both tunnels are nearly complete, so it is only a matter of time before the final attack on the Bio-Tech Orchard begins.

Southern Armory B: When the attack first began, the Splicers in this wing quickly realized the desperation of the situation and quickly enacted a plan to seal off a large portion of the invading army in the Southern Wing with them. They hoped their sacrifice would buy the rest of the defenders enough time to evacuate the Engineer. They decided they would make their final stand at the Bio-Tech Orchard and immediately began making preparations so they could hold out as long as possible. As some Splicers were tasked with holding off the assault force, others began raiding the Armory for as much as they could carry. Teams of Splicers kept running back and forth between the Orchard and the Armory gathering up as much as they could until Legion finally forced her way into the Armory and they had to fall back. Their last act as they fled the Armory was to unleash the Meltdown virus within the nutrient tank in order to destroy all the Bio-Tech items they had to leave behind. By the time the player characters arrive, the once vibrant pink liquid is now a sickly green color and every device in the pool has been turned into sludge. The entranceway to the firing range is still intact, but the rest of the entranceways were collapsed (likely by the Splicer defenders). However, the southern wall has fresh holes drilled through it by Legion that the group can use to move on to the next room if they choose. The signs of battle can be seen everywhere, but the room is pretty quiet now. A little too quiet. There is not a single functioning robot to be found in the room anywhere (there are plenty of destroyed ones though). If the players go near the shore of the nutrient pool (which they will have to do if they want to pass through the Legion-made tunnels), they will discover why this room is so silent. The tranquil surface of the murky green pool suddenly explodes as three large insect-like creatures burst from the pool and begin to position themselves around the player characters. They are wicked looking winged monstrosities with a crimson red, chitinous hide that is covered in razor-sharp spikes and blades. Everyone will immediately notice a striking similarity between these beasts and the prototype armor adorned by Archangel Drake Benton. If he is with the group at this point, he will quickly confirm the group's suspicions by whispering, "*Saber Raptors*". The Librarians used their DNA to create the Nighthawk Living Body Armor. Try to look around for more of them without being too obvious. They're voracious, cunning pack hunters. The only reason these haven't attacked yet is because they're trying to distract us." Drake's alarmed reaction and assumptions are correct. It is unclear where they were hiding before, but eight more Saber Raptors are quietly moving into position directly over the heads of the group. As soon as they are all in position, they will charge en masse. If Drake is with the group, his warning will mean that the player characters automatically win initiative. If he is not there, then the creatures will attack if attacked first (roll for initiative as normal), or they will pounce when they are ready (in this case, the Saber Raptors automatically win initiative). They will try to drag the player characters into the pool to destroy their weapons. Any Bio-Tech firearm or device that requires the nutrient fluid to recharge will quickly dissolve into sludge after 1D4 minutes of exposure. Once the process starts it cannot be stopped. As soon as half

of the Saber Raptors are destroyed, the rest will retreat into the murky green waters of the nutrient pool. The players can try to pursue them if they would like, but visibility in the pool is limited to a few feet (0.6 m). The players will be practically blind (-6 to strike, parry, and dodge), but the Saber Raptors feel more comfortable in the liquid and are not nearly as debilitated (-3 to strike, parry, and dodge).

Note: Nutrient Pool Size: 4 feet (1.2 m) deep at the edge and 12 feet (3.7 m) deep in the center, with a 30 foot (9.1 m) radius.

Southern Wing Food Storage B: Legion's forces in this room will basically be used as cannon fodder during the assault, so the attack force is mainly composed of Collectors and Steel Troopers. They have two tunnels ready to go, but they are waiting until the forces tunneling through from the *Southern Rec Room* are ready before they break through. When the assault begins, they will come through one at a time at first to minimize casualties, but once Legion starts gaining the upper hand in the Orchard, they will start coming in more frequently.

Southern Weapons Locker: The chaotic noise coming from this room sounds like some nightmarish dog kennel as loud, synthesized barking and growling can be heard echoing down the surrounding hallways. This massive Weapons Locker has been pillaged and the charred walls are marred with signs of major weapons fire, explosions and blood splatter. Metal shrapnel and numerous Mantis Cannon carapaces litter the chitin-plated floor. This Weapons Locker has two rows of metal cages; each cage being 4 feet (1.2 m) wide by 4 feet (1.2 m) tall and 7 feet (2.1 m) long and lined up along the northern and southern wall of the Weapons Locker. Each row contains 1D10+5 cages. Two Collectors are patrolling down the middle of the cages, while three Mechanics scurry back and forth between the different cages and are activating the large, silent canines inside (each activation takes 1 melee action). Upon closer inspection, the players will see that each cage contains a modified Gorehound amalgam that is outfitted with serrated metal armor plating and machine weaponry. These are Legion's *Blood Hounds* and have been brought down here by her forces to scour the rest of the facility and to be used to rush the Defender strongholds.

The metal hounds will all be loosed upon Legion's command. However, if the Collectors or Mechanics notice any of the defenders or player group members, they will begin unleashing Blood Hounds, two Hounds for each member of the player group and three or four for every large War Mount/Tempest. Fortunately, not all of the Blood Hounds are activated and online, only half have been activated. If the players can take out or stop the Collectors and Mechanics from opening the cages, then no Blood Hounds can escape until it blasts its way out (will take two melee rounds to successfully free itself).

Southern Firing Range: Two Collectors are cocooning up the left-over cache of Bio-Tech weapons that the Defenders could not carry off or use against the invaders. Most of the weapons are completely cocooned, but there are 2D8 various Bio-Tech rifles placed into a pile near the entrance and 1D10 Bio-Tech rifles (all G.M.'s choice of various types) still mounted in nutrient tanks along the entrance wall.

Engineering Hallway: When the remote detonators failed, Isaac Mendoza quickly decided to seal the tunnel to the Engineer. They gathered up hundreds of pounds of explosives from the Storage Room and collapsed as much of the tunnel as they could. All that remains is one of the Mantis Cannon Kill Rooms and ten of the explosive barricades. Isaac moved all of the Mantis Cannons out of the tunnel and split them evenly among the remainder of the tunnel and the Crossfire Kill Room just to the west of it. This hallway is absolutely packed with Mantis Cannons. They are the first line of defense and they should be able to inflict some serious damage before they are ripped apart.

Crossfire Kill Room: This room is also completely packed with Mantis Cannons. Most of them are on the lower level, but some are also mixed in with the human and Tempest defenders on both balconies. They are as ready as they are ever going to get, but none of them expect to last long.

Northern Elite Guards' Quarters: The defenders stationed in this room are as armed and ready as they are going to get. When Legion first breeched the airlock, they had to move quickly to seal off the Engineer,

so they were not able to raid the Armory. Fortunately, the Tempests and Biotics stationed in this area are pretty powerful on their own, but they could have used the extra firepower. They will hold in this room until any of the defenders in the Crossfire Kill Room are either killed or run out of ammo and need to be relieved. What they do not know is that Legion is also tunneling through to this room. When the attack comes, both the *Guards' Quarters* and the *Crossfire Kill Room* will be completely overwhelmed within minutes. The powerful defenders stationed in these rooms will put up quite a fight, but they do not stand a chance. They will fall just like everyone else in the facility.

Crossroads Hallway: Isaac had his people fill this hallway with all the explosives they had left. When the first line of defense falls, Isaac will trigger these explosives and take out as many minions as possible. The explosion will inflict 6D6x10 M.D. to everything in this hallway plus 1D6x10 to everything within the *Northern* and *Southern Elite Guards' Quarters*, the *Managers' Quarters*, and the *Crossfire Kill Room*.

Managers' Quarters: This room is completely empty of all personnel. Martin never really kept much in here of any major importance other than his personal effects, so there is no reason to do any searching (besides, there is not really any time for that). If the players are steadfast on searching the room, they will find illustrations and paintings of new prototype War Mount designs.

Southern Elite Guards' Quarters: The Southern Quarters is pretty much in the same situation as the Northern Quarters. The defenders have their orders and are ready to execute their game plan; they just do not realize how drastically that plan is about to change.

Engineering Assistants' Quarters: The defenders collapsed the northern entrance to this room and set up their final surprise for Legion's forces. In addition to the few dozen *Trench Foot Mines* scattered across the floor, they also set up an experimental Bio-Tech weapon known as an E-Bomb. It is similar to the *Electro-Pulse Gun* (see *Splicers® RPG*, page 134), but instead of releasing a directed electro-magnetic pulse, this one-shot device releases a massive EMP blast in all directions upon detonation. It is far more powerful than the Electro-Pulse Gun (add +5 melee rounds to the impairment and penalties). However, it is also somewhat harmful to living tissue (1D10 S.D.C., -1 melee attack and -2 for all combat actions for 1D4 melee rounds), which is why it is still in the experimental phase. The bomb can be detonated by a single rifle blast, so the defenders need to keep the southern entrance to the room intact in order to trigger the blast. They all know that it will not be enough to stop the invaders, but it will slow them down a little.

Engineering Chambers: Isaac, Martin, and a small contingent of Splicer soldiers are in here coordinating their final stand. A pair of Tunnel Rat War Mounts (see *The Rifter®* #30, page 65) that have survived Legion's attack, are trying to construct an escape route for the Engineer as fast as they can, but they have only built about 200 feet (61 m) of tunnel so far and time is quickly running out. Isaac is still willing to give them time to work, but he believes he will more than likely need to go with Plan B, which is to execute the Engineer before he can fall into enemy hands. The Gene Pool is lined with two rows of explosive charges. One set of charges is designed to shatter the ground around the Engineer so that he can be moved. The other set of charges are meant to vaporize the Engineer before he can be captured. Isaac will fight until his last breath before he even considers triggering the kill charges, but ultimately, he realizes there is no other possible outcome to this situation. The arrival of the player characters (and most importantly, the Badger War Carrier) will be seen as an absolute godsend. Isaac will insist on using the Badger to immediately extract the Engineer, but if the player characters explain to Isaac and Martin that the invasion force could be stopped by destroying a handful of Legionnaires, both he and Martin will be surprisingly open to the idea of taking the fight directly to Legion rather than attempting to flee. They explain to the player characters that forcibly uprooting and moving an Engineer is a dangerous proposition at best. Even if everything goes according to plan, there is only about a sixty percent chance that the Engineer will survive a forced extraction. Martin also explains that among the group of survivors preparing their final stand in the Bio-Tech Orchard is the facility's lone Saint. They

tried to move her to the Engineer's Chamber during the initial moments of the assault, but she got cut off. Saints are nearly as valuable to the Resistance as the Engineers and Librarians, and the idea of abandoning one when they have a chance to save her is not a decision they would make lightly. Isaac and Martin would love to take a shot at rescuing her (and the rest of their people) if there is even the slightest chance. Surprisingly, Isaac is the one making the most daring suggestions about how to sever Legion's connection to her invasion forces. He is not only willing to let the player characters continue to use the Badger for this mission, he is also willing to give them the E-Bomb to better their chances at taking out any key Legionnaires. He tells them with all the redundant systems in N.E.X.U.S. robots, the E-Bomb will only knock them out for merely minutes at best. While this would have done little to stop the full weight of the invasion force pouring into the Engineering Chambers, it would give the players more than enough time to take out a single Legionnaire within the incapacitated horde. Isaac also suggests that if they were willing to use one of the Shell Bombs in the airlock, he would personally lead the remaining survivors against Legion's Factory Walker to pay them back for their sacrifice. It is up to the player characters to decide which is more valuable for their final assault, one extra Shell Bomb or dozens of extremely powerful warriors.

Bio-Mass Storage Chamber: This room is empty other than the tons of refrigerated carcasses piled up throughout the room. They have been cleaned and processed and have been deemed pure enough for insertion into the Gene Pool. This means that anything in this room is safe for consumption in case any carnivorous War Mounts or suits of Host Armor need to do some quick gorging before the final confrontation.

The Final Showdown

The choices the players made earlier in the adventure will determine what kind of resources they have available during the final confrontation. If they skipped the Artemis Secret Weapons facility, they will pretty much be on their own. They will still have Drake Benton, Anderson Long, and the Badger on their side, but the Stalkers will leave them to go help their friends back at the Lab. Worse yet, they will miss out on the impressive amount of ordnance scattered throughout the facility and instead will have to rely solely on the weapons and equipment they had when they first left the underground haven. If they did return to the weapons facility, the resources they are able to gather will largely depend on how successful they are. Fully stopping the invasion force will gain them the enormous thanks and support of Martin, Isaac, and all the facility's defenders. The Lab itself will be a total loss either way, and the Engineer will need to be moved, but if Legion's attack is stopped, Isaac and the majority of the survivors will lend their support to the final assault against the Factory Walker while Martin, the Saint, and a handful of defenders will stay behind to coordinate a slower, more careful evacuation of the Engineer. If the players go to the Lab and are unable to save the Engineer, then they will likely still walk away with some powerful weapons and a few extra survivors to help them in the final attack. If by chance, Legion successfully captures the Engineer, Dante, then every survivor will join in the final assault to hopefully recapture him before Legion can merge his body with the Factory Walker. Legion will keep her minions hunting through the facility to exterminate any stragglers even after successfully capturing her prey, so exiting the facility will still be a challenge.

The group can attempt to exit through the damaged airlock or tunnel out using the Badger. Multiple trips may be necessary if there are a lot of survivors, or the Badger can work at a slower pace to create a semi-permanent passageway. Depending on the outcome of the assault, the group may be in too big of a hurry for this to be a viable option.

To be concluded in the next episode of I am Legion: "Final Showdown."

New O.C.C. Specialty Upgrades Restored Biotics and Tempests

The creation, utilization and future of Biotics has been an ongoing and controversial subject that most Resistance political powers have been cautious to tread. Great Houses have debated on the procedures and social integration of beings that are often considered psychologically unstable, yet unarguably deadlier than the common civilian. Fortunately, due to the global threat of the deadly machine forces, rival houses and alien predators, most Great Houses are required to have a sufficient defense force to protect its territories, resources and civilian habitats and have validated the "remaking" process to utilize Biotics. It comes as no surprise that Biotics continue to validate themselves in grueling battles and in the defense of havens as a logical implementation of converting criminals, the insane or the mentally disturbed versus expending valuable resources and time to govern and sustain housing systems to maintain the same people. The implementation of Biotics preserves valuable numbers within the Resistance militia and serves as a reminding deterrent for those who entertain illegal activities.

However, the future of Biotics is an uncomfortable topic riddled with heated arguments, rising concerns and speculative analysis. The Biotic populace is typically kept in check by the amount of battles they are deployed and serve in. Growing concerns of Biotic uprisings and rogue cadres are no longer mere rumors or myths, and the problem of Biotic mental stability in the battlefield has always posed concerns for comrades and Dreadguards. The very idea of an improved, more stable and loyal Biotic that could be relied upon both in the field and within haven societies appeals to many Splicers abroad. Sadly, the controversial steps needed to reach such objectives have produced very little success to help bridge the debating leaderships and the swirling scrutiny. Not only is there a greater risk of psychological problems and insanities being increased by constant tampering of the minds of Biotics, but the risks are drastically increased as to what the Biotics could become if a megalomaniacal Librarian handled the reprogramming. These risks warranted major concerns, yet there are isolated tests being conducted (i.e. the *Metamorph Program* (see *The Rifter*® #51, pages 19-30), *Tempest Vanguardians*, among a few others) to evaluate if proven Biotics should be given reconditioning to make them better soldiers and civilians among the Resistance populace.

Great House Artemis is one of the few houses that believes in such tests and have begun the *Restoration Project*. Instead of keeping Biotics in a certain mind state, the Restoration Project seeks to improve the mental prowess and stability of trusted Biotics via a restoration of desirable memories, functionality and skills. Instead of "unplugging" a soldier and designating him primarily for cannon fodder, the project restores mental qualities with the intent of developing better soldiers. Instead of deploying platoons of mind wiped, unstable Biotics into battle, Houses can now benefit by having reliable, skilled Biotics to take on more diverse and significant roles in the fight against all enemies. Ideal candidates for the restoration consist of Biotics that are either created from volunteers and Biotics that continue to prove themselves as reliable assets in the field. Candidates are evaluated, tested and sponsored only by Active Dreadguards for a mental restoration by a Librarian. When a Librarian mind wipes someone, it still stores those memories, making the Librarian a complete repository of human memories. Sponsored Biotics are given back selected quality memories or filled with new "quality" memories and given a new identity.

Unfortunately, the restoration process is not one hundred percent guaranteed as there are gaps of lost memories, particularly anything involving illegal history or affiliations. Sometimes this may include the

omission of family members and other loved ones, causing the Biotic's past to become a deep mystery that is blurred and not familiar. Encounters with anyone from the past that knew the Biotic before the mind wipe can trigger flashbacks and trigger an insanity. There is also a chance (18%) of a such triggers at levels 6, 9 and 12 (see **Splicers® RPG**, page 148). Add +5% for every encounter the character experiences with a past loved one or illegal partner. Re-roll any duplicate results. For most Biotics, if they are made aware of their past, they become obsessed with the missing gaps in between the implanted memories and see the missing pieces as a puzzle that they secretly strive to put together or try to bury.

The Restored Biotic is essentially a genetically engineered, programmed super soldier with pre-selected memories primed for warfare and the full implementation of Bio-Technology. Restored Biotics (considered *the Reborn* by elite forces) awaken in a maturation chamber located in the elite Biotic barracks, where they are greeted and briefed by senior officers, typically their sponsoring Dreadguard, perhaps even members of the Dreadguard Senate or the Warlord himself. Unlike their Biotic brethren, a Restored Biotic may achieve higher rankings such as Sr. Habitat Defense & Enforcement, Elite Bodyguard, Heavy Weapons Support, Special Field Ops and Sr. Outpost Security.

Most Restored Biotics feel that they have been selected and evolved into the best physical means for humanity to survive, and see themselves as the sacrificial pioneers that must represent the path to enlightenment for the future of mankind to follow. These Biotics continue to remain subservient, for now, doing their best to preserve their hard-earned respect and trust, but most importantly, the alien powers they are gifted with. For a few other Restored Biotics, they are simply waiting for the time they when Bio-Technology is viewed as the ultimate means to reclaim the planet, that the current human body has reached its full potential, and that the Bio-Tech breakthroughs are the undeniable next steps for human evolution. Guided by the secret whispers in the shadows by Librarian agents and mind probe implantations, it is only a matter of time before a major uprising ensues to literally force every human to undergo Biotic conversions in order to take the planet back from the machines. For these Biotics, it is only a matter of time and a continuation of recruiting the right soldiers.

Restored Biotic Upgrades: The new Restored Biotic bears a tribal facial tattoo and or body markings artistically embedded into his or her epidermis' DNA by an Engineer. It is a badge of honor, respect, distinction and identity. Restored Biotics receive 2D10+20 Bio-E per level of the character's experience for additional Bio-Enhancements in addition to the standard Biotic enhancements. Unlike a standard Biotic where additional Bio-E is optional, the Restored Biotic is automatically given 3D10+25 Bio-E points at experience levels 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15. The character also gets to select one Secondary Skill at levels 4, 7 and 11.

Tempest O.C.C.

"Why rely on the armor, when you can become the armor?"

– Michelangelo, 2nd Librarian of House Artemis.

Heroic Roughnecks, Restored Biotics and proven volunteers, may be selected for the ultimate fusion in Bio-Technology, and perhaps the most unsung of all honors, the *Tempest Vanguardian*. Tempests are devoted infantry and defenders that are not only fully capable, thinking soldiers, but literally have their brain, heart and supporting organs transferred into a Host Armor-like body. No one can pilot inside the armor because the interior is now solid flesh and bone. Ideally, Tempests are selected as Elite Bodyguards, Enforcers, Heavy Infantry Support, Guardians for havens and remote outposts, where they are most adept. For the rare individuals that Tempests do trust and share their secrets with, they are devoted and will give their life for them. The reason Tempests are so secretive is due to many societies fearing the power they wield or the bad examples of Tempests that have succumbed to their primal metabolism

instincts and gone rogue and predated upon their fellow man. Such acts have quickly given them a bad reputation, forcing excommunications, abandonments, forced to be participants in gladiatorial blood sports or hunted down and executed.

Tempests wholeheartedly believe that the human spirit within them supercedes any external form that is supposed to define humanity. They view all other humans who have not been converted into Biotics of some form as immature brethren who are not yet enlightened to the vast opportunities that Bio-Technology offers and that the future of mankind will be composed strictly of Mega-Damage beings. All others will inevitably succumb to the horrors of warfare, predation, some unforeseen tragic event or mere evolution. Much like their Restored Biotic brethren, Tempests believe they are the sacrificial pioneers for humanity's evolution and that they must undergo the necessary evils of fear, prejudice and scrutiny in order to pave a way for mankind to survive the Machine. This is cultivated by underground cults and believers growing within the Biotic communities, with many roots leading back to Librarian Black-Ops agents and high-ranking Scarecrows. Tempests are not as evangelical about their beliefs nor as supportive of Librarian activity as Scarecrows are, but they are strong proponents in being harder, more powerful beings in order to fight and usurp the Machine's dominion. They are very supportive of Biotics, *Homunculi* (see *The Rifter®* #50, page 80), Skin-jobs and War Mounts, and have a deep empathy and devotion towards Engineers.

Unlike Homunculi, Tempests have human brains, making them sentient beings and can not be controlled by Geneticists. However, Tempests also serve as test platforms for new Bio-Tech and Bio-Enhancements, particularly those that are too heavy and/or powerful for Homunculi to wield. The majority of the Tempests in the field wield some of the most dangerous, experimental weapons and enhancements that can be placed onto Host Armors and War Mounts. Unfortunately, they are also the most likely to have major problems such as Bio-E overloads, weapon meltdowns, backfires, overshots, greater blast radius than anticipated, friendly fire, etc. Designed to serve as the "tanks" of the Resistance's armored infantry battalions, they are built for durability and heavy firepower, not for longevity and reliability. Tempests are well-briefed on the major burdens and risks they will bear before they are converted, and see such risks and exposures to experimental weapons as part of the sacrifice that they must endure for the greater good of humanity's survival. Lighter, sleeker Tempest versions are also being tested, yielding mixed results and clashing opinions; leading to a preference for either Heavy Tempest units or Homunculi as the two best options for test platforms. Thus, the Light Tempest variety are produced in smaller numbers with growing suspicion that there are more *Light Tempests* operating in the field, than what was is being reported.

Class: Heavy Experimental Test Platform.

Crew: None.

M.D.C. by Location:

Note: *Light Tempest* M.D.C. is rolled up as standard Host Armor (see **Splicers® RPG**, page 71).

Arms (2) – 2D8x10+15 M.D.C. +5 additional M.D.C. points per level of experience (starting at level two); both arms have the same M.D.C.

* Hands (2) – 1D8x10+12 M.D.C., +10 additional M.D.C. at level seven and fourteen; both hands have the same M.D.C.

Legs (2) – 3D8x10+15 M.D.C., +7 additional M.D.C. per level of experience (starting at level two); both legs have the same M.D.C.

Feet (2) – 1D10x10+12 M.D.C., +15 additional M.D.C. at level seven and fourteen; both feet have the same M.D.C.

** Head – 2D810+25 M.D.C., +7 additional M.D.C. per level of experience (starting at level two).

** Main Body – 4D6x10+75 M.D.C., +2D10+8 additional M.D.C. points per level of experience (starting at level two).

* A single asterisk indicates a target that is difficult to hit. An attacker must aim and make a "Called Shot" to hit it, and even then is -3 to strike.

** Destroying the head or depleting the M.D.C. of the main body kills the Tempest.

Note: Tempest morphology is slightly more durable than standard base Host Armors, because Tempests are solid Mega-Damage beings, not hollowed bio-armor suits. A Tempest that has been brought down to zero M.D.C. of the main body may still be alive up to one hour, due to the soldier's original heart and lungs that were also transferred into the body as a emergency backup, unless these organs are also damaged or removed (resort to Hit Points).

Alignment: Most Tempests are typically Scrupulous (45%), Unprincipled (35%), Anarchist (10%), and Aberrant (5%), and a good 5% are other alignments, including evil. However, even Anarchist and evil Tempests are usually loyal to their fellow man and despise the robots. The worst of the lot go rogue and have been known to predate upon fellow humans (armored or otherwise), though because they know what they are capable of, they tend to give Resistance Fighters a wide berth, especially Dreadguards, Packmasters and Scarecrows. Tempests that are prone to go rogue may have been mistreated, gone insane by Librarian probing or succumbed to the primal instincts of their Metabolism.

Attribute Requirements: Only the Roughneck and Biotic's physical tolerance and overall core durability can survive the taxing process of converting from their human form to the actual Tempest embodiment. All Tempest candidates must have an S.D.C. base of 60 or more to survive the conversion process. A high P.S. and P.E. are helpful, but not mandatory.

Attributes: When creating a new character, roll as usual for I.Q., M.E., M.A. and P.B. All other attributes, see below. If the Tempest is being engineered from a Restored Biotic or Roughneck then carry over their previous stats with the exception of P.S., P.P., and Spd.

Tempest P.S. is determined by 4D6+10 (Splicer P.S.) and is equal to *Robotic Strength* (Light Tempest Variant is 3D6+8).

P.P. is 1D8+12 (1D10+15 for Light Tempest Variant).

Note: All Restored Biotic Bio-Enhancements and weapons can be transferred to the Tempest body at no additional cost.

Speed: Same running, leaping, digging and flying as starting Host Armor with a 50% fatigue rate (Light Tempest Variants are 20% percent faster).

Maximum Underwater Depth: Unlike Host Armors which are developed to eliminate the majority of physiological dangers to the pilot inside, Tempests are alleviated of such restrictions and can make very deep dives up to 2,300 feet (701 m) for 1D4 hours. There are no longer any concerns for a pilot that required the need to decompress, there is no need for special gas mixtures, and there is no danger of decompression sickness or nitrogen narcosis.

Attribute Bonuses (after being "Engineered"): +1D6 to P.S., +1D6 to P.P., +1D8 to P.E.

Tempest Bonuses: +1 attack per melee round at levels 1, 5, 10 and 15, +3 to strike with long-range Bio-Weapons that are an integral part of the Tempest body (+1 for handheld, long-range weapons), +2 to strike and parry in hand to hand combat, +3 to pull punch and +1 to roll with impact, punch or fall, +3 to save vs toxins/poisons, diseases and drugs, +15% to save vs coma and death, and +4 to save vs Horror Factor.

Tempest Biological Enhancements: A Tempest is genetically engineered and modified with Bio-Enhancements in much the same manner as a Host Armor, only there is no pilot inside.

There are two methods by which the Tempest is engineered. For *Volunteers*, they can simply begin at Step Two of Host Armor & Bio-Tech Construction (see *Splicers® RPG*, page 72), only when building your Tempest's body, you begin by choosing your Metabolism. The Tempest has 2D6x10+50 Bio-E points at level one, plus their chosen metabolism's Bonus Bio-E Points available for enhancements and selections made from any of the categories. This is typically all the Tempest gets for his standard arsenal of abilities. However, because Tempests are designed to function as test platforms for new and experimental Heavy weapons and bio-enhancements, they receive 2D10+20 Bio-E points at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12. They can spend the Bio-E on new test weapons and enhancements at normal cost or

pay double the cost for standard production Bio-E weapons and enhancements.

For Splicers that are being *Converted* from either a Biotic or Roughneck, they can do the above process or they can opt to convert their pre-existing features, bio-enhancements and weapons from their previous Biotic form/Host Armor into their new Tempest body. In the case of the Roughneck, their Host Armor is literally their new Tempest body once the melding and gestation is complete. See *Production Cycles* for details. Converted Tempests start with 2D4x10+30 Bio-E points at level one, plus their chosen metabolism's Bonus Bio-E Points available for enhancements and selections made from any of the categories. Any additional Bio-E points earned are treated the same as the first method defined above.

Experimental/Test Enhancements and Weapons: This is a new creative, interactive dynamic between the player and the Game Master. Both the player and the G.M. get to create and propose new experimental bio-enhancements and designs that they would like to test in the field. If the two agree on an item or items, then they can be added at the agreed upon Bio-E point cost. It should be noted, that these are *experimental* enhancements and weapons and there are no guarantees that any experiment will last or function properly versus standard Bio-Tech production items and enhancements. This is to preserve unpredictability, excitement, suspense and most important, game balance. If a G.M. feels that they have made a crucial mistake and have approved a weapon to a Tempest that is exhibiting too much power and it is unbalancing the setting then the weapon can easily be reduced within gameplay. Such weapons/enhancements can begin to idle down (lose damage and/or range) after each use, suffer Bio-Energy overloads and malfunction half the time, completely melt down, leaving just a husk or worse, can backfire, causing damage to everyone with close proximity, etc. The consequences should be fair and fit the need to resolve the issue without spoiling the story or the fun of the game. If the G.M. discovers, and sincerely feels the weapon or enhancement is severely under-powered, then the weapon might undergo metamorphosis over time and become a more powerful weapon without any additional Bio-E cost or can be upgraded the next time that Tempest is before the Engineer. Perhaps the maturation time was simply underestimated and it took longer for the weapon to reach its full potential (i.e.; increased damage, longer effective range or higher rate of fire are fun ways to surprise players that might feel discouraged). Please allow players to be innovative and fully test their experimental bio-enhancements and weapons out first though to ensure that the G.M.'s intervention is worthy. Also G.M.s, please avoid issuing out special enhancements or weapons that begin to usurp or take away the specialty of another O.C.C. There is no need for a Tempest to control a pack of Gorehounds, or to try to be as stealthy as a Skinjob or as acrobatic, and dominating in the air as an Archangel. Try to keep in mind that Tempests are designed to test the heavy stuff and special enhancements geared towards Host Armors and War Mounts. The key is to have fun, and enjoy the innovation and bartering process with your group.

Tempest players, please don't get frustrated if your G.M. does not approve your test weapons or bio-enhancement proposals, (remember, they're all "proposals"). Just as long as the G.M. does provide some test items (preferably 1D4+1 items) at levels 3, 6, 9 and 12, your Tempest experience will be sound.

Statistical Data:

Height: 7-10 feet (2.1 to 3 m) tall is the normal height; though 12 foot (3.7 m) tall Tempests have been produced.

Width: 3-5.5 feet (0.9 to 1.7 m) shoulder to shoulder.

Length: 3-4 feet (0.9 to 1.2 m).

Weight: 750 to 1,500 pounds (338 to 675 kg).

Cargo: None.

Production Cycle: **New Volunteer:** 8 months for cerebro-transplant and Tempest body gestation, 4 months for growth time and complete neurological unification.

Biotic Conversion: 10 months for cerebro and all Bio-Tech transplants (i.e.; all Bio-Enhancements and Weapons) and includes the new Tempest body gestation, 6 months for growth time and complete neurological melding.

Roughneck Conversion: 5 months for cerebro-transplant, 2 months (within the 5 months) for the Tempest body modifications (Host Armor to Living Being), 2 months for fusion and complete neurological unification.

Note: If the Tempest is converting from a Biotic or Roughneck and they are not carrying over their previous bio-enhancements and/or Host Armor, then they have to wait the same time as a New Volunteer.

Operational Lifetime: 1D10+20 years.

Trade Value: Limited. Tempests are not pieces of equipment or pack units that can be controlled by Packmasters, Outriders, Falconers or Geneticists; they are living beings. However, they do wield a value in the black market for any of their experimental weapons and bio-enhancements, as well as to the illegal slave trade to be used for brute force, and blood sport entertainment.

Bio-Regeneration Rate: 3D8 M.D.C. per hour for the main body and 1D8 M.D.C. per hour for all other locations. Tempests cannot regrow severed limbs or destroyed weapons systems that have been reduced to zero (there must be some M.D.C. remaining), but an Engineer can generate and attach a replacement limb with minimal effort.

Horror Factor: 7 when humans and other Splicers are under the assumption that you are merely a Host Armor, 11 when they realize what you truly are. 14 for all beings who fear Bio-Tech; none against the machines.

Senses and Features: Same as Standard Host Armor including Bio-Comms.

Internal Life Support: The Tempest's heart and lungs are regulated to a secondary life-support when the primary heart and lungs of the new body have failed, in order to keep the Tempest's heart alive.

Feeding and Sleep Requirements: See *Tempest Metabolisms*.

Skills of Note: All Tempests carry over their previous O.C.C. skills. However, any skills requiring superb balance (e.g. Climbing, Acrobatics, Gymnastics) or stealth (Prowl) are reduced by half. On top of any previous skill bonus, an additional +15% to operate bio-equipment and +15% to Bio-Comms.

Combat Bonuses: Tempests have their own brain so they do not have instinct driven reflexes that are the equivalent of biological combat computers as seen in Host Armors. So it does not receive the added bonuses in the beginning and it can only track up to 9 targets at a time (Herbivore metabolisms can track up to 12 targets). However, Tempests do retain their memories (unless special conditions or insanity created by a Game Master dictate otherwise). So they can recognize and remember any image or noise that they have previously experienced. In addition, Tempests are +5 to all saving throws, +4 to long-range weapons, +4 to long-range, handheld weapons, +3 to strike and +3 to save vs Horror Factor. (Light Tempests also receive auto-dodge and are +3 to roll with punch/impact.)

Automatic Penalties (add to metabolism penalties): -3 to pull punch.

Tempest Metabolisms

Tempests can select nearly any Metabolism type besides Parasitic because there is no pilot inside to feed upon (see **Splicers® RPG**, pages 72-76). Most statistics are the same for Tempests as they are for Host Armors, including bonus Bio-E, instinctive skills, combat bonuses (bonuses provided to the pilot become bonuses of the Tempest) and penalties. The statistics that differ are as follows:

Carnivore: Needs 20-60 pounds (9 to 27 kg) of meat daily, and may gorge on up to 100-120 pounds (45 to 54 kg) at one time. After gorging, a Tempest can go for 2D4 days without feeding and without suffering any ill effects. **Additional Bonus:** +1 attack and +1 to strike. **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 55 Additional Bio-E points. **Additional Penalties:** Increased aggression, enjoys the hunt, having a very strong prey drive, often questioning if your humanity is slipping a little bit now that you're not just part of a symbiote suit, your body is the suit. So all of the adrenaline and

instincts are melded with you. Feels more primordial and at home in the wild. So even on a hunt, are you analyzing yourself if you are becoming more of a predator or simply a human that needs to eat? Despises being pent up and not active for long durations. Begins viewing humans as optional prey items if food is scarce and tries to be dominant at kills among others feeding on the same kill. Will trigger fights with other carnivores for the choice meats, often being injured by Dracos, Gorehounds, Grennels or pilots operating carnivore Host Armors in the process.

Herbivore: Needs to consume 60-80 pounds (27 to 36 kg) of vegetable matter a day. **Additional Bonus:** +1D6 to P.E. **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 35 additional Bio-E points. **Additional Penalties:** Extremely territorial over platoons (dubbed the *Herd Syndrome*), heightened testosterone, emotionally sensitive, and wider situational awareness (constantly scanning for threats and can track up to 12 targets). Will be quicker to instigate a defensive stance against any perceived threat, even when there is no threat. Constantly thinks and acts as if something just moved quickly out of sight or is stalking the group.

Lithovore: This metabolism needs to consume 50-80 pounds (22.5 to 36 kg) of raw minerals and forages more frequently for specific nutritional minerals such as iron and phosphorus that are essential for the Tempest's physiology and health. **Additional Bonus:** +1D4 to M.E. **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 30 additional Bio-E points. **Additional Penalties:** Really difficult at times to find enough food, and its quiet nature is often mistaken for being lackluster, unenthusiastic or being anti-social among groups. Extremely obsessive over precious metals and gems.

Omnivore: Needs to consume 40-60 pounds (18 to 27 kg) of vegetable and/or animal matter a day. **Additional Bonuses:** +1D6 to P.E. and +1 Attack. **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 40 additional Bio-E points. **Additional Penalties:** Perhaps the closest metabolism to being human, there are no perceived penalties as long as the Tempest gets sufficient food. Tends to be overly curious and nosy, always looking for opportunities.

Photosynthetic: **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 25 additional Bio-E points. **Additional Penalties:** When exposed to direct sunlight, the Tempest tends to become so mesmerized by the charging tranquility of the sun's rays that there is a 7% chance of slipping into a daydream that lasts 1D4 minutes, and will only awaken from the daydream if it receives more than 15 M.D. of damage or the duration of the dream expires. The longer the Tempest is exposed to darkness or night, the more pessimistic they become, and will spew out negativity and degrade any optimistic agendas, behaviors, plans or ideas.

Thermosynthetic: **Bonus Bio-E Points:** 25 additional Bio-E points. **Modified Penalty:** All penalties remain the same, except when the temperature is below 15 degrees Fahrenheit (-9.4 C), the Tempest suffers 3D8 M.D. per hour of exposure, is almost completely immobilized (can only move at 10% normal speed, only has one attack per melee, and all combat bonuses are reduced to zero). Worse is that the Tempest will go into a coma within 12-24 hours if not warmed up, and will die in 36 hours. The Tempest cannot revive from the coma state until exposed to temperatures of 40 degrees Fahrenheit (4.4 C) or higher for 1D8+3 hours and will remain in a sluggish state for 1D8 hours thereafter.

Vampiric: Smaller, leaner scale. Looks like an experimental hybrid between a Biotic and Host Armor. Special forces of Vampire Tempests (Heavy and Light Variants) are now being fielded by several Houses. **Additional Features:** Also receives Enhanced Sight, Nightvision Eyes and Butcher's Organ. **Sleep Requirements:** Must have a deep rest of 1D4+2 hours of meditation/rest or sleep per day, but can go as long as 1D6+3 days without rest. The meditation is a deep slumber that helps rest the body's healing and metabolism and the Tempest will have a much harder time to awaken, even if touched. Will only awaken from the meditation if it receives more than 10 M.D. of damage. However, the smell of blood will immediately awaken the Tempest. **Additional Penalties:** Vulnerable to blood lust and frenzy. Each day without meditation reduces speed, combat bonuses and attacks by 10%. Without sleep the Tempest will become more moody, paranoid, and begins seeing things that aren't really there. Hallucinations will last 1D4 melee rounds for every six hours. (G.M.s, create the hallucinations when they are ready.)

Common Skills: Standard.

O.C.C. Skill Programs: If a new character: Basic Military (+20%), infantryman (+15%) or support man (+10%), and one Skill Program of choice; except Host Pilot or War Mount Rider; typically military, combat or weapon oriented.

If upgraded from a Biotic or Roughneck, the Tempest keeps their previous Skill Programs, plus adds another Skill Program minus the listed Skill Program exceptions above.

Elective Skills: Select two additional Military or Physical skills at level one, as well as two additional skills from the list below. Also selects one Elective Skill at levels 4, 8, and 12. All new skills start at level one proficiency. If upgraded from a Biotic or Roughneck, the Tempest keeps his or her previous Elective Skills, plus selects two additional Elective Skills from the following list.

Communications: Any.

Domestic: Appraise Goods, Fishing and Gardening only.

Espionage: Detect Ambush, Detect Concealment, Intelligence, Interrogation, Sniper (minus Bow and Arrow due to lack of sensitivity) only with Tracking, or Wilderness survival only.

Medical: Animal Husbandry, First Aid (-25%), Psychology and Toxicology only.

Military: Any except Demolitions Disposal and Parachuting.

Physical: Any except Acrobatics; Prowl is available to Light Variant only.

Rogue: Gambling, Imitate Voices and Sounds, and Use and Recognize Poison only (only Light Tempest Variants can use Prowl).

Scientist: Specialized scientific tools designed for Host Armors must be used.

Technical: Excavation, History, Machine Lore, Machine Technology, Masonry, and Operate Bio-Equipment only.

Wilderness: Any except Fasting.

W.P.s: Any.

Secondary Skills: New characters get to select three Secondary Skills at level one. These are additional areas of knowledge starting without any special O.C.C. bonuses. The character may select one more Secondary Skill at experience levels 3, 6 and 9 in the future.

If upgraded from Biotic or Roughneck, the Tempest keeps his or her previous Secondary Skills, plus he can select two additional Secondary Skills at level one. These are additional areas of knowledge and start without any special O.C.C. bonuses. The character may select one more Secondary Skill at experience levels 6 and 9 in the future. So yes, Tempests who are upgraded from Biotics or Roughnecks will be more skilled versus a pure volunteer.

Standard Equipment: A full body cloak poncho (military camouflage, brown or shadow green), survival knife, one weapon for each W.P. and appropriate ammunition, backpack, tent, bedroll, water skin, a bar of sterilizing soap, emergency food rations if needed (two week supply) and some personal items. Unlike most O.C.C.s, Tempests do not automatically receive their own War Mounts or War Horse, they have to keep up as best as they can, unless a special mission requires them to be issued a War Mount to carry them along with the rest of the group. If that is the case, Tempests can choose only from Behemoths, Leviathans, Striders or Zephyrs unless the G.M. decides otherwise.

Money: Has all of their money previous to the Engineered conversion, plus they receive 1D6x100 credits in precious metals, relics or trade items to barter and negotiate with in the field as they may have to have others make purchases or trades for them.

The Upside: Designed to be a tank among the infantry, you are a powerful, walking juggernaut and possibly one of the first bio-cyborgs fighting for the salvation of humanity. Your sacrifice and devotion for the Resistance has made you a fearless, formidable M.D.C. soldier built for decimating machines, alien predators or rival Splicers. You get to test and utilize the first prototype Bio-Tech enhancements, equipment and weapons slated for future infantry and Heavy Support. Engineers take pride in you and most Biotics have a healthy respect for you.

The Downside: You will always be the unsung hero, as your biggest sacrifice is also your biggest secret. Tempests can never revert back to their human forms and it is another reminder to those (i.e. Librarians, Engineers, Skinjobs and Scarecrows) who have shared such a cost in order to serve the Resistance. Unfortunately, the Tempest concept is considered unethical, crossing the line and highly illegal by most Resistance standards. This forces you to serve only in small numbers, but you must also pretend to be soldiers inside of Host Armor suits or risk being discovered and possibly killed. You are wary of others, often avoiding making any true connections and friendships, though Roughnecks and Biotics are the most accepting of Tempests as fellow brothers in arms.

Tempests are typically the last to enter an armory and are always volunteering for long-term missions, Tunnel Patrols, or guard duty while others rest, sleep, etc. Inside havens you are always finding ways to be active, such as working at one of the Defense Checkpoints/Entry Points, serving as a Bodyguard or Law Enforcer (even painting your body with blue and red trim to fit the bill), or fighting in the gladiatorial arenas or other armored sporting events. When not active, you are typically in a Gene Pool or being augmented by the only beings that you can fully trust, Engineers and Geneticists. Regrettably, you are also routinely retrieved by Scarecrows and brought into one of the libraries for an updating probe by one of the Great House Librarians. They will always remind you of what you really are and who you really serve.

As a test platform for various Bio-Technologies for both Librarian and Geneticist designs, you take many risks as you are commonly requested to be augmented and refitted with various weapons and enhancements to field test. Sometimes you get more injured by using these experimental enhancements than you do by your enemies. You cannot get comfortable with any favorite test enhancement or weapon, as you never know how long it will work or how long they will allow you to keep it. Worse, your experimental Bio-Tech places a big bull's-eye target on your back for those operating in Black Market trade, Wastecrawlers and rival Great Houses that seek to capture you in order to reverse engineer any of your House's newest inventions.

Tempest Bio-Weapon Enhancements

Librarians are always seeking to push the limits of Bio-Tech, and Tempests and Homunculi serve as testing platforms to do just that. Librarians and Geneticists can develop or modify new Bio-Tech specifically for Tempests that may be too risky for standard Host Armors or too powerful for Homunculi to wield. Tempests can receive enhancements and weapons from any Bio-Tech category, just like Host Armor. Bio-E costs and prerequisites are the same (double the Bio-E cost for all other O.C.C.s). These new features and weapons can be anything that players and G.M.s co-create together within reason and at a feasible Bio-E cost.



Escaped Creatures & Experiments

Devourer Amoebas

Created by Lance Colley

A threat to both human and N.E.X.U.S. forces, the wild Protean Amoeba is an animated glob of ooze, driven only to eat, grow, reproduce, and continue to consume nearly everything around it. Whether these large, protoplasmic terrors are an act of nature or something else is entirely unknown. Discovered in the subterranean caverns several years ago, the Amoeba organism has the ability to alter its shape, primarily by extending and retracting pseudopods (false limbs). They are capable of replicating most basic living shapes, though it typically takes the form of an ooze, or mushy, octopus-like form, but there are reports describing them as massive humanoid forms standing on two to three pseudopods, but moving at half the speed.

Often called Amoeboids, even small, newly formed ones, have always been considered a major menace and both the Machine and the Resistance will attempt to wipe them out when encountered. It is unknown if N.E.X.U.S. exterminates these creatures because they predate upon Retro-villagers and attack robots or if there is something darker, and more alien within its origins. Even the N.E.X.U.S. personality Gaia relocates them, often releasing them near or inside Resistance havens and sewer networks as she has zero tolerance for these Amoeboids within her Nature Preserves.

Despite all efforts, Protean Amoebas are remarkable survivors and, aside from climates of extreme cold, they can be found in almost any environment. In some regions, they are quite abundant, and reside in packs, like rocks scattered across sand. A newly birthed Protean is roughly the size of a volleyball and immediately begins a life of near mindless aggression and consumption, seeking only to consume and spread, growing with each new meal. They range in color and camouflage, from bright green to a sickly yellow to a lifeless, often translucent gray. Inside can be glimpsed an odd black core, with a web of numerous vein structures spreading throughout the creature.

No one has ever been brave (or foolish) enough to attempt any in-depth studies of the creatures, until now. House Artemis's militarized version, dubbed *Devourer Amoebas*, were designed to serve as bio-weapons against rival Houses. The Devourer Amoebas were to be deployed inside enemy territories and strongholds, aggressively targeting and melding with rival Bio-Tech as it incapacitated and fed upon its adversaries. Once the creatures were done feeding and exterminating; specialized Artemis agents were to come in and freeze the amoebas for transport. Once frozen and retrieved, Librarians and Geneticists could dissect and extract DNA samples of their rival's Bio-Tech for study and reverse engineering, if they desired. While Devourers cannot change color, they often blend in to their environments and can easily catch most prey unaware. Devourer Amoebas radiate little heat, so they cannot be detected or tracked by infrared or heat sensors. In addition, they move in almost complete silence and are able to slither up walls and ooze through small cracks and openings. These creatures are drawn to heat and the bioelectric energy exuded by Bio-Technology and those that wield it, and are able to sense prey and Bio-Tech, even through walls or other solid structures. They make no differentiation between organic and Bio-Tech, and are able to consume and digest either equally.

In combat, Devourers are nearly fearless, and will attack and engage any target. The aggressive amoebas attack by forming masses of pseudopods to lash out, entangle, and engulf or overrun fleeing prey. All Devourers secrete a powerful mix of acidic chemicals that can dissolve nearly everything it meets, including metal. Worse, these weaponized

amoebas can activate nearly any Bio-Tech weapon or device that they have consumed or melded with. This enables a Devourer Amoeba to utilize and discharge an array of Bio-Tech, and being particularly effective with weapons like Chemical Sprayers, Electrical Weapons, Organic Rockets, Serrated Whips, Spore Dischargers, Super Light Cells and Tendril Injectors. The augmented Amoeboid however, is not intelligent enough nor does it have the necessary control to wield and accurately fire cannons or rifles, so it receives a -7 to strike. Organic rockets, however, have their own independent neurological bundle and tracking optic to help them target and track adversaries, so they are not penalized and receive all bonuses of Organic Rockets. All amoebas are unable to meld with any cryo-based weapon, nor can they replicate Bio-Enhancements.

The creatures attack to feed, and if prey proves to be too powerful, the Amoeba will retreat in search of easier victims. A Devourer Amoeba's size is limited solely by the amount of food available and the blob-like creatures continue to grow throughout their lives. Truly massive amoebas (60 feet/18.3 m or more in diameter) have been encountered and destroyed, and one Splicer patrol witnessed a battle between what they described as "a gargantuan Amoeboid" versus an entire Robot Platoon. The Protean was able to defeat almost the entire platoon before it was destroyed by a massive N.E.X.U.S. combined air and artillery strike.

Type: Experimental Bio-Weapon Amoeboid.

Alignment: Best described as Diabolic, though even this is not entirely correct. A Devourer is driven only by the need to feed, reproduce, and survive.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D4, M.E. 3+1D4, M.A. 1D4, P.S. 20+1D6 (Splicer P.S.), P.P. 10+1D4, P.E. 20+1D6, P.B. 1, Spd 2D6. Note: Truly large or massive Protean Amoebas will have different attributes. See Proto-Growth (below) for full details.

Speed: 15 mph (24 km) and the act of slithering does not tire the creature. Cannot swim, but can slither along the bottom of rivers or lakes as long as the temperature does not exceed its cold tolerance (see Vulnerabilities). When they are attacked with very cold weapons or come into contact with very cold temperatures, they can move up to 20 mph (32 km) in attempts to escape, but oddly, they do not utilize this speed to catch prey.

M.D.C.: Varies according to size, however, the average Protean Amoeba will have 300+2D4x10 M.D.C. Add an additional 1D4x2 M.D.C. for every 100 pounds (45 kg) of mass the creature consumes. Note for Devourers: Internal contents or melded Bio-Tech will have half to one quarter of their original M.D.C.

Size: Amoebas start off as small, volleyball-sized oozes (0.85 feet/0.26 m), but can grow into gargantuan amoebas reaching 400-600 feet (122 to 183 m).

Weight: A newly birthed Protean weighs roughly 15 pounds (6.8 kg), but they can grow to 4.5 tons.

Average Lifespan: Unknown.

Bio-Regeneration: 4D6 M.D.C. per hour, but can not regenerate damage caused by cold attacks. Frozen scarring can only be shed or scraped off. Repair Shedding takes 1D4 days per every 100 pounds (45 kg).

Horror Factor: 14 for a standard-sized, wild Protean Amoeba (+2 for a Devourer Amoeboid). Add one point for every additional 20 feet (6.1 m) in diameter.

Feeding: See Proto-Growth.

Natural Abilities:

Semi-Solid Body: The Amoeboid is a simple organism, composed of protoplasmic "ooze" and a few simple internal organs. The Amoeba is immune to poison, toxins and acids. Projectile attacks like bullets, arrows, and even rail and casting gun rounds pass through the protean, doing no damage at all. Edged and blunt weapons, including punches, kicks, swords, etc. inflict only 10% of their normal damage. Large explosions (40 M.D.C. or more), having great weights drop or slam into it, and falls from great heights, do only a quarter of the normal damage, but they will stun the creature, causing it to lose 2 actions per round for the next 1D4 melee rounds. Electrical, energy, flame and all heat-based attacks inflict half damage; however, the

creature is extremely susceptible to cold attacks. The Amoeba has no real "front" or "back" and can lash out with its pseudopods in any direction.

Manipulate Shape: The Amoeba is soft and malleable, and can be squished, molded, and puddle as it sees fit. This means the creature can ooze through small openings and cracks, slide under a door or window, squeeze through bars, chains, ropes, etc. Depending on the size of the opening, it takes the Amoeba 1D4 melee rounds (per 5 feet/1.5 m of mass) to completely pass through an opening. Note: Devourers can only pass uninhibited, through areas that allow them to squeeze through with their melded attachments as the Bio-Tech components are not malleable. There is a 50% chance that a Devourer may sever its melded component if the components are preventing the amoeba from successfully squeezing through a crevice or opening. Increase to 95% if there is food or Bio-Tech that the Devourer is after or if it is fleeing cold temperatures.

Adhesion: The Amoeba's sticky nature allows it to adhere to the surfaces of walls, enabling it to slither up walls and along ceilings at half normal speed.

Senses: The Amoeba's entire body functions as a primitive sensory organ and can detect heat, smells, and vibration within a 150 foot (45.7 m) radius.

Natural Camouflage: When not moving, an Amoeba is considered to have Prowl at 85% and cannot be detected by infrared or other heat detection. Even while moving, it makes almost no noise and is considered to have Prowl at 55%.

Special: Acidic Touch: When attacking, the Amoeba strikes with acidic pseudopods (Devourers attack with both the acidic pseudopods and any melded Bio-Tech that it can discharge into the intended targeted area). These chemical secretions are highly caustic and devastating to both organic and inorganic material. The acid adds an additional 2D8 M.D. to its regular punch damage. In addition, the acid even eats through M.D.C. armor alloys and Host Armor. Amoeba acid will continue to inflict 3D8 M.D. per melee round for one minute (4 melee rounds) or until washed off.

Special: Smothering Attack: The Amoeba's most devastating attack is to completely engulf its victims. The attack must be announced ahead of time, and counts as two attacks. If successful, the target has been engulfed in the Amoeba. Once engulfed, a combined P.S. of 45 will be needed to pull the victim free (40 if any characters possess Supernatural Strength). Even then, the victim and any pullers lose 1D4 melee actions for pulling loose. A smothered victim may attempt to cut their way out using claws or a similar small, bladed weapon. Inflicting 25 M.D.C. or more points to the creature in a single attack will cause the Amoeba to release its hold. While the victim is trapped, they are reduced to 1 melee action per round, and suffer both acid damage (3D8 M.D. per melee round) and crushing damage (2D6 M.D. per round). Characters will suffocate and die within 1D6+1 melee rounds unless in environmental armor or with some sort of independent oxygen supply.

Special: Proto-Growth: Each time an Amoeba inflicts damage to an opponent, it receives M.D.C. equal to half of the damage inflicted in the attack (this does not include damage inflicted by residual acid burn). There is no limit to the amount of M.D.C. that can be absorbed; the more the creature ingests, the larger it can become. For every 50 points of M.D.C. gained in this fashion, the creature permanently gains an additional +1 to P.S., P.P., and P.E., increases its diameter by 2 feet (0.6 m), and adds an additional 30 pounds (13.5 kg) to its weight. An Amoeba will continue to grow as long as food is readily available. If food is scarce then the Amoeba will begin feeding upon itself in order to sustain its life, resulting in a more sluggish, less active creature (reduce speed and attacks by half). It will shed 60 pounds (27 kg) and 100 M.D.C. every time it consumes itself.

Number of Attacks: 5, +1 attack for every additional 20 feet (6.1 m) in diameter. Note: Devourer Amoebas can discharge all melded Bio-Tech weapons simultaneously and counts only as one attack.

Bonuses (in addition to attributes): +2 on initiative, +4 to strike and parry, no bonuses to dodge, immune to poisons, toxins, acid, pain and Horror Factor.

Damage: Crush/Squeeze and Pseudopod strikes all inflict damage as per Splicer P.S.

Vulnerabilities: Cold: Amoeboids are extremely vulnerable to cold and cold temperatures. Cold and ice-based attacks do 50% more damage, and any item below 30 degrees Fahrenheit (-1.1 C) will inflict double M.D. to the creature. Even a simple ice cube will inflict a single M.D. point! Any cold-based attack that inflicts more than 20 M.D. in a single attack will reduce the creature's number of attacks and bonuses per melee by half for 1D4 melee rounds. Additionally, temperatures below 55 degrees Fahrenheit (12.8 C) will begin to severely impair the creature. In temperatures between 40 to 54 degrees Fahrenheit (4.4 to 12.2 C), the Amoeba begins to behave sluggishly: its speed is reduced by 20%, and it is -1 attack per melee round, -2 on initiative, and -2 to dodge. In temperatures less than 39 degrees Fahrenheit (3.9 C), its speed is reduced by half, it is -3 attacks per melee round, and reduce all combat bonuses by half. In addition, the creature suffers 1D6 M.D. for every 10 minutes of exposure. In temperatures below 15 degrees Fahrenheit (-9.4 C), the Amoeba suffers 3D6 M.D. for every 10 minutes of exposure, is completely immobilized, and regardless of M.D.C., will die within 12-24 hours if temperatures do not warm up. Also note: because Amoebas are not that intelligent nor that particular when choosing prey items, they have been known to succumb to the consumption of explosives.

Average Life Span: Unknown.

Habitat: Any except cold (freezing or below) climates. Prefers subterranean areas, sewer systems, nature preserves, jungles and swamps where prey is plentiful.

Allies: Other Amoebas.

Enemies: Anything not another Amoeba or Devourer is a potential meal. Note: Devourers will cannibalize wild Amoebas to increase their size.

Saber Raptors

Derived from the pack hunting species known as *Razor Demons* that were recently introduced into several Nature Preserves, a genetically modified version called Saber Raptors is currently being field-tested by the Great House of Barren Marsh. Multiple Houses were given DNA samples of Saber Raptors to brew within their Gene Pools to test and record their results with experimental Packmasters called *Blade Keepers*. Unfortunately, most Saber Raptors exhibited too strong of a predatory instinct and constant challenges for domination of the entire pack. Even the few raptors that are semi-controlled by a Blade Keeper preserve an unpredictable, volatile temperament as they snap their jaws at fellow comrades of a Platoon or view War Mounts and wounded soldiers as viable prey options. This has forced several houses to cull these Raptors outright. Others continue testing to try to develop more controllable, reliable samples for field use. Unfortunately, a few frustrated houses have also unleashed uncontrollable packs (some of them armed with Bio-Tech weapons) into the nearby Nature Preserves to allow Gaia to deal with them, only adding to the personality's ever growing disdain towards Splicers.

Razor Demons and Saber Raptors exhibit similar behavior traits of being highly social animals, living in large packs with a rigid dominance matriarchy that contains multiple breeding females, yielding to a clever alpha queen. Males serve as the hunters of the pack, providing food for the females and their brood. Ironically, it is the females that are the fiercest fighters and protectors of the young. However, both genders will engage in territorial disputes against other packs or rival predators, and will strategically gang up on larger, formidable quarry or Splicers when the opportunity presents itself (particularly at fresh kill sites).

Packs usually consist of 10 to 12 individuals, but larger groups are known where prey items are either extremely large or plentiful. Both



species are typically diurnal pack hunters preferring medium-sized and large prey to feed the entire pack. Saber Raptors however have been augmented to also hunt nocturnally and will do so, especially when the prey is human/Splicers oriented. Their Splicer modifications give them a keen insight that vulnerable humans exist underneath the large, protective armor shells. The raptors know that if they cause enough damage, the naked pilot usually comes writhing out of the back of the shell, looking to escape the butchering, and quickly becomes a delicious meal.

In the Nature Preserves, sewer networks, caves, swamps and tropical forests, both Razor Demons and Saber Raptors aggressively compete against each other, alien predators and Splicers; targeting somewhat different prey species, but still with a substantial dietary overlap that includes each other. Both species use strategic stalking methods to track their targets before outright attacking, often studying their prey to determine which is the most vulnerable and who is the strongest and to observe and capitalize on any signs of weakness. The Raptors will set up ambushes and have demonstrated well-coordinated, pack hunting strategies that nearly rival Splicers tactics to bring down their quarry. Worse is that the Saber Raptors will watch, learn and mimic successful field tactics that are utilized by other packs and by Splicers, making them extremely dangerous adversaries.

Type: Predatory Pack Hunter Animal.

Alignment: Miscreant, lives to hunt and kill. Extremely territorial, strategic and opportunistic pack hunters.

Attributes: I.Q. 1D6+5 (medium to high animal intelligence), M.E. 1D6+4, M.A. 1D6+8, P.S. 2D6+15 (Supernatural P.S.), P.E. 2D4+10, P.P. 1D8+12, Spd (see below).

Speed:

Running: 95 mph (152 km) maximum for short bursts up to 10 miles (16 km) before requiring rest. Can trot at 32 mph (51.2 km) up to 40 miles (64 km). Note, that the Sickle claws are always raised and on the inside of the legs when Saber Raptors are running to avoid being snagged or breaking. Razor Demons tend to be 10% faster in speed bursts.

Leaping: 20 feet (6.1 m) from a standing position, doubled with a running start.

Swimming: Bladed Wings and a powerful bladed tail are used like fish fins and a crocodile tail to propel and maneuver underwater with a top speed of 27 mph (43 km/23.5 knots), providing a very fast and agile speed for pursuing aquatic prey.

Flying: Despite massive flight muscles and wingspan, the armor-bladed raptors typically do not generate enough lift to take off from a level surface. Like human hang gliders, these predators run or pounce downhill, or from cliff faces or tall trees into a headwind to become airborne.

Once aloft, however, both species are excellent and highly maneuverable gliders, with top speeds reaching 200 mph (320 km). To remain airborne, the Raptors rely upon prevailing wind currents with flapping only occurring during the take-off and landing phases. Saber Raptors use their large wings to exploit a combination of thermal updrafts as well as dynamic soaring. Dynamic soaring is essentially where a flying creature uses the boundary between two air masses to pick up speed by cartwheeling into oncoming wind and using the wind speed to accelerate itself forward. Repeating this process further increases the speed of the raptor, resulting in an extremely energy efficient form of flight.

M.D.C. by Location:

Note: Reduce by half for Razor Demons.

Saber Wings (2 large) – 30 each

Saber Wings (2 small) – 10 each

Arms (2) – 30 each

Elbow Sabers (2; 1 per arm) – 15 each

Talons (6; 3 per foot) – 25 each

Bladed Spines (8) – 15 each

Spurs (8; 4 on each arm) – 12 each

Legs (2) – 65 each

Tails (2) – 45 each

*Head – 40

**Main Body – 115

* Attackers are -3 to strike the head.

** Depleting the M.D.C. of the head or main body kills the creature.

Horror Factor: 12 to humans, none to machines.

Size:

Length: 11.5-14 feet (3.5 to 4.3 m) from snout to tip of tail.

Width: 3 feet (0.9 m) shoulder to shoulder and a 22 foot (6.7 m) wingspan.

Height: Typically hunched and leaning forward like a T-Rex, its tallest points are its hips and back spines, thus giving it a 3.5 to 4 foot (1 to 1.2 m) height from its feet to the tallest spines.

Weight: 160-175 pounds (72-79 kg) for females and 180-195 pounds (81-88 kg) for adult males.

Average Life Span: 18-25 years.

Bio-Regeneration: 3D6 M.D.C. per day to the body, 2D6 to all other locations. (Reduce by half for Razor Demons.)

Feeding: Carnivore that consumes 20-40 pounds (9-18 kg) of meat per day, with a preference for fresh meat.

Natural Abilities: Vibro-Blade vibration, Echolocation and gills for amphibious mobility.

Skills: Prowl (77%), Climbing (68%), and Tracking (Sight and Scent; 60%).

Vulnerabilities: Vulnerable to disease and Mega-Damage weapons. There is a slight chance (8%) that Blade Keepers, Falconers and Packmasters can trigger via Bio-Comms, some of the instinctive programming embedded into Saber Raptors, and seize a tentative alliance or semi-control of 1D4 Saber Raptors for 1D8 melee rounds. (+1% for every level of experience.)

Number of Attacks: 5, +1 attack during a speed burst.

Damage: Bite 3D8 M.D.C., Elbow Blade Slash 2D6 M.D. (+6 M.D. during speed burst), Wing Slash 2D10 M.D., Tail Swat 2D6 M.D., Running Pounce Attack 3D6 M.D., +1 to strike and has a 01-60% likelihood of knocking an opponent as large as 10 feet (3 m) tall off his feet and onto his back. If knocked off his feet, the target loses initiative and two melee attacks/actions, and the Saber Raptor is poised for a fast bite attack (+2 to strike for the Raptor's next attack), counts as two attacks.

Bonuses: +3 to initiative, +3 to strike, +2 to parry, +3 to automatic dodge (does not use up melee attacks to dodge), +5 to roll with fall, and +6 to save vs Horror Factor. During a speed burst, add another +1 to initiative and attacks, as well as +2 to strike, parry, and auto-dodge.

Habitat: Any temperate or subtropical zone, regardless of the terrain. Prefers deep jungles, caverns and mountainous areas or tall grasslands and reeds that provide wonderful concealment.

Pack Size: Average pack size is about 8 to 15 adults and double that number of brood. Although the Packs are always led by an alpha female, the gender breakdown is usually evenly split between males and females. Packs naturally grow to match the rate of available game. In places where prey is more plentiful, there have been reports of packs as large as 50-80 adults.





Thrasher Squid

Combat Beast

Created as a sparring beast for Biotics, Host Armors, and War Mounts, the Thrasher is a Mega-Damage creature bio-engineered and genetically spliced from multiple super predators that roam the planet. At first glance, it resembles some form of colossal squid with an array of spines and thrusters mounted along its back, but when it opens up its tentacle mantle, it reveals a giant, amphibious, alien bear-like form with a giant mouth built into its chest, designed for decimating and devouring anything that is engulfed by the tentacles. It has one natural-born purpose and instinct and that is to hunt anything that it can conquer. Librarians designed this creature to be used as an entertaining gladiatorial combatant for the haven arenas as well as to train the armored mobile infantry of the Resistance; testing the mettle of entire platoons, including squads that contained heavy War Mounts.

The Thrasher was one of several test creatures that was recalled by the Warlords, because the creatures consumed large amounts of food, had major husbandry requirements, and were the antithesis to efficient training methods due to their highly aggressive brutality. The recalled Thrashers are still utilized by some Great Houses for intense training of Special Forces, but most Houses simply have done away with them.

Type: Gladiatorial Arena Experiment.

Alignment: Miscreant, lives to hunt and kill. Extremely territorial, highly aggressive and opportunistic.

Attributes: I.Q. 7, M.E. 10, M.A. 10, P.S. 39 (Supernatural P.S.), P.E. 15, P.P. 16, Spd (see below).

Speed:

Running: 50 mph (80 km) maximum for short bursts up to 10 miles (16 km) before requiring rest.

Leaping: 20 feet (6.1 m) from a standing position, doubled with a running start, triple with thrusters.

Swimming: The Thrasher swims quickly by taking in water through its mantle and then closes off the mantle and expels the water forcefully through its funnels. This propels the Thrasher through the water at speeds of up to 74 mph (118/64.3 knots) for short bursts of 6 miles (9.6 km). Otherwise its regular cruise speed using its organic thrusters is half its maximum speed. Maximum Depth: 1,800 feet (548.6 km).

Flying: Despite its massive size, Thrashers can hover up to 30 feet (9.1 m) off the ground using their array of back-mounted organic thrusters and are capable of reaching speeds of 90 mph (144 km). The act of hovering does tire the creature out and it can only hover for 10 minute intervals before requiring 1D4 hours of rest. Once airborne, these large creatures are very agile as they utilize their thrusters and funnels to coordinate propulsion and maneuverability.

M.D.C. by Location:

Tentacles (10) – 200 each

*Tentacle Suckers (44 per tentacle/440 total) – 1 each

Mantle – 225

*Mantle Eyes – 30 each

Upper Arms (2) – 280 each

Lower Legs (2) – 420 each

Clawed Webbed Paws (6) – 210 each

Ray Tail (2) – 310

Water Thrusters (16, back-mounted) – 50 each

Chest Beak – 620

**Head – 420

***Main Body – 1700

* Items with one asterisk are small and difficult to hit, and attackers must make a Called Shot at -4 to strike them.

** Attackers are -3 to strike the head.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the head or main body kills the creature.

Horror Factor: 18 to humans, none to machines.

Size: The following stats are for the Thrasher found in the facility. Most Thrashers are 10% smaller.

Length: 126 feet (38.4 m) from snout to tip of tail.

Width: 27 feet (8.2 m) shoulder to shoulder and a 184 foot (56 m) diameter tentacle spread.

Height: 92 feet (28 m) from the top of its head to the tip of its tentacles.

Weight: 36 tons.

Average Life Span: Unknown.

Bio-Regeneration: 3D10 M.D.C. per hour for the main body, 2D6 to all other locations.

Natural Abilities: Chameleon Skin, Echolocation, Enhanced Regeneration, Gills for amphibious mobility, Ink Dispenser (see *Dracos War Mount* in the *Splicers® RPG*, pages 115-116), Resistance to Cold, Slime Coating, Tentacle Suckers, Interlocking cartilage skeleton and self-dislocating joints, and Three hearts.

Skills and Special Instincts: Swimming 94%, Camouflage 82% when not moving/23% when in motion, Tracking by Sight 74%, Weather Sense and Wrestling 80%.

Number of Attacks: 15

Damage: Bite: 5D8 M.D. Punches and swats as per Supernatural P.S. Claw strike: 3D6 M.D. plus punch damage. Tentacle swat/Strike: 4D6 M.D. plus punch damage. Crush/Pry/Tear or Stomp attacks: 4D8 M.D. Body Rams: 6D6 M.D. plus punch damage. Swimming ram: 2D8 M.D. per 10 mph/16 km.

Bonuses: 10 tentacles (+10 to parry, +2 melee attacks, +4 to entangle and pin, +3 to initiative, +2 to dodge in the water, +30% to Swimming skill, +1 to initiative, +2 to strike, +2 to save vs Horror Factor, Ambidextrous (+1 attack), +5 to roll with fall, +8 to save vs Horror Factor. During a speed burst using the Organic Thrusters or while underwater, add another +1 to initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to dodge, and +2 to roll with fall or impact.

Vulnerabilities: Extreme Heat, Intense Light, and most susceptible to intense sounds. Thrashers are typically Nocturnal creatures as they find it difficult to operate during peak daylight hours. They tend to be more sluggish and uncoordinated (reduce all bonuses by half, -15% to skills). They are also highly susceptible to radiation and they must avoid the Wastelands and other “hot zones” or they will contract radiation poisoning. They will suffer 3D6 M.D. points of damage every hour of exposure to moderate radiation and they can not bio-regenerate while being exposed to radiation, plus radiation damage takes three times as long to heal.

Penalties: All energy and sonic-based weapons do double damage.

Color: Pale white with solid black eyes and claws. Able to camouflage itself like an octopus, mimicking an array of colors and textures. Thrashers are extraordinarily adept at camouflage because their skin contains pigmentation cells called *Chromatophores*, which can change color instantly in order to match the surrounding habitat.

Weapons of Note:

1. Central Chest Beak – The chest of the Thrasher has a four-part beak, with each mandible filled with several rows of serrated teeth. This is the primary mouth that the Thrasher utilizes to feed, though it can also use the bear-like mouth to consume smaller portions as well. The beak works in a four way scissor-like motion backed by powerful muscles to deliver a heavy downward force that is capable of shattering bones, crushing through thick chitin or even reinforced Bio-Tech armor plating with ease. Many armored soldiers and War Mounts have suffered large gaps of missing flesh and severed limbs from Thrasher attacks. The rows of serrated teeth aligned in each beak are used to rip the flesh from the body of its prey. The teeth are much like a shark's and are easily replaced when broken off within 1D4 days.

Primary Purpose: Feeding and Assault.

M.D.C.: The four-part beak has a total of 620 M.D.C. when the mouth is closed. When open, the two upper beaks have 165 M.D.C. each and the two lower beaks have 145 M.D.C. each.

Mega-Damage: 1D6x10 M.D., but on a Natural 20 roll, add +15 M.D. points of damage directly to the bitten target as well as all other Critical

Strike effects. Like most cephalopods, the bite of the Thrasher also contains a poisonous, Paralyzing Agent venom. This neurotoxin venom disrupts the motor functions but leaves its victim fully awake and aware, a frightening predicament for those about to be consumed by a Thrasher or anyone who has escaped the deadly maw only to sink to the bottom of a lake or ocean and drown or crushed by the surrounding depth pressures. Victims who fail to save vs non-lethal poisoning will fall to the ground, and their limbs will feel like dead weights. Speed is reduced to just 10%, they have one attack per melee round, no initiative, and -10 to all combat rolls. Skill performance is at -60%. Duration is 6D10 minutes. A successful save means most of the effects are shrugged off: just -1 to all combat rolls and -10% to speed and all skills for half the usual duration.

Rate of Fire: Counts as one melee attack.

Effective Range: Hand to hand only.

Note: It requires a combined Splicer P.S. of 36 or higher to pry open the beak.

2. Electric Shock Tentacles – (see *Electrical Discharger* in **Splicers® RPG**, page 101).

New Legion Machines Highjacker

This frail and seemingly insignificant-looking skeletal robot, is a small bio-mechanical creature made of living tissues and synthetic materials, yet it possesses an ability that makes it one of the most terrifying minions in Legion's arsenal. This wicked design is not a traditional robot nor made of metals, it is derived from an alien squid worm species that Legion stole from one of Gaia's cryo-zoos. This creature has been augmented with advanced machine technology, giving it the power to seize control of a suit of Host Armor and operate it like a puppet. The Highjacker fires a pair of high-tensile tendrils from each wrist that embed themselves into the Host Armor with barbed spikes. Once the barbs are set and the neural circuit is complete, the Highjacker can attempt to seize a limited amount of control over the targeted Host Armor. However, Host Armors that have a conscious pilot inside can resist the control. The long-range jacker tendrils can really only seize control of the limbs, but this is often more than enough if the pilot is dazed, sleeping, unconscious or worse, dead. It was the genius of Legion that was able to create a twisted creature that can steal a Host Armor at short or long-range.

While most awakening pilots struggle to regain control of their Host Armor, the Highjacker works to quickly slice open the rear hatch and pry the vulnerable pilot out of his protective shell. Any unconscious human or dead body will easily be discarded for Collectors or other minions to retrieve while the Highjacker quickly gets inside and seizes control of the Host Armor. Highjackers work carefully to make sure the Host Armor is not damaged too much in the process since the ultimate purpose is to use these powerful weapons of war against other Splicers. Most Highjackers try to steal Host Armors while the pilots are away and out of the armor suits, ideally targeting remote Splicer outpost or haven armories where there are plenty of opportunities. Pilots that are asleep in their Host Armors are the next prioritized targets.

An unarmored Highjacker sticks to the shadows, patiently stalking its quarry and only strikes targets that are alone and usually preoccupied with some other task or that have been weakened from previous battle. These somewhat fragile robot creatures are best used against opponents that are unprepared for battle. Splicers with their guard up will still be attacked (from behind), but the best prey is the one that does not know it's being hunted.

However, once a Highjacker acquires a suit of Host Armor, it becomes far bolder. Legion is quite familiar with the Resistance's strategies and tactics. Besides using Bio-Comms and mimicking any voice she hears, Legion also knows the hand signals that field teams use to communicate when noise discipline is required, and she uses this knowledge to get her Highjacker agents into place. The Highjacker uses the stolen Host Armor to get close to other Splicers so that it can gather intel, lead them into ambushes, distract platoons or lure them away from achieving objectives, framing pilots or instigating blood feuds by misusing the stolen armor, or launching devastating surprise assaults. Currently, Legion uses Highjackers to lure Splicers into traps so they can be captured and turned into Frankenstein-like Amalgams, but once she tires of this activity, she will use them a bit more aggressively. Highjackers are relatively cheap to create, so she really has no qualms about walking them into the center of armed camps and unloading every armament at their disposal until they are eventually overwhelmed and destroyed. She also plans on leaving a few armored Highjackers lying among the corpses of slain Splicers to give any teams searching for survivors an unpleasant surprise. Legion does enjoy toying with her opponents, and Highjackers are truly some of her most entertaining game pieces.

Class: Light Infiltration Bio-Robot.

M.D.C. by Location:

Legs (2) – 50 each

Arms (2) – 35 each

Feet (2) – 15 each

Hands (2) – 10 each

Jacker Cables (2) – 15 each

Head – 60

*Main Body – 80

*Depleting the M.D.C. of the Main Body will completely destroy the Bio-Robot.

Speed:

Running: Maximum speed is 150 mph (240 km).

Digging: 10 mph (16 km) through dirt or sand, half that speed through clay, rock, or stone.

Leaping: 25 feet (7.6 m) high or lengthwise; increase by 50% with a running start.

Swimming: Not possible. Sinks like a stone.

Flying: Not possible, though it can highjack Wing Packs.

Statistical Data:

Height: 5-6 feet (1.5 to 1.8 m).

Width: 2-3 feet (0.6 to 0.9 m).

Length: 1-2 feet (0.3 to 0.6 m).

Weight: 250 lbs (112.5 kg).

Physical Strength: Robotic P.S. of 28.

Cargo: None.

Power System: Organically driven, good for 1D8+6 months, after which it will be converted into a Necroborg.

Trade Value: None. Not even Technojackers can meld or control Highjackers (something even Legion is not aware of, yet).

Horror Factor: 13 to most people, but 17 to a Splicer in Host Armor.

Senses and Features: Standard features (all encased in hard fiber plastics or advanced bio-synthetic materials), plus Prowl 85% and Operate Host Armor: Highjackers are equipped with a special nervous system that allows them to hack into a Host Armor's nervous system and seize direct control. This means that Highjackers can actually pilot another Splicer's Host Armor. This interface is not as fluid as that between a human and Host Armor, so the Highjacker is not able to tap into the supernatural reflexes of the armor (no additional bonuses), Bio-Comms, or senses. However, the Highjacker can use the suit's weapon systems and its own superhuman reflexes to make up for any shortcomings. In order to overcome the sensory deprivation that comes along with piloting Host Armor, the Highjacker weaves miniature fiber optic cameras and bio-mechanical microphones through the skin of the armor to view the world around it.



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Note: Legion has infused the Highjackers with special biomechanical plating that protects them from her nanobot plague reaction, but Highjackers are fully susceptible to the N.E.X.U.S. nanobot plague reaction. Number of Attacks per Melee (includes bonuses from being controlled by the Legion personality): 8.

Combat Bonuses (includes bonuses from being controlled by the Legion personality): +6 on initiative, +6 to strike with ranged weapons, +9 to strike in hand to hand combat, +9 to parry, +9 to dodge, +2 to disarm, +4 to pull punch, and +5 to roll with punch. Note: Because the Highjacker is based from an alien worm and advanced bio-mechanics, it is a cold-blooded creature that takes on the temperature of its surroundings, so it does not show up on infrared or thermo-imaging sensors. This ability does not carry over to any Host Armor that it hijacks.

Skills of Note: Standard, plus Disguise 70% (the Highjacker is skilled at mimicking the movements of the former pilot while using his Host Armor) and Sign Language 68%.

Weapon Systems:

1. Jacker Cables: Mounted in each wrist is a launcher that shoots a special barbed spike attached to a thin yet surprisingly durable, wire-like tendril. Both spikes are fired in tandem at the same target. If they strike successfully, then a connection is formed between the Highjacker and the Host Armor's nervous system. Once the circuit is completed, the Highjacker can attempt to seize control from the sleeping/unconscious or dazed pilot. They fight a battle of wills by rolling 20-sided dice and adding their M.E. attribute numbers to the results, highest number wins. For the purpose of this battle of wills, the Highjacker has an M.E. of 15. If the Highjacker wins, it must quickly pry the pilot out of the armor before he regains control. The battle of wills continues every melee action until either the pilot or the jacker cables are removed from the armor. The jacker cables provide a bit more limited level of control than the synthetic nervous system. The creature cannot access any of the Host Armor's weapon systems, nor can it open the back hatch to expose the pilot. The Highjacker can only move (or paralyze) the limbs of the Host Armor for 1D6+2 melee actions per Melee Round. This means it is possible the pilot can still target the Highjacker with any head-mounted weapons or other defensive measures like Needle Death Blossom. This is another reason why Highjackers move quickly to slice the pilot out of his armor once the connection has been made. Pilots that are completely awake and alert receive a +5 to their Battle of Wills roll and are harder to take over, thus Highjackers usually target the sleeping or unwary. Awakening, dazed, stunned or unwary pilots are penalized -5 to their rolls. Sleeping or unconscious pilots are penalized a -10 to their rolls.

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

M.D.C.: Each cable requires 25 M.D.C. to sever. Severing just one cable destroys the link and makes hijacking impossible. The creature contains 200 feet (61 m) of extra cable and 20 extra spikes inside its frame. If the cable is cut, it only takes one melee round to create a replacement cable.

Mega-Damage: 1D4 M.D. from both barbed spikes.

Rate of Fire: Equal to the number of attacks per melee.

Effective Range: 30 feet (9.1 m).

Bonus: +4 to strike, but this is the only bonus that applies.

Note: It requires a Splicer P.S. of 30 or higher to pull out each jacker cable.

2. Talons: The tip of each finger ends in a 3 inch (7.6 cm) long blade. They make decent combat weapons, but they are typically used to surgically slice through the outer hatch of the Host Armor so the Highjacker can climb inside.

Primary Purpose: Assault.

Secondary Purpose: Defense.

Mega-Damage: 1D4 per talon, 4D4 per four-finger strike, or 4D8 per two-handed strike (counts as two attacks per melee).

3. Hand to Hand Combat: The Highjacker tends to focus on hand-to-hand combat, and has bio-engineered instincts to excel in this endeavor.

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch: 1D4 M.D.

Punch: 2D6 M.D.

Power Punch: 4D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Single Talon Strike: 1D4 M.D.

Four Talon Strike: 4D4 M.D.

Two-Handed Talon Strike: 8D4 M.D. (counts as two attacks).

Kick: 2D8 M.D.

Leap Kick: 4D8 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Body Block/Ram: 3D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

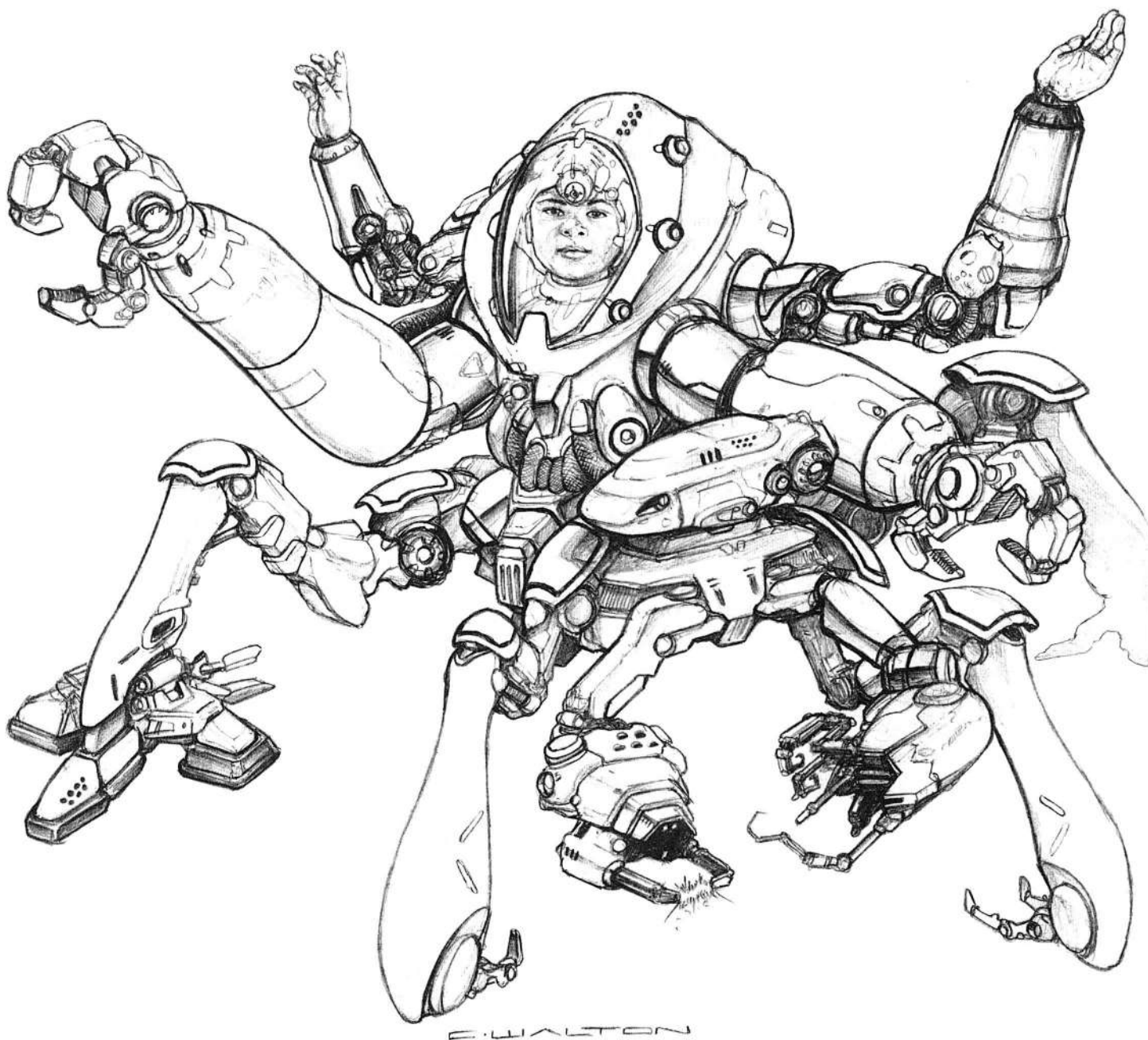
Mechanic

"Don't let your heart deceive your mind, these things might have the cutest, innocent looking faces you've ever seen, but it will also be that same face that's laughing at you while you are being dismembered inside the Factory Walker. If you have to close your eyes to shoot, then do it. But whatever you do, don't hesitate to pull the trigger."

— Sr. Roughneck Lucas Brody

The true mainstay of mechanical repairs, medical maintenance and builders of Legion's forces, are not the Collectors; they were Legion's versatile, multi-purpose units to help establish and sustain her genesis. Once Legion completed the Factory Walker and began her mobile operations, she had plans for a more specialized design to be implemented that would fulfill the role of a dedicated field technician. Sure, Legion had the designs to produce *Repair Wagons* (see **Splicers® RPG**, page 50), and she opportunistically seized multiples of them. However, Legion's idea of a field mechanic had to be suitable for every aspect of her grand scheme. This meant a machine that could efficiently repair and reconstruct her array of forces in the heat of battle as well as in the smaller subterranean tunnels and passageways where her primary quarry, the Splicers, dwelled. Having swarms of faster, smaller units that could effectively facilitate the responsibilities of Repair Wagons would be more advantageous to Legion. They are easier and quicker to produce, harder to spot and their vast numbers makes them more challenging to overcome. The Mechanics' smaller size and speed allows them to be agile and harder to target, enabling them and any Collector escorts to haul unassembled, formidable robot parts, closer to target areas and quickly reconstruct the robots to launch deadly assaults. The Resistance and N.E.X.U.S. have both been caught off-guard numerous times by some of Legion's largest robot designs within some of the most challenging places such as intense battlefields, Ghost towns, Retro-Villages, ruined cities, underground sewer systems, and caverns near Havens or Seedlings. Repair Wagons would not give Legion this advantage as they are simply too large and would be spotted miles out by Splicer Scouts or N.E.X.U.S. Machines.

Being half robot and half children's parts, the Mechanic is a cyborg similar to the Hunter and Legionnaire via their components and quality of construction. They have proven themselves to surpass even Legion's expectations, much to the chagrin of the Resistance. Mechanics are highly mobile units that are frequently working in and around Legion's controlled territories, as well as on the battlefield, fixing damaged robots, cyborgs and the robotic portions of Amalgams. When not scurrying around and crawling all over Legion's forces, repairing and adding various components, reloading ammunition, or conducting all manner of mechanical and electrical repairs, Mechanics can also be seen salvaging, recycling and building various construction sites for Legion. These cyborgs have no -real- weapons of their own, so they are usually within close proximity of Legion's forces. When given a task away from the Factory Walker, they are typically escorted and protected by 1D4 Col-



lectors or a group (2D6) of *Steel Troopers*, plus one to two *Flying Strike Ships* (see **Splicers® RPG**, pages 60-61 & 43-45).

Mechanics are always made from young children parts with at least the head, face and arms fully intact (ideally Retro-Village or Haven captives, ages seven years or younger, but Nex-Android children will also do the trick). This is partly due to their psychological terror and inherited protection that they bring to the battlefield against most Splicers, who simply can't bring themselves to kill the innocent-looking cyborgs. Even worse for some Splicers if it's a familiar, cute face and sweet sounding voice. However, Legion has sincere applicable needs for the children's components, as their small arms and tiny fingers are perfect for getting to the intricate parts of her constructs where they can repair or build things quicker than her Collectors. The fact that the majority of Splicers won't even fire on them or destroy them, is an added bonus for Legion. Mechanics may have children parts on the outside but they are hardwired with nanobot reinforcements and durable alloy skeletons, plus a sophisticated network of electrical wiring patched into their nervous system on the inside. The state-of-the-art interface allows their arms and fingers to move exceptionally fast; in some cases, their fingers move as fast as a hummingbird's wings. This makes them ideal for rewiring, bypassing,

jury-rigging or rebuilding sophisticated components at incredible speeds and efficiency. Mechanics are not armed well for combat but can skillfully protect themselves and dodge attacks, at least long enough until one of their lethal brethren arrive.

Class: Field Repair and Construction robot.

M.D.C. by Location:

- Large Robot Arms (2; heavily reinforced) – 55 each
- System Repair Arms (2) – 35 each
- *Child Arms (2) – 25 each
- *Child Hands (2) – 15 each
- Robot Legs (4) – 45 each
- *Front Feet (2) – 10 each
- Back Feet (2) – 18 each
- Protective Harness (heavily enforced) – 180
- Bubble-Top Glass Helmet – 15
- Sensor Head – 40
- **Child Head (heavily enforced) – 55
- ***Main Body – 275
- Force Field – 100

* A single asterisk indicates a target that is difficult to hit. An attacker must aim and make a "Called Shot" to hit it, and even then is -3 strike.

** Destroying the head will eliminate all optics and sensory systems, reduces the maximum speed, and all bonuses by half. However, because the Mechanic has two heads, the secondary head preserves the number of attacks until both heads are destroyed and it keeps fighting.

*** Depleting the M.D.C. of the main body kills the Mechanic.

Speed:

Running: Mechanics can skitter at an alarming speed of 100 mph (160 km) maximum, and half that speed along walls, but not along ceilings. Normal cruising speed is 40 mph (64 km).

Leaping: The legs of a Mechanic enable it to hop and propel itself 40 feet (12.2 m) high or across, increase by 50% with a short running start and double when running at full tilt.

Digging: 20 mph (32 km) through sand or dirt, but half that speed through clay, rock or stone. Digging does not tire the Mechanic.

Swimming: Cannot swim, but can gallop along the bottom of rivers and lakes and stay submerged indefinitely. Maximum depth underwater is 600 feet (182.88 m).

Flying: Not applicable.

Statistical Data:

Height: 3 feet (0.9 m) walking and crouching, but can rise up 5.5 feet (1.6 m) like a hissing cat when it needs to or when it is angry.

Width: 8 feet (2.4 m) from leg to leg, 8 feet (2.4 m) arm-span when the large robot arms are extended and spread out. With legs splayed out, it is 11 feet (3.35 m) wide.

Length: 4.5 feet (1.37 m) from tip of the robot sensor head to the rump.

Weight: 428 pounds (194 kg).

Cargo: None, but the Mechanic can drag 1,600 lbs (725.7 kg). Mechanics often haul scrap into high crevices for Legion's Collectors to retrieve. Caches of scrap metal and robot parts are typical finds when Mechanics are scurrying around and find parts that they can't currently use. Legion catalogs every scrap part that a Mechanic discovers and stores, and if she learns or thinks of a machine that requires one of these parts, she remembers exactly where it is and what units to deploy to retrieve it.

Power System: Nanobot & organic driven.

Construction Quality: Quick Stitch – Mechanics look like disposable fodder, but their internal construction is a bit more solid. They use the same cybernetic joints as most of Legion's cyborgs to hold the pieces together, but they also possess fully functional life support and repair systems. **Construction Time:** 1D4 hours. **Penalties:** -2 melee attacks, reduce speed by 25%, and reduce bonuses by half.

Trade Value: None. Can not be controlled by a Technojacker and are a shoot on sight adversary. Note: some parents feel or believe that their child is not completely lost and will offer personal valuables in exchange for the safe return of a Mechanic if it has their child's face on it.

Horror Factor: 10; however, with the human face begging, crying, pleading, laughing and screaming, it is 14. 16 for a swarm of six or more against humans. None against Robots.

Senses & Features: All standard Robot, plus the following Bio-Tech features:

Seismic Sense: Mechanics can feel & detect vibrations along the ground or other surface of contact through any of the spider legs like a living seismic sensor. This means that Mechanics cannot be snuck up on or caught by surprise by an opponent or multiple opponents approaching on the ground. Mechanics can detect how many opponents are approaching, how fast they are coming, whether they are lightweight or heavy-weight, and from which directions, including from the sides and behind.

Oil Spit: Mechanics are equipped with special pumps built in their lungs that allows them to spit lubricating industrial oil up to 10 feet (3 m) in a spray or 30 feet (9.1 m) away in a stream. The protective glass quickly opens and retracts for oil spewing. The oil is typically used for mechanical maintenance where they can spew it in controlled spouts into areas that need lubricating or pour it into reservoirs. Mechanics can also spew the oil into the faces of adversaries, causing temporary blinding

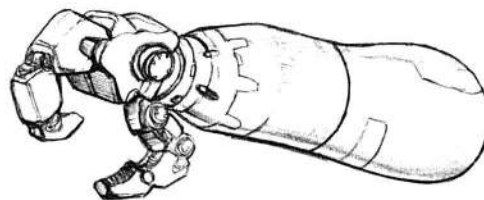
effects, and is particularly effective against machine and Technojacker optics, visors and lens. Mechanics can also spray the oil onto floors, walls or ceilings, making the surfaces very slippery and extremely difficult to cross. Even Host Armors or War Mounts equipped with *Suction Cups* and *Grip Hair* enhancements can not climb these surfaces. The oil is flammable and anyone sprayed with the oil can be ignited by laser fire, sparks from gunfire or any other intense heat source.

Number of Attacks per Melee (includes bonuses from being controlled by the Legion personality): 4.

Combat Bonuses (includes bonuses from being controlled by the Legion personality): +4 on initiative, +1 to strike in hand to hand combat, +4 to parry, +6 to automatic dodge (i.e.: can dodge without using up a melee action), +3 to roll with punch, fall or impact, +2 to disarm and entangle, impervious to Horror Factor and all humans are -3 to save vs Horror Factor (-6 if it is a child that the human knows).

Skills of Note: Standard, plus Climbing 65%, Demolitions 70%, Demolition Disposal 75%, Trap Construction 65%, and all fundamental skills involving electronics, mechanics, robotics, repairs, jury-rigging, machine maintenance, computer operation and repair, audio, optics and sensors, and similar skills, all at 92%; in short if a broken machine can be fixed, the Mechanic can fix it, rebuild it and modify/customize it according to Legion's plans and designs.

Weapon Systems:



1. Heavy Robot Arms (2): Two-fingered hands for grasping, heavy lifting, holding, supporting and making repairs.

Mega-Damage: Can inflict 6D6 S.D.C. damage on a restrained punch or 1D4 M.D. on a full strength punch.

Range: 6 feet (1.8 m).

2. Utility Arms (2): The two smaller robot arms are all-purpose tools that have interchangeable parts and multiple functions that include high-powered drills, fusion torches, precision laser, laser scalpels and a welding torch.

Primary Purpose: Repairs and Robot Unit Construction

Mega-Damage and Range:

Light Drill with numerous S.D.C. settings: 1D4, 1D6, 2D6, 4D6 and 1D4x10 S.D.C. damage. Heavy M.D. Drill with settings for 1D4, 1D6, 1D8, 2D6, or 2D8 M.D. Range for both is touch.

Fusion Torch: 4D6 S.D.C., 1D4x10 S.D.C., one M.D., 1D4 M.D., 1D6 M.D., and 2D6 M.D. Range: Touch.

Laser Scalpel: Any increment of 1D6 M.D. up to 4D6 M.D. Range: Touch.

Laser Cutter: 1D4, 1D6, 2D6 M.D. Range: 30 feet (9.1 m) and may be used in self-defense.

Rate of Fire: Each use/Blast counts as one melee attack/action.

Maximum Effective Range: Varies, see above.

Payload: Effectively unlimited.

3. Hand to Hand Combat: The Mechanic is not really designed for combat, but in a pinch may resort to it, usually to make good an escape using its multiple arms and/or leaping body block/ram.

Mega-Damage:

Restrained Punch: 1D6 S.D.C.

Full Strength Punch: 2D6 M.D.

Power Punch: 3D6 M.D.

Kick: 3D6 M.D.

Leap Kick: 5D6 M.D., but counts as two attacks.

Springing/Running Body Block/Ram: 3D8 M.D., and effective against opponents up to 10 feet (3 m) tall and has a 01-35% chance of knocking an opponent off his feet. Counts as two attacks.

New Modifications for NPCs augmented by Legion are as follows:

Zhong Kui, Call Sign “Ghost”

Now converted by Legion, if Ghost is captured or beaten badly enough, he will plead for his life to be spared and imply that he is only doing what he is doing because Legion has planted a bomb inside him. He won't say where it is planted, and will do everything he can to convince the player group that he was only biding his time to find out more about Legion and any of her weaknesses and plans against the Resistance. These are all stall tactics to try to convince anyone that seeks to kill him or turn him over to Great House authorities.

Race: Skinjob Borg.

New Attributes: I.Q. 17, M.E. 20, M.A. 13, P.S. 17 (Splicers Strength), P.P. 14, P.E. 20, P.B. 8, Spd 22.

Alignment: Miscreant.

Increased M.D.C.: 350 M.D.C. Regenerates 1D8+2 M.D.C. every 10 minutes or 6D6+5 M.D.C. per hour.

Increased Weight: 192 pounds (86 kg). **Height:** 5 feet, 8 inches (1.7 m) tall.

Appearance: Like all Skinjobs, Ghost appears horrifying. Covered in dull grey skin speckled with repulsive white blotches, he looks as if he's covered in diseased elephant hide. His face appears to be surgically fitted with a sleek metallic visor instead of eyes and a grill-like muzzle with six Small Collection Tentacles similar to Legion's Collector, writhing about.

Skills of Note: Research 85%, Demolitions, Demolitions Disposal, and Demolitions: Underwater at 82%, Bio-Comms, Detect Ambush, Machine Tech, Operate Bio-Equipment, Pick Locks, and Trap & Mine Detection at 75%, Machine Lore and Pick Pockets at 70%, Intelligence 68%, Chemistry 65%, Wilderness Survival 60%, Climbing, Land Navigation, Sign Language, and Tracking at 55%, Camouflage 65%, Recognize Weapon Quality 45%, Concealment 41%, Palming 40%, Sleight of Hand, Swimming 80%, Athletics and Fencing.

Weapon Proficiencies: Bio-Weapons: Light, Bio-Weapons: Heavy, Archery, Blunt, Knife, Staff, and Sword.

Attacks per Melee: 6

Combat Bonuses: +1 to dodge, +2 to initiative, +1 to strike, +2 to parry and dodge, +3 to roll with punch/fall/impact, +1 to disarm, and +3 to pull punch. +2 to save vs Horror Factor.

Other Combat Info: Backward Sweep Kick, Karate punch/Strike does 2D4 damage and Karate Kick does 2D6.

Senses & Features: Standard Skinjob M.D.C. Skin (impervious to Mega-Damage fire and cold, high pain resistance), Chameleon Skin, Stealth field, Silent Prowl (special), Feign Death, reduced sense of touch.

Tentacle Maw: Built into Ghost's face is a maw that has six Collection Tentacles specifically designed for use against unarmored humans and other S.D.C. creatures, but that does not mean they are useless against more powerful opponents. Each tentacle still possesses impressive strength, and when all six of these limbs combine their power, they can tear apart nearly any foe.

Primary Purpose: Defense.

Mega-Damage: The electric shock inflicts 2D6 S.D.C. plus the victim must make a roll to save vs stun of 15 or higher. On a failed roll, the target is completely paralyzed for one melee round, plus stunned for the next 2D4 melee rounds after that (-3 attacks per melee; -4 to strike, parry, and dodge; and speed is reduced by 40 percent). The electric shock from these tentacles is not strong enough to stun

M.D.C. creatures or robots. Once the target is stunned, the Ghost will call in a Collector to cocoon the fallen opponents and have them carried off to the Factory Walker or Prison Bot.

Rate of Fire: Activating the electric shock counts as one melee attack (it does not require any melee attacks to maintain the shock, but that tentacle cannot be used for anything else). Applying 20 feet (6.1 m) of webbing counts as one melee attack.

Range: The tentacles have a reach of 8 feet (2.4 m), and the nanotube webbing can be applied up to 5 feet (1.5 m) away.

Payload: Electrical blasts are effectively unlimited.

Weapons of Note: 1. Bio-Energy Pistol. 2. Wears a Demolition Leather Harness. Pouches contain 6 Chigs (3 on each side), 4 Migs (2 on each side) and 1D4 Squigs. Anything else that Zhong anticipates he will need is placed onto Cao's harness. 3. High-frequency daggers (2). 4. Zhong has placed an Electro-Pulse gun on the harness of Cao for metal threats (Machine, Technojacker, nano-plague reactions or otherwise).

Ghost's Personal Gorehound, “Cao”

Ghost choice of a personal War Mount is a massive Gorehound named “Cao” that resembles a robust Shar-Pei. Cao is covered in dense wrinkles and is equipped with a stealth field. Cao's skin is so loose that it allows him to turn around in the skin, even when seized/bitten by another adversary to deliver his own bite.

Alignment: Loyal only to Ghost and Legion.

Size: Standard Gorehound.

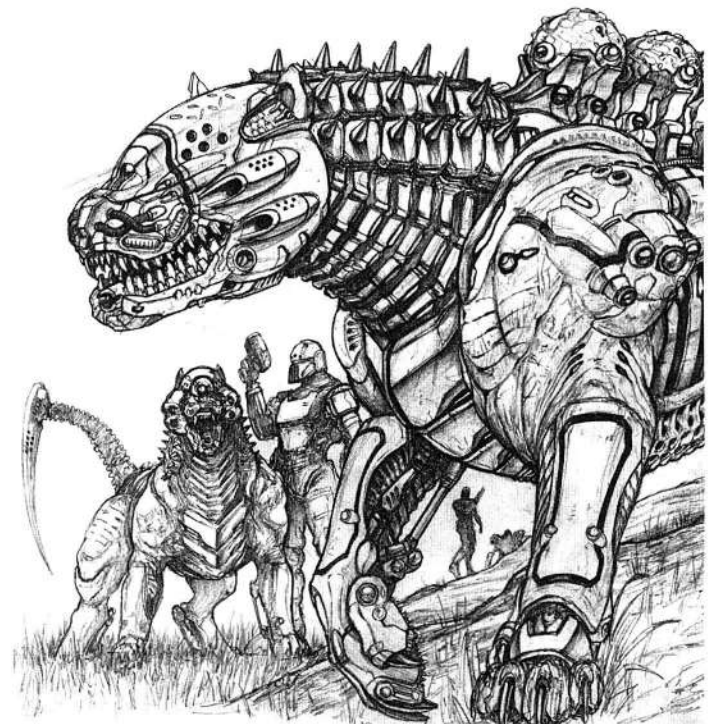
Length: 8 feet (2.4 m) from tip of the nose to the rump, plus a 2 foot (0.6 m) long, curled tail.

Skills of Note: Explosive Ordnance Sniffer and Reconnaissance Scout skills (see *The Rifter*® #59).

Features: Standard Gorehound plus the Shar-Pei Breed Enhancements – Stealth Field, Grip Hairs, Acid Blood and Motion Detection.

Known Weapons: 1. Right shoulder-mounted Heat Projector Cannon. 2. Trench Foot Mines (2 behind each front leg).

G.M.'s Choice: The War Dogs encountered in the *Southern Weapons Locker* can possibly consist of *Packmaster Natasha London's* Gorehounds among the rest of Legion's pack and would be equipped with their original Bio-Tech Weapons (see *The Rifter*® #71-72, pages 127-129) in addition to Legion's enhancements.



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