

Grunj

Description

Grunj are furry, humanoids standing between 3.5 and 4.5 feet tall. They have proportions similar to humans. Their fur comes in varying shades of black, white, gray, and brown. Most grunj have single-colored fur, but some have spotted or striped markings. Grunj have snouts instead of noses and short, pointed ears on the top of their heads. To humans, the grunj look like humanoid dogs.

Grunj in Bostonia

According to grunj history, they grunj existed long before humans emerged from the sea. Their once proud civilization was torn by the battles of powerful warlords who coveted the lands as their own. A few of these warlords discovered caches of ancient weaponry. Soon after they unleashed these terrible weapons on their foes, a sickness spread among the grunj, and a staggering percentage of them were killed.

The grunj civilization was devastated and the remnants of their race dissolved into chaos as opportunists scrambled to acquire as much wealth and power as possible in their newly depopulated land. A small community of grunj fled the lawless land and migrated to the coast, where they founded a society based on pacifism.

When human tribes emerged from the sea, they encountered the grunj and began aggressively settling their lands. The pacifist grunj welcomed their new neighbors. Those tribes that knew Stratus and Aestra shared their religion with the grunj. The grunj found the story of the ancients and Stratus to mirror their own shameful past and many of them flocked to worship the human gods.

Today, most grunj live as part of human society. Grunj follow the laws of Bostonia, pay taxes to its lords, and worship in its Church. Most Bostonian cities have ghettos called "Grunjtowns" in which most of the grunj live. Grunj are second-class citizens of Bostonia. While they are allowed to work, do business, and even own a small amount of property, they are not permitted to take part in government, or hold a title in a guild, or enter the Church.

In addition to their second-class status, most Bostonians hold a great prejudice against grunj. They are thought to be dirty, unintelligent, and lazy. Many Bostonians will not buy from grunj, or socialize with them. They are often found performing manual tasks, or as servants to wealthy Bostonians. A fortunate few make their living as journeyman craftsmen or assistants to guildsmen.

Because of the poor treatment of grunj in Bostonian society, grunj who are resourceful enough to own their own business usually cater to their own kind. Grunjtowns

often have an isolated, but thriving community of small, grunj-owned businesses.

Other grunj have forsaken the Bostonian cities and moved to remote locations in western Bostonia. It is not unheard of to find a village of grunj existing in the depths of a remote forest, or valley.

Family

Grunj females often have litters of 5-8 babies. However, because of the small size of the children at birth, most of them die before 2 weeks. Usually, one child will survive, sometimes two. Because of this, grunj babies are considered rawfawul (ROF – waul) for the first month after their birth. Rawfawul means "between lives". Grunj feed and care for children who are rawfawul, but will not name them, and do not mourn their loss. Once a child survives his first month, they are considered waulac (WAL – auk), meaning "all here". The waulac child is named and becomes an official part of the family.

Possibly because of the high death rate in grunj litters, grunj are very gentle and loving with their children. Waulac children are showered with gifts and attention for the first few years of their lives, and until they are about 10, their lives are filled with play. Once a grunj reaches 10 years of age, they are expected to help the family by working. Very few grunj children attend school, but some have tutors, or are taught to read by the Church.

A typical grunj family might consist of a mother and a father living in a one or two room dwelling with 4-6 children. Families are close, but extended families living in the same community are rare. Once children reach the age of 15 or so, they are expected to hashcoi (HASH – co), meaning wander. The grunj leaves his parents' community and travels to find a new home.

Grunjtowns

Most large Bostonian towns have a grunj neighborhood in which the majority of grunj live and work. These grunjtowns are often the poorest and most run-down neighborhoods in the city. The buildings are dilapidated, and the streets are muddy and pitted. Nevertheless, grunjtowns will often have their own shops, inns, churches, and even craftsmen that cater to grunj.

The scope of these businesses depends on the size of the grunjtown, and the disposition of the town's regular guilds. Some town guilds are sympathetic to the grunj and allow the stores to run as though they were normal human-run guild shops. Others collect high "dues" from their grunj counterparts, or try to force grunj-owned businesses to fold.

Grunjtowns have their own unofficial governments. Grunj elders and leaders will gather and make decisions about their community. So sometimes this committee, called a cach (pronounced like catch), will collect money from the local businesses to fund a public works project. The cach has little power outside of grunjtown. If a matter is pressing enough, the cach will consult the local priest who will speak on behalf of the community.

Bostonians tend to avoid grunjtowns because of their disdain for the grunj. Conversely, grunj congregate there because they feel comfortable there, and they have a better chance of being accepted, finding work, etc.

Philosophy

Because of their history of war, nearly all grunj are pacifists. They believe it is wrong to kill any sentient being and will only kill for food. Most will even forego violence in self-defense, preferring to flee or die before taking a life. Grunj that forsake the pacifist norms are exiled from their homes.

Religion

When the grunj first encountered humans, they were fascinated by the stories of the ancients' fall. The grunj identified with the tale of ancient mages dabbling in forbidden magic and being destroyed for it. Many grunj thought that their race had also been punished for its hubris and desire for power. Because the teachings of the Father deeply touched them, thousands of grunj converted to the worship of Stratus and Aestra.

Today, most grunj are devout followers of the Bostonian Church. Grunj are not permitted to hold any position within the Church; even the lowly position of Lay Minister is beyond them. Regardless, grunj support the Church by donating their money and services. Many churches have several grunj volunteers that clean and maintain the building. Churches in grunjtowns, or grunj villages often retain "assistants" to advise the priests on grunj issues.

Rules

Stat Modifiers

- STR -3
- AGI +1
- TOU -3
- WIL +2
- SPI +2
- PER +1

Racial Traits

- **Attuned to the Spirit World:** Grunj have the unique ability to perceive the spirit world. All grunj are attuned to spirits and will often feel "chills" if a nearby spirit has noticed them. Grunj shamans are trained to hone their spirit sight and can see and interact with spirits that are intangible and invisible to others. In game terms, this spirit sense gives grunj the ability to sense spirits that are close to the grunj and have noticed him. The grunj has the ability to notice such spirits 75% of the time. In addition, the grunj can get a feel of the nature of the spirit ("It is a fire spirit" or "It is a wolf spirit") and the general disposition of the spirit as well.
- **Bilingual:** Most grunj spend their lives dealing with Bostonians as well as their own race. Grunj who grow up in or near Bostonian communities speak Bostonian at level 3 as well as their native tongue. At the GM's discretion, a grunj character that comes from a rural grunj village might NOT have this advantage.

Templates

Hunter

Climb
Combat: Bow +1
Combat: Knife
Craft: Furrier
Craft: Trapper
Kn: Game Animals
Kn: Regional Geography +1
Navigate
Survival (Choose 2 Regions & Set Snares)
Swim
Track
+27 Buy Points

Description

Hunters are grunj trained in archery, trapping, and survival. They spend much of their time in the woods and hills, hunting and setting traps. In rural villages, grunj hunters are respected members of society. The meat and fur they bring to the community are invaluable sources of nourishment, clothing, and trade goods. In human communities, grunj hunters are often hired as guides for their survival skills, and regional knowledge.

Suggested Attributes: DEX/PER/INT

Suggested Limitations:

Adviser

Conversation +1
Kn: Church Hierarchy
Kn: Church Law
Kn: Local Grunj Community +2
Kn: Local Politics +1
Etiquette
Literate
Orate +1
Persuasion +1
Theology
+31 Buy Points

Description

Most churches of Stratus that operate in grunj communities retain an intelligent and literate grunj to advise the Ilpaders on grunj affairs. These grunj are called advisers. The Church provides advisers with religious instruction, but they are not ordained, or permitted to hold any office within the parish.

Advisers are intermediaries between the human priests and the grunj in the parish. They teach the priests about their people, provide advice on grunj customs, and act as translators for grunj who do not speak Bostonian. Because they have the ears of the priests, advisers are held in high esteem among their peers.

Suggested Attributes: INT/CHA/PER

Suggested Limitations:

Howling Horde

Acrobat
Breakfall
Climb
Combat: Pole
Combat: Thrown
Juggling +2
Medical
Missile Deflection
Ritual Spell: Howl
+25 Buy Points

Description

The Howling Horde is a mercenary company of grunj who have forsaken the pacifist ways of their brethren. The Horde is 50 strong and its members fight as skirmishers, using short spears and javelins. Horde warriors use a fighting style that consists of tumbles and acrobatic dodges to confound their opponents. This unique style includes a maneuver where the horde member whirls his spear about his head and shoulders, forming a barrier against sling stones, spears, and arrows.

The Horde is named after the dreadful howl they let out just before engaging in battle. The entire company will growl, snarl, spit, and howl as though they were feral beasts. The chorus of howls makes the Horde's opponents afraid and many have fled upon hearing it.

Suggested Attributes: INT/CHA/PER

Suggested Limitations:

Cachi

Administrative +1
City Contacts: 4 pts.
Craft: Choose +1
Kn: City Officials
Kn: Grunj Community +1
Kn: Local Politics +2
Literate
Orate
Persuade +1
Trade +2
+25 Buy Points

Description

A cachi (CATCH – ee) is a member of a grunj committee that oversees a grunjtown. They and their fellow committee members deal with the Bostonian authorities to protect the grunj under their care, and provide them with better living conditions. Their work is complicated by the miserable conditions of most grunjtowns and the prejudice grunj face in the human world. To combat the attitudes they face, cachi learn the workings of their city inside and out. They learn to speak persuasively, and to make friends whenever possible.

Suggested Attributes: INT/CHA/PER

Suggested Limitations:

Shaman

Ancient Knowledge
1 Bound Spirit
Herbalism
Kn: Spirits +1
Meditate
Ritual Spells: 6 Points
Ritual: Spirit Bind
Spirit Combat: Choose +1
Spirit Combat: Choose
Spirit Sight Power
+20 Buy Points

Description

Grunj shamans are powerful mages who bind spirits to do their bidding. This template represents a shaman with some minor experience including a spirit bound in a previous encounter. Shamans are experts at finding spirits and confronting them with cunning, or sheer willpower.

Suggested Attributes: INT/WIL/SPI

Suggested Limitations:

Shaman's Apprentice

Ancient Knowledge
Herbalism
Kn: Spirits
Ritual: Spirit Bind
Spirit Combat: Choose
Spirit Sight Power
+50 Saved Checks
+20 Buy Points

Description

This weak template represents a young grunj who has recently started along the path to becoming a shaman.

Suggested Attributes: INT / WIL / SPI

Suggested Limitations:

The Spirit World

Bostonians believe that when Stratus destroyed the ancient world, millions of creatures were killed. The spirits of these dead did not pass on to the afterlife, but instead were condemned to roam the mortal world and be ever tormented by its sights, sounds, and smells. Spirits are everywhere, lurking just beyond consciousness, watching with jealousy as mortals go about their lives.

The Nature of Spirits

Spirits are manifestations of dead souls. They are the souls of ancients that succumbed to the Deceiver and his Church of Immortality, or the souls of pagans and those forsaken by the Mother and Father. Other spirits are those of animals, or powerful elementals that existed at the time of the fireseeds.

Spirits can roam the spirit world and see mortal creatures. They have no physical form, and can only affect the real world with tremendous effort. In addition, spirits are invisible and cannot be detected in normal circumstances. However, there are times when spirits are visible to mortals.

- Bostonians believe that feverish, or delirious children can see into the spirit plane.
- Spirits can appear as shadows, movement, momentary reflections, or a glimpse out of the corner of someone's eye. Bostonians' eyes never deceive them – they are seeing spirits.
- Some spells and artifacts can cause spirits to appear, and some can even trap them.
- Spirits cast reflections in spirit iron, and so can be seen as reflections in many magical items, and enchanted weapons.
- Through great effort, or by having tremendous power, spirits can sometimes affect the mortal world.

- Grunj can feel spirits, and grunj shamans can see and interact with the spirit world.
- Spirits can appear to mortals in dreams.

Like mundane creatures, spirits are defined by their attributes, skills, and powers.

Spirit Attributes

All spirits have the attributes INT, WIL, SPI, CHA, and PER. In addition, they have the figured stat hit points:

$$\text{Hit Points} = (2 \times \text{WIL} + \text{SPI} + 8)$$

Spirits also have an additional figured stat called power. Power is a measure of the magical energy of the spirit, and its ability to affect the world. Spirits with low power can do little but roam and spy on the mortal realm. Spirits with high power scores can affect the real world by moving objects, summoning creatures, possessing living beings, and possibly even manifesting a physical form.

$$\text{Power} = (2 \times \text{SPI} + \text{WIL} + \text{INT})$$

Spirit Skills

Spirits can have any skills in the game. Spirits of intelligent creatures retain the skills they had at the time of their death. Because spirits do not perceive time as mortals do, a spirit's skills do not degrade, even through thousands of years of disuse.

All spirits have the skills spirit walking, and one or more spirit combat skills.

Spirit Powers

In addition to attributes and skills, most spirits have powers that allow them to produce magical effects. These effects are unique to each spirit and can be anything the GM can imagine. Common powers are magical attacks, powers that allow the spirit to confuse, or charm mortals, illusions, and summons.

New Skills

These skills are typically limited to spirits, and grunj shaman. At the GM's discretion, other types of characters can learn these skills, but there would have to be a very good reason.

All of the following skills cost 3/5/9/15 points to buy, and take 5 improvement points to increase. All of the following skills default to "half", except for dream combat, which defaults to "none".

Combat: Dream

Dream combat is based on the attributes INT / WIL / SPI.

This skill is the ability to create changes in a dream environment. Some spirits have the ability to trap a character in a nightmare, and then manipulate the nightmare to frighten the character, drive him insane, or even kill him.

A successful combat: dream test allows the character to alter the dream to suit his needs. The difficulty of the test depends on the magnitude of the changes desired. Generally, the GM can assign a difficulty by determining a circle of spell that would generate a similar effect.

Example 1st Circle Effects (DL 6-10)

- Minor attacks and defenses that affect one individual (2d4-2d6)
- Changing the temperature by 10 degrees
- Creating/destroying a small item that fits perfectly with the paradigm of the dream
- Enhancing a stat or skill by a couple of points (1-2, +1 bonus)
- Making cosmetic changes in the environment (changing an object's color, changing the type of flowers in a forest)
- Summoning or controlling a trivial creature (an insect, a small rodent)

Example 2nd Circle Effects (DL 12-14)

- Moderate attacks and defenses that affect one individual (2d8-2d10)
- Minor attacks that affect more than one individual
- Enhancing a stat or skill by a few points (3-4, +2 bonus)
- Creating minor, but meaningful changes in the environment (day to night, stopping it from raining)
- Summoning a minor creature (dog, wolf)

Example 3rd Circle Effects (DL 16-18)

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Example 4th Circle Effects (DL 20+)

- Altering the paradigm of the dream

Combat: Riddle

Riddle combat is based on the attributes INT/INT/SPI.

This skill is the ability of the caster to create riddles, paradoxes, and metaphysical quandaries. It also measures the skill of the caster at finding answers to such questions.

Combat: Willpower

Willpower combat is based on the attributes WIL/WIL/SPI.

This skill is the ability of the caster to withstand attacks on his will, and direct attacks on the will of a spirit opponent.

Spirit Walking

Spirit walking is based on SPI/WIL/PER.

The spirit world corresponds to our own world. However, movement in the spirit world is based on thought and memory. If a spirit can find a place in his memory or thoughts, he can appear there instantly. Finding a place takes time, and requires that the spirit remembers it, or has knowledge of it.

Spirit walking is the ability of a spirit to find a location and travel to it. The difficulty of the roll is based on the familiarity the spirit has with the location in question. A failed roll means that the spirit has to try again after the proper amount of time takes place.

Situation	DL	Time
No knowledge of place	26+	1-6 months
Traveler has been told of a place	20-24	1-6 days
Traveler has been told of a place in detail, has seen pictures	16-18	1-6 hours
Traveler has been to a place once or twice	12-14	1-6 minutes
Traveler has frequented a place	8-10	10-60 seconds
Traveler has intimate knowledge of a place	4-6	1 second

Spirit Combat

When a shaman encounters a hostile spirit, then combat is possible. There are four types of spirit combat possible. All spirits will not be able to engage in all types of combat. The nature of the spirit determines what combat he can initiate.

In all types of spirit combat, the goal is to reduce your opponent's power low enough so that they might be bound or possessed. To bind a spirit, the shaman must use the Bind Spirit ritual spell while engaged in spirit combat. On the other hand, if the spirit reduces the shaman's power to 0, he may possess, kill, or curse the shaman.

Dream Combat

In dream combat, the spirit and the shaman duel in a dream world. Typically, the spirit initiates dream combat when the shaman is asleep. The landscape and initial conditions of the dream are random, or determined by the spirit. Only spirits that are intelligent can use dream combat.

Once the combat is entered, combatants can act just as they would in the real world (with whatever weird conditions the GM wants to impose on the dream world). Combatants with the skill combat: dream can alter the conditions of the dream by succeeding at a skill test.

In addition to drawing the shaman into the dream combat, a spirit will also draw nearby sleeping mortals into the conflict. These mortals can act in the dream world, but cannot perform any dream alterations if they have combat: dream.

Both the shaman, and the spirit use their power as their hit points in a dream combat. Creatures in a dream take damage from anything that would hurt them in real life. Any damage they take in the dream is deducted from this total, and not their real hits. Neither the spirit, nor the shaman, can be wounded, or knocked unconscious in a dream. If either combatant reaches 0 power, they are under the power of their opponent. Spirits can be bound, and shamans can be possessed.

Characters (aside from spirits and shamans) that are drawn into the combat take hit point damage, wounds, and unconsciousness as though they were in a normal fight. A character that is knocked unconscious or killed in the dream combat has to roll on the Dream Death table and suffers the results. If he lives, he startles awake.

[TODO: Make Dream Death Table]

In addition, when a mortal companion of the shaman is wounded, killed, or knocked unconscious in the dream environment, the shaman takes damage to his power. Likewise, when the spirits minions are destroyed, the spirit takes damage.

Companion or Minion Is	Damage
Wounded (takes a wound effect)	1d4
Unconscious	1d8
Killed	1d16

Dream combatants with the combat: dream skill can alter the dream environment. Regardless of whether a specific alteration succeeds or fails, each alteration can only be attempted once in a given dream combat. Thus, if you increase your strength at the beginning of the combat, you cannot do so again. You must keep thinking of new alterations. The GM is the final arbiter whether an alteration is original enough to be allowed.

Dream combatants can escape the dream environment, though doing so is often difficult. Every dream has one or more escape conditions determined at the start of the combat. These conditions can be almost anything, but should be reasonably attainable. Escape conditions focus on objects, portals, times, or specific individuals in the dream environment. The shaman might have to get through a door to escape, or he might have to survive until the break of dawn.

Dream combat allows the GM to place his PCs in strange and fanciful situations that do not otherwise fit the campaign. It is suggested that the spirit always draws other PCs into the dream combat so that all of the players at the table have something important to do during these long sequences.

If the GM does not want to spend the time to play a full dream combat scene, then the combat can be diced using the quick combat rules (detailed below).

Physical Combat

Most spirits do not have a physical form. However, many of them have powers that they can manifest on the mortal world. Spirits might try to distract and defeat the shaman by summoning minions, or hurling stones at him.

Physical combat would often occur before spirit combat as the spirit tries to deter the shaman from entering its realm. Alternately, the spirit might use physical powers to distract, or kill the shaman as they engage in another form of spirit combat. Only particularly evil and devious spirits will sink to this type of behavior.

Of course, the characters might be able to use physical combat against a spirit. There are certain spells that trap a spirit in the mortal world and allow them to be attacked. Certain items can hit spirits as well. Any physical damage done is subtracted from the spirit's hit points and not its power.

Riddle Combat

Bostonians believe that riddles and paradoxes are tied to the world of spirits. Thus, one of the ways that a shaman can confront a spirit is through a game of riddles. Each combatant takes a turn posing a paradox to the other. If the receiver of the riddle can answer it, his opponent's power is reduced. If he cannot answer, his power is reduced.

If both the GM and the player involved like riddles, then it may be possible to play part of this combat out as an actual battle of riddles. However, if that is not the case, then the GM will likely want to handle the riddle combat as a quick combat (detailed below).

Willpower Combat

In willpower combat, the shaman and spirit sit motionless, staring at one another. Each concentrates, hurling gruesome images, and waves of hatred at the other's mind. The first to flinch, or look away loses.

Bestial spirits can engage in this type of combat and physical combat only. Willpower combat is always resolved using the quick combat system (detailed below).

Quick Combat

Because of the nature of spirit combat, it will often be desirable to come to a quick resolution without playing through a whole scene. Though dream combat might be interesting, you would certainly not want to run three of them in a night while the shaman tries to bind spirits for his magic.

Quick combats are run in a series of rounds. Every round, both combatants roll 1d12 and add the relevant combat skill. The higher total wins the round and damages the other combatant's power score. The amount of damage is based on the difference in totals, and the power of the winning combatant.

Die Total Diff	Damage Die
1-2	1d4
3-6	1d6
7-9	1d8
10-13	1d10
14-17	1d12
18-21	1d16
22+	1d20

Max Power Score	Damage Die
0-3	0
4-9	1
10-21	1d2
22-31	1d3
32-41	1d4
42-51	1d6
52-61	1d8
62-71	1d10
72-81	1d12
82+	1d16

Spirit-Based Rituals

Spirit Sight

Casting Time: Very Short
 Range: Self
 Area of Effect: Self
 Initiative: ---
 Delivery: ---
 Difficulty: 8
 Duration: 1 Hour
 Save: ---
 Maintain: 6
 Skill: SPI/SPI/PER
 Cost: 3 Buy Points
 Components: None

This spell allows the caster to see spirits and interact speak with them.

Spirit Walk

Casting Time: Long
 Range: Self
 Area of Effect: Self
 Initiative: ---
 Delivery: ---
 Difficulty: 14
 Duration: 1 Hour
 Save: ---
 Maintain: 12
 Skill: SPI/SPI/WIL
 Cost: 4 Buy Points
 Components: None

This spell allows the caster's spirit to leave his body and travel the spirit plane. The caster can then spirit walk and observe the mortal plane. While spirit walking the caster is intangible and can be detected only by spells that detect spirits. The caster can see spirits, and travels at the speed of thought as per the rules on spirit walking.

While spirit walking, the caster's body is vulnerable to physical attack, or spiritual possession. Each time the caster walks the spirit world, there is a 10% chance that his vacant body captures the attention of a spirit who will possess it. The caster's spirit is affected by all spells that affect spirits.

Spirit Bind

Casting Time: Combat
 Range: Sight
 Area of Effect: 1 Spirit
 Initiative: 0
 Delivery: Direct
 Difficulty: 5 + Spirit Power
 Duration: ???
 Save: None
 Maintain: None
 Skill: SPI/INT/WIL
 Cost: 3 Buy Points
 Components: None

This spell binds the spirit to the caster indefinitely. The spirit is forced to follow the caster's commands (though a malicious spirit might attempt to twist the meaning of the command) and use his abilities at the request of the caster. The spirit will not use his abilities unless the caster demands it, and cannot act against the caster.

A spirit is freed from his bondage when its power is drained to 0 from using it power (at the request of the caster). Alternately, the spirit can attempt to escape when the caster is knocked unconscious.

This spell automatically works on a spirit who is willing to be bound.

Spirit-Based Magic & Shamans

Shamans cast spells by binding and commanding spirits to use their powers. When a spirit is bound to the shaman, it is compelled to follow the shaman's orders. The shaman can order the spirit to provide information about places and things he knows. He can order the spirit to spy on a place or person – but remember spirits can only get to places and people they know easily. Finally, he can order the spirit to use his powers.

Spirit magic is perilous. First, the caster has to bind a potentially hostile spirit through one of the three methods of spirit combat. If the shaman loses the combat, he may be killed, driven insane, or possessed by the spirit. Second, intelligent and malicious spirits might try to twist their master's commands in an attempt to harm him. Finally, if the shaman is rendered unconscious, then his spirits might escape and attempt revenge.

Encountering Spirits

Spirits can be found all over the world of Bostonia, but many are clever and elusive. Old battle sites and ancient places are good places to find spirits. So are rune sites, and places deep in the wilderness where few, if any, have traveled. The nature of spirit walking means that most spirits remain close to familiar places.

Typically, a shaman interested in encountering spirits will use his spirit sight and seek out a likely place. A contest of PER typically determines who detects whom first, though spirits, because they are in familiar territory, can spirit walk, and are drawn to live creatures, get a +4 to the test.

If the spirit detects the shaman first, its reaction depends on its intelligence and demeanor. Bestial spirits will usually flee or attack as soon as they notice an intruder. The nature of the attack depends on the spirits abilities. Bestial spirits will engage shamans in willpower combat, or they will try to use their powers to kill the shaman and his companions.

Spirits that are more intelligent might observe the shaman for a time, gauging him, and using powers to confound him. The spirit might decide to leave, or talk with the shaman. It is possible for the shaman to convince the spirit to join him willingly, if the spirit is of a like mind, or has something to gain. When an intelligent spirit enters combat, he will pick the best type of combat.

Entering Spirit Combat

Willpower combat begins as soon as either combatant launches an attack. There is no fleeing a willpower combat. Dream combat can only be initiated by a spirit, and the shaman must be sleeping when the spirit comes upon him. If dream combat occurs, other mortals in the area can be drawn into it – usually people in the area that have some tie to the shaman (either ally, or enemy).

Riddle combat is exceptional in that both parties must act to engage in it. Riddle combat begins when one party asks a question, and the other attempts to answer it. This question can be simple to answer, but cannot be information immediately related to the encounter. So, “What is your name,” does not begin combat, but “What is the flight speed of an unladen swallow,” might. Often, the combatants will agree to the contest, but a character or spirit could be tricked into answering a question, and thus starting the combat.

Spirit combat occurs in combat rounds that last as long as normal combat rounds. The exception is riddle combat, where each round can last from as little as a few seconds, to as much as an hour.

Binding Spirits

Once a shaman has reduced a spirit’s power to a reasonable level, he may attempt to bind the spirit using the ritual spell. A failed binding means that the spirit can continue fighting. The shaman cannot use a spirit combat skill in the same round as he attempts to bind, exactly like he was casting a combat spell in a regular fight.

Once a spirit is bound, they regain 75% of the power they lost in the spirit combat. The spirit’s remaining power can then be used by the spirit at the shaman’s command.

When a spirit runs out of power, or has so little power that they could not use any of their abilities, the spirit fades and leaves the shaman’s service. Spirits so drained are unable to affect the mortal world for a period of months, or even years at the GM’s discretion. Bound spirits cannot regenerate power points.

Escaping Spirits

Spirits can escape their bondage in several ways. First, if the shaman is rendered unconscious, then every spirit under his command has a 40% chance of being freed. Second, if the shaman is reduced to less than 5 power in a spirit combat, then his spirits have a 20% chance of escaping. Third, a shaman that is reduced to 0 power will lose all of his bound spirits. Finally, there are spells, artifacts, and powers that will allow spirits to escape.

Commanding Spirits in Combat

Commanding a spirit takes a few moments of concentration. In combat, this means that issuing a command takes a half-action. A shaman can only command one spirit each combat round.

Spirits that join the shaman of their own volition will follow commands, and if so commanded, will act independently of the caster. However, spirits that are bound by combat often resent the caster and will only act if the caster commands them directly.

Example Spirits

(Descriptions for each to come later)

Grungan (Wolf Spirit)

Intelligence	3	Skills	
Willpower	10	Combat: Willpower	11
Sprit	20	Tracking	25
Charisma	9	Spirit Walk	14
Perception	22		
Hit Points	42		
Power	41		

Powers

Tracking: If Grungan has the scent of a mortal, he may track him. Grungan partially materializes to do so, and thus cannot spirit walk, or use other powers while he is tracking. While tracking, Grungan can move at a rate of 60 miles a day, but if he is bound, he is limited to the movement rate of his master. Tracking costs 1 power each day.

Summon: Grungan can howl up to once a night and summon a small pack of wolves to serve him. 3d6 wolves appear in 2d6 combat rounds. Summon costs 10 power.

Pacify: Grungan can whisper to wolves and pacify them. Normal wolves that are not under the control of a hostile intelligence will always leave. Using the power on wolves that are magical, summoned, or otherwise controlled allows the individual controlling the wolves a WIL save vs. DL 14 to resist. Pacify costs 4 power.

Barktongue: Grungan can allow his master to speak with wolves for a cost of 1 power each hour of conversation.

Thangris (Master of Games)

Intelligence	21	Skills	
Willpower	6	Combat: Riddle	18
Sprit	15	Combat: Willpower	9
Charisma	18	Converse	14
Perception	12	Persuade	15
Hit Points	35	Kn: Games	16
Power	57	Kn: Obscure Riddles	20
		Kn: Puzzles	20
		Spirit Walk	9

Powers

Puzzle Solver: Thangris loves to solve puzzles. If a puzzle is presented to him, he will try to solve it using his high INT, and knowledge skills. Each puzzle costs Thangris 1 power point. If the puzzle requires physical manipulation, the cost is 3 power.

Lockpick: Locks offend Thangris, and he can open most normal locks automatically. Doing so costs him 3 power.

Maze: Thangris can manipulate reality around him to construct a maze out of nearby material. In the wilderness, the maze will consist of thick hedges and trees. In a ruin, the maze will be constructed of brick and stone. The maze will cover whatever space is available, up to a couple square miles. Escaping the maze requires from 1d6 hours and an INT test vs. DL 18 to escape the maze. A failed INT roll means that a trapped character may try again, but must take another 1d6 hours.

The maze is only partially real and can be dispelled by spells that affect illusions. In addition, creatures of low intelligence (<5), animals, insects, and undead are not affected by this power. Thangris and his master can navigate the maze without fail.

Maze costs 10 power points and lasts until the last person escapes the maze, to a maximum of 7 days.

Teacher: Thangris has a number of ritual spells and riddles he can teach a character. He will do so, if commanded, but must be freed as the price.

Challa (Fire Spirit)

Intelligence	8	Skills	
Willpower	8	Combat: Willpower	7
Sprit	11	Combat: Magic	13
Charisma	7		
Perception	7		
Hit Points	35		
Power	38		

Powers

Firestarter: Challa can start flammable material on fire with a brief thought for the cost of 1 power.

Firebolt: Challa can cast a firebolt at the enemies of its master. The bolt seems to come from the caster, and does 2d8 points of damage if it hits. Each bolt costs 2 power.

Protect From Fire: Challa provides its master with a +1 to all saving throws pertaining to fire, and a -1 damage/die of fire damage taken. If commanded, Challa can increase this protection, giving its master a +4 to saving throws, making its master immune to normal fire, and causing magical fires to do only half damage. The normal level of protection costs nothing, but the more powerful protection costs 3 power for every 10 minutes.

Hydris (Water Spirit)

Intelligence	12	Skills	
Willpower	5	Combat: Willpower	7
Sprit	12	Combat: Riddle	10
Charisma	10		
Perception	5		
Hit Points	30		
Power	41		

Powers

Water Breathing: Hydris can give its master the ability to breathe water for 1 day for a cost of 2 power.

Undertow: Hydris can grab and hold anyone who is in water deep enough to cover them from head to toe. The victim must make a STR save vs. DL 17 each round or take 2d6 drowning damage. If the victim saves, then he keeps his head above water for the round, and can pull himself out of the water if there is land or another safe platform upon which to do so. This power costs 3 power/round.