

Torg Worldbook

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INFINIVERSE™

VOLUME 1 CAMPAIGN GAME NUMBER 1

TORG™

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The Infiniverse is new, the result of a struggle older than the cosm of Core Earth, older than any cosm. Legends say that when Apeiros fled The Place to escape the frenzied destruction of the Nameless One, it created the first cosm. Then Apeiros created another, then a score of dozens more. Soon the entire cosmverse was filled with the cosms of its creation. Yet for all of these cosms there was only one cosmverse, the sum of all the cosms which had been created.

The Nameless One sent Darkness Devices, filled with shadows of its own destructive power, through the multidimensional seams bounding The Place. The Darkness Devices created the High Lords. When the High Lords invaded Earth's cosm, the Possibility Wars began.

As recounted in *The Nightmare Dream* (third novel of the *Possibility Wars* trilogy), Storm Knights confronted High Lords, and a would-be High Lord, in Dreamtime. While the Storm Knights had the advantage in Dreamtime (a place conducive to creation sprung from possibilities), the power of the High Lords and the circumstances of the confrontation marred their plan. The most disastrous consequence was a patterning of possibilities, dread possibilities, which acted as a beacon for the Nameless One. Attenuated, weakened by the convoluted dimensional path necessary to reach Dreamtime, the power of the Nameless One still threatened to overwhelm Dreamtime and the cosms connected to it.

The miracle which halted the growth of that power is documented in *The Nightmare Dream*. A contradiction was soon created, as the cosms began to reject the possibility of the Nameless One. The Everlaw of One immediately began to diminish the entity's power. In response the Nameless One destroyed the Everlaw, allowing contradictions to exist. Freed from the constraint of the Everlaw of One, Apeiros and creation responded by replicating the cosmverse, creating an infinite number of copies, many differing only in small details from other cosmverses, some identical, some varying greatly from others. The Nameless One's power was stretched across all the cosmverses. In most the Everlaw of One was restored, and quickly eliminated the residue of the Nameless One's power from that cosmverse. In some the Everlaw of One was not restored, or not restored fully; the cosmverses were destroyed (or are being destroyed) by the Nameless One.



Rick Harris

But again the Void and the Nameless One had failed to completely destroy Apeiros and Eternity. In fact creation was now far larger than it had ever been, for where there had been one Cosmverse, there are now as many as there are numbers. There is now the Infiniverse.

How Your Campaign Fits Into the Infiniverse

Each gamemaster is assumed to be running her campaign in a cosmverse which is exclusive to her campaign. Her Nile Empire is in a different cosmverse than the Nile Empire being run by her friend, also different from the Nile Empire being run by another gamemaster a thousand miles away. However, all three are still part of the Infiniverse. In each campaign the Possibility Wars are being fought, and the events, victories and defeats in each can cause perturbations which are felt in other cosmverses.

If you wish to have your cosmverse be part of the grand story of the Possibility Wars throughout the Infiniverse, this campaign game newsletter is your link to those other cosmverses which are also fighting the High Lords.

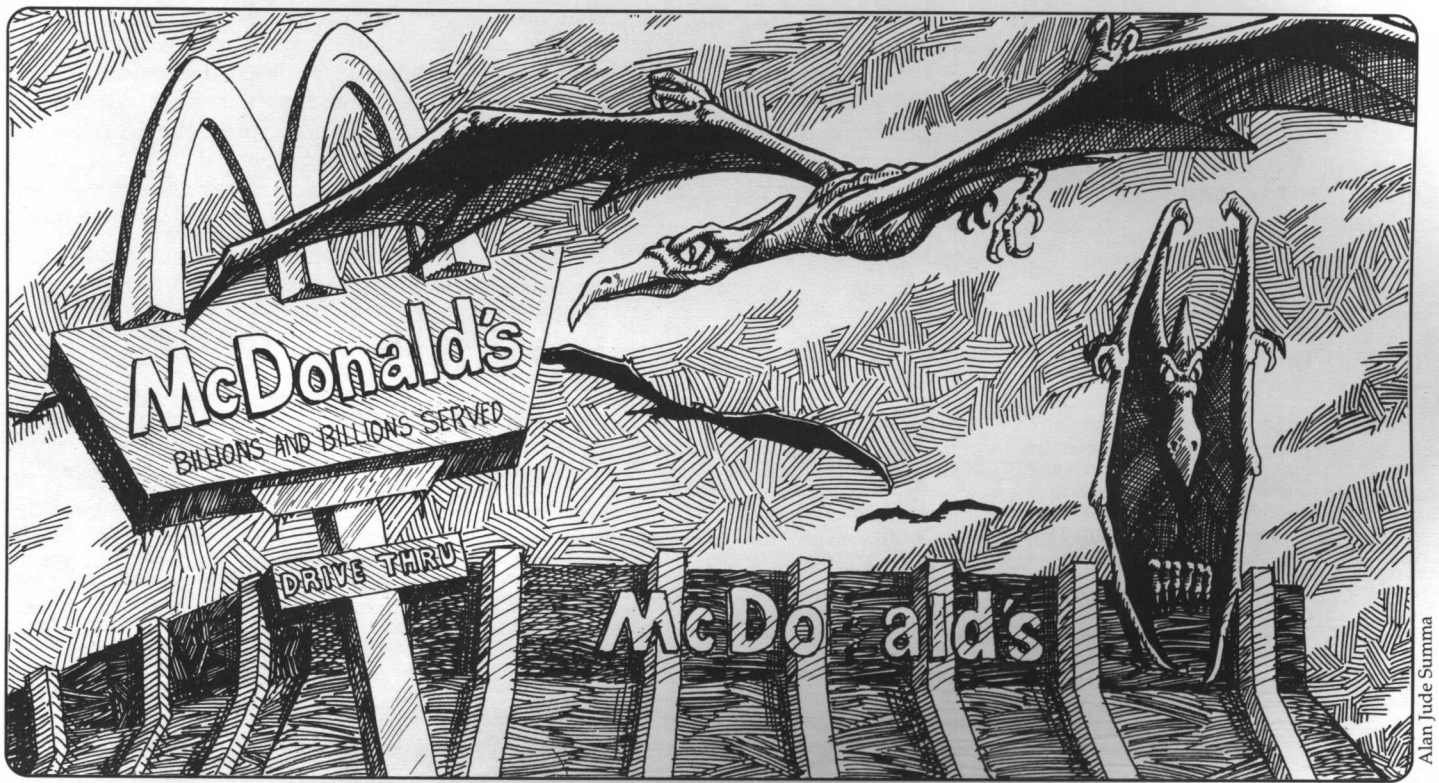
How Do I Connect to the Newsletter?

West End Games is developing a number of storylines for each cosm, storylines which unfold in the campaign game. You can incorporate the storylines you like into your campaign. In each issue is a response form, described on page 13, which numerically describes how your group did on an adventure. Everyone's responses are run through a computer program which gives us a measure of all the responses for all of the linked campaigns in the Infiniverse. This result then affects the next stage in the storylines. Eventually, as the responses build and direct the West End campaign, the results will affect future adventures and sourcebooks. The players of the Infiniverse campaign are not only the advance guard of the Possibility Wars, seeing story developments before the rest of the *Torg* public does, they will have a direct effect on determining its outcome.

What's In It ?

Each campaign game newsletter will have 12 printed pages (not including the response form, ads or other things which come with each issue; you get 12 pages of good stuff), plus one special page called the *response page*. The 12 pages contain information on Infiniverse, story elements and goodies designed by West End which have been shaped by the play of your campaign, and the campaigns of others, through the response form. The newsletter is the chronicle of the Possibility Wars as it is being fought in countless cosms.

The response page is a custom-printed page which gives you slightly different events, or characters, or items, or instructions, or whatever, than is found in the basic newsletter. Your response form determines what appears on the response page. While every gamemaster is involved in the Possibility Wars, the Infiniverse is too varied to presume that every campaign proceeds in exactly the same way. The response page helps capture some of those differences while still keeping your campaign involved with the main action of the *Torg* storylines.



Alan Jude Summa

Dispatches and Rumors

Dispatches are bulletins describing events and discoveries (or possibly characters) in the realms. They are confirmed happenings in the Infiniverse. Dispatches may be anything from adventure hooks or leads, to specific encounters, scenes, items, events, anything which could be happening in the realms. They are numbered for use in the response form (see page 13). Examples:

1

Chicago has become the home to at least two new gospog fields — one in Grant Park, the other in a razed section of the Edgewater neighborhood on the north side. The gospog fields have just been planted, so it is possible the first crop may be stopped by quick acting Storm Knights. The tribes of edeinos in the area are reportedly restless with their garrison duty in an area still filled with so many "death piles" (large buildings), and occasionally stray several miles from the fields. However there are several dozen gospog of the first planting, veterans from the attack on Chicago, which patrol the fields. Worse is the confirmation that the three gotaks of the tribe have sown the perimeter of the fields with pain sacks (see page 24 of the World Book), and that the gospog are commanded by three to five ravagons, who are in turn commanded by Ujeratza, a ravagon veteran of three invasions, two in the service of the Gaunt Man, one with Baruk Kaah.

Ujeratza (Ravagon Veteran): DEX 9, STR 13, TOU 10, PER 10, MIN 8, CHA 9, SPI 12.

Skills: reality 15, flight 15, maneuver 15, stealth 13, unarmed combat 12, find 15, language 16, tracking 13, trick 12, test 9 (12), persuade 12, taunt 10 (12), faith 16 (Irishanti), focus 16, intimidation 13. The ravagon has access to Core Earth miracles *bless, communicate with animal spirit, cure disease, healing, ritual of hope, ritual of purification, refresh, ward danger, ward enemy*, which also exist in the Irishanti religion.

Possibilities: 22.

Natural Tools: armor (defense value 13), talons (damage value 15), wings (speed value 13).

Equipment: Holy symbol of Irishantism (a religion which claims the Gaunt Man as one of the seven prophets), Staff of Righteousness (as the ravagons see things) which in the hands of Ujeratza has a damage value of 20 (+3 for staff, +4 increased *Strength* due to blessing; see page 15 of the World Book), focus +4.

Goals: Serve the Gaunt Man, raise an army of first through third planting gospog and lead them south along with edeinos tribes to plant stelae in a path which would isolate the eastern United States from the rest of the country.

2

Pope Jean Malraux has given increased authority and resources to a Dr. Etienne Balczesak, previously research team leader with the French space program. Soviet, German and Japanese intelligence sources have all confirmed major construction projects about 50 kilometers northwest of Avignon, apparently building a launch site more sophisticated than any currently on Earth. All sources agree that the Cyberpope has suddenly taken an increased interest in space exploration. Given the tech axioms of the realm, this could prove devastating to Core Earth, and pose a problem for the other High Lords as well. Even given Cyberpapal blessing, money and miracles, the first mission should be a few months away; jump starting a space program is a technically and organizationally imposing task. It is not known what Balczesak will launch for the first mission.

A German agent in place at the launch complex had her cover blown by the watchful informants of the Inquisition. Methodical and brutal searching of the area around the launch site has continued, suggesting the Inquisition has not yet found what they have been looking for. If a group of Storm Knights could find the agent, and get her or her information to Germany, then more would be known. If the agent cannot be found, it is doubtful that any intelligence agency, or the Delphi Council, would recommend entering the launch site on the Storm Knights' initiative. It is suspected that part of the site's purpose is to draw Storm Knights to it, in order to save the Inquisition the trouble of having to hunt them down. There is some supporting evidence for this theory, for despite all of the computing power installed at the site, it has yet to be connected to the GodNet– quite unusual for the Cyberpapacy. A Storm Knight or other agent would have to physically travel to the installation to gather much information about it, and it is heavily guarded by the Church Police, cygoyles, and members of the Inquisition.

Agent Mimieux/Suzi Helfer (Covert Operative): DEX 10, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 9, MIN 10, CHA 11, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, dodge 11, fire combat 11, energy weapons 11*, lockpicking 11, stealth 12, disguise 12**, find 10, first aid 10, land vehicles 10, langauge 11, test 12, charm 13, persuasion 15, taunt 13, intimidation 10.

The asterisk notes that energy weapons is not a template skill for covert operative; she learned it while

in the Cyberpapacy. The agent had earlier learned disguise while in the field.

Possibilities: 6.

Equipment: IriMesh armor (+3/ armor value 12), Perforator II Rocket Pistol (Tech 24/damage value 17/ range 3-10, 25, 60), 4 Magcoder ID security badges for the launch complex; only one of her covers has been blown.

Goals: Get back to Germany. Keep calm in the launch complex until the search cools down enough to brave the cordon the Inquisition has established.

Dr. Etienne Balczesak: DEX 7, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 11, MIN 12 (17), CHA 8, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 9 (0 adds), dodge 8 (+1 chip for value 9), unarmed combat 9 (+1 chip for value 10), air vehicles 12, evidence analysis 12, space vehicles 12, trick 12, medicine 18, science 20 (+2 chip for value 22), test 18, willpower 19, taunt (12), faith 14 (Cyberpapacy), intimidation 13.

Possibilities: 9.

Equipment: EpiphaNeur, slashers (STR+4, damage value 12), neuracal, chipholder 3 (with chips as mentioned above), interdermal plating (+6/ armor value 15), manofique. Cyber value 11.

Etienne Balczesak became a stormer moments before he was confronted by a cyberpriest. Unfortunately for the doctor, the priest invoked a reality storm, which Balczesak lost, transforming to the Cyberpapacy. Captured and put through the GodNet, Etienne quickly and fervently converted to the faith of Jean Malraux. Recognizing his usefulness, a cardinal gave him a blessing vow which radically increased his mind as long as he loyally served Jean Malraux.

Goals: Establish a permanent space station, extend the reach of the GodNet to the whole world.

3

The Nile Empire is trying to establish diplomatic relations with the United States. While most of the country is opposed to this, including even some members of the Delphi Council, certain people believe that an Egyptian Empire with largely obsolete technology may be a lesser evil than the other realms. There are desperate hopes for convincing Dr. Mobius to turn on the High Lord with whom friction has already become apparent: Pope Jean Malraux.

The ambassador is Ohan Marruk, urbane, charming, with an aristocratic bearing. His task is to establish good relations with the United States, a difficult if not impossible task given the fact that Mobius and Baruk Kaah have cooperated, at least loosely, on a number of projects.

Marruk's plan is straightforward—he plans to build faith with the public of the United States by fighting and destroying a tribe of edeinos. His methods are convoluted. His contacts with Baruk Kaah have provided him with totems and jewelry from the Furrek-Dah tribe, confirmed enemies of Core Earth United States. He plans to send a company of shocktroopers into the Living Land to destroy an encampment of edeinos who oppose Baruk Kaah and "skin them to the last scale". The victory is to be costly; if the edeinos do not provide enough opposition, the captain in charge has orders to "arrange" for higher casualties among his men. The Furrek-Dah items will then be seeded in the edeinos camp for the benefit of the press (and US military inspectors). Destruction of the enemy, coupled with the high casualties taken, are the tool Ohan Marruk needs to build sympathy in the United States.

Ohan Marruk: DEX 9, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 11, MIN 10, CHA 11, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, beast riding 10, dodge 11, fire combat 10, stealth 12, find 12, first aid 12, land vehicles 12, langauge 12, trick 17, test 12, charm 13, persuasion 15, taunt 13, intimidation 10.

Possibilities: 11.

Equipment: Marruk is of *evil* inclination. Solid gold cigarette case and lighter, each inlaid with three half-carat diamonds, several specially tailored silk suits (each with a weird science lining (Tech 25) which acts as +4 armor/armor value 12, activates when Ohan fingers a button on his coat, and the ID device inside recognizes his fingerprint). He is usually not armed, carrying a visible sidearm (usually a .45 colt automatic) when he is armed.

Goals: To rise in power within Mobius's organization, and to be popular and respected by the people he is presently victimizing.

Captain Achmedi: DEX 10, STR 11, TOU 12, PER 9, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.

Skills: reality 9, dodge 11, fire combat 13, heavy weapons 11, melee weapons 12, unarmed combat 12, land vehicles 11, persuasion 9, trick 11, taunt 11.

Possibilities: 7.

Equipment: Achmedi is of *evil* inclination. 9mm Luger (damage value 15, range 3-10, 25, 40).

Goals: To loyally serve Dr. Mobius, and to never again have to serve under that buffoon Wu-Han.

Rumors

Rumors are unconfirmed reports and discoveries. It is up to you and your players, and the other campaigns in the Infiniverse, to determine whether or not the rumors are true. They are the gossip, the whispered fears overheard by traveling Storm Knights. Rumors may be adventure hooks, locations, encounters, scenes, items, events ... just about anything possible, and probably a few which are not. When characters, items, or other information is given, it is the best information available to Storm Knights. Items may not be all they are cracked up to be, and characters may prove to be tougher, or simply non-existent.

The rumors are numbered for use in the response form (see page 13).

1

In Ohio, there is rumored to be a spring which has become a collector of possibility energy. It is not an eternity shard, and Possibilities cannot be drained from it, but reports suggest that it can help the miracles of *healing, refresh,* and the *ritual of purification,* granting a focus and faith bonus of perhaps as high as +7. It is almost as if

the spring were a community of faith, not just of the Living Land or of Core Earth, but a community of pure faith waiting to believe. Transformed humans living in the area have claimed that spirits now live in the spring, and more are gathering each sunset.

2

There are unconfirmed reports of heavy Nile shocktrooper activities in the Land of the Dead, under the command of Field Major Hopten-Ra, concentrating on the exploration of underground tunnels that may link the Nile Empire with the Living Land and possibly other realms as well. Witnesses report the movement of great numbers of men and vehicles, as well as the creation of an airfield capable of accommodating transport aircraft. It is suspected that Dr. Mobius is trying to ascertain just how far and in which direction the tunnels go, and hopes to put the information to use for military purpose.

In potentially related rumors, Takken Soth of the Theban Ur Guild has been reported in the Land of the Dead, and there are hints that "weird scientist" Dr. Nasca Belar and a convoy of trucks departed from a research center for that area at roughly the same time.

The coming together of a major exploratory expedition, an engineer, and a prominent weapons scientists in so mysterious an area would suggest a number of frightening possibilities. Worst among them is the theory that Mobius hopes to plant some sort of explosive beneath the surface of other realms in preparation for some future invasion. At the least, the presence of a major destructive weapon beneath neighboring areas would allow Mobius to blackmail other High Lords and sate his financial ambitions. This, in turn, would allow him to step up the activities of his research and development centers and his search for eternity shards.

It is also possible that the departures of Soth and Belar have nothing to do with the military operation, and may instead involve the construction of a new research and development center in the Land of the Dead. The military activities could involve a search for gold in the area.

If the rumors of personnel movements and increased activities are correct, they could have disturbing ramifications for Core Earth, the other realms, and the planet as a whole.

Field Major Hopten-Ra: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 10, MIN 10, CHA 11, SPI 8.

Skills: reality 9, beast riding 10, find 12, fire combat 10, heavy weapons 10, intimidation 10, land vehicles 10, taunt 12, unarmed combat 10.

Inclination: Evil.

Possibilities: 10.

Equipment: Kevlar armor (Tech 22 +5/armor value 14), .357 Desert Eagle (Tech 22/ damage value 16, range 3-10, 15, 40).

Goals: To achieve military victories; to one day attain a promotion to the staff of an Overgovernor and begin accumulating political power.

Takken Soth: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 11, MIN 11, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: engineering 14, evidence analysis 14, find 14, mathematics 13, persuasion 10, scholar 12, science12.

Inclination: Evil.

Goals: To put his knowledge of mathematics and engineering to work to gain power for Mobius, and by extension, himself.

Dr. Nasca Belar: DEX 7, STR 7, TOU 7, PER 14, MIN 14, CHA 10, SPI 7.

Skills: reality 8, evidence analysis 16, find 16, persuasion 11, scholar 15, science 18, weird science 18, willpower 15.

Inclination: Evil.

Possibilities: 11.

Goals: To create and test bigger and better (i.e., more destructive) gizmos in the service of Dr. Mobius.

3

In the horror realm of Orrorsh, a new terror lurks. A 150-year-old vampyre known as Maletretius has taken over a cult of demon-worshippers known as the Mordians. Using a ritual known as the Demonorum Majestrix, these cultists plan to increase Maletretius' powers, hoping to make him immune to the effects of sunlight, garlic, running water, and all physical attacks. If the cultists are successful, Maletretius would be completely invulnerable, and could then go on to create a race of super-vampyres that could overrun the realm without fear of opposition. If true, it is believed that it will be some time before the rituals can be completed. The cultists would require a great deal of silver and the rare intedores siana plant, which is found only in still-untainted New Guinea. The rituals would also have to be done in secret, lest the other creatures of Orrorsh grow jealous and attempt to disrupt the ceremonies.

Maletretius: DEX 12, STR 16, TOU 18, PER 11, MIN 14, CHA 14, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 18, acrobatics 20, dodge19, maneuver 17, running 17, stealth 20, unarmed combat 20, climbing 19, alteration magic 15, find 14, language 15, scholar 16, trick 16, test 23, willpower 23, charm 26, persuasion 21, faith 12, intimidation 17.

Possibliities: 9.

Natural Tools: fangs (damage value 18).

Goals: To attain complete invulnerability to physical and non-physical attacks; to father a race of vampyres possessed of ultimate power.

Typical Mordian Cultist: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 9, SPI 12.

Skills: faith 14, find 11, intimidation 13, language 11, melee weapons 11, scholar (occult lore) 11.

Equipment: dagger (Tech 7/ damage value STR+3).

Goals: To use arcane ritual to gain power and influence in the realm of Orrorsh.

4

This much is fact: dozens of years ago in the Terran cosm, a crucial battle was fought. On one side was the dreaded villain Blackpool, and his minions, and on the other The Whisper, mysterious avenger of injustice.

When the bloodshed was ended, Blackpool had been buried by a cave-in, and his mad schemes with him.

The Whisper had been seriously wounded, and his assistants killed. The evil one was never seen again, and the hero retired, apparently consumed with grief over the heavy toll the battle had taken.

Since that time, Mobius has dropped his maelstrom bridge and invaded Earth. And stories have floated out of Thebes that the High Lord has a new ally: Blackpool. Frightened servants of Mobius claim that the High Lord's supporters in Terra discovered Blackpool, still alive and in suspended animation at the site of the cave-in. (He had supposedly plunged into an underground river, the mysterious properties of which preserved him until he could be revived. Now, more maniacal than ever, Blackpool is determined to go through with the plan the Whisper foiled all those years ago: the detonation of a device, known as an Allorizer, which would send out an electromagnetic pulse and effectively shut down all machines in an entire nation).

The rumors state that Blackpool has been supervising construction of the weapon at a weird science research center outside of Cairo. With the financial backing of Mobius, Blackpool will set off the device within the Cyberpapacy realm, destroying the GodNet and all cybernetic devices and rendering the whole area ripe for conquest.

The stories may be just that—stories, intended to frighten Terran natives who still shudder at Blackpool's name, and possibly keep the Cyberpapacy authorities looking over their shoulders. But if it is true, only one man has ever been able to stop Blackpool, and he hasn't been seen in 20 years.

The Whisper has become a legend over the years, and the legend has an epilogue of sorts—in the back alleys of Cairo, they say, there is a derelict who has the same piercing eyes and thrilling voice that terrorized Terra's criminals for years. If the stories are accurate, lost in a fog of drink may be the one mind capable of ending Blackpool's threat.

The Whisper: DEX 9, STR 7, TOU 11, PER 13, MIN 15, CHA 11, SPI 6.

Skills: reality 10, charm 12, evidence analysis 17, fire combat 9, intimidation 9, persuasion 12, scholar 15, stealth 9, taunt 13, trick 14, willpower 17.

Inclination: Good.

Possibilities: 11.

Natural Tools: super attribute (adventure cost 3); see *The Nile Empire* sourcebook for details.

Equipment: twin .45 Colt automatics (Tech 20/damage value 16/ range 3-10, 15, 40).

Goals: To redeem himself; to free himself of the guilt caused by the deaths of his friends 20 years ago.

Blackpool: DEX 11, STR 11, TOU 14, PER 14, MIN 15, CHA 17, SPI 15.

Skills: reality 10, dodge 13, melee weapons 15, unarmed combat 11, scholar 16 (politics), science 19, willpower 11, persuasion 18, taunt 20, intimidation 17.

Inclination: Evil.

Possibilities: 10.

Natural Tools: super attribute (adventure cost 6); see *The Nile Empire* sourcebook for details.

Equipment: rapier (Tech 15/damage value STR+5).

5

It is difficult to separate fact from fantasy in the realm of Aysle. The low tech axiom has made communication between countries difficult, and much is wild rumor and speculation.

Much of this speculation is centered on Ireland, which is divided between a mixed zone and Core Earth, and an uneasy resistance continues to battle in the north. Lately, Viking raids along the coast have increased in frequency. Yet while fierce, the Norsemen's attacks have been of shorter duration than normal. The Vikings have suffered heavy losses and taken little plunder, yet they continue to return.

At the same time, sightings of "monsters" have been on the rise in and around Belfast, and the creatures have reportedly cut swaths of destruction through the area. It is a new kind of terror that witnesses tell of, and the savagery has reportedly seriously shaken the morale of those still resisting in the area.

It is only lately that the Irish taletellers have begun to make the connection between the Viking raids and the stories of huge monsters. Although they cannot prove it, many now believe the Viking ships are acting as ferries for transformed Earthers, most often trolls, gathered from Norway and sailed to Ireland as part of a new offensive.

If this is true, it represents both a threat and an opportunity. The threat lies in the inability (so far) of the resistance to overcome its terror and successfully battle the huge creatures. The opportunity lies in the fact that the sinking of Viking longboats could prove devastating to the troll population (since it is rumored that transformed people-trolls, at least, are unable to swim.)

Whether or not there is any connection between the raids and the monster sightings or indeed any truth to the reports of trolls in Ireland remains to be seen.

Troll (transformed human): DEX 11, STR 18, TOU 18, PER 6, MIN 8, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: taunt 9, dodge 13, fire combat 12, melee weapons 14, unarmed combat 14, lifting 20.

Possibility Potential: Some (55).

Equipment: The trolls supposedly spotted in Ireland were carrying large clubs (Tech 6/ damage value STR+3).

New Stuff

We will be premiering new source material, new rules, new characters, places, and evil plots in *Infiniverse*. Some will foreshadow events which will be published later in a more expanded version, some of the material will only appear in these pages. Sometimes which is which depends on how events go in your campaign; if the villains are foiled here, certain products will be altered (or simply not released). Alternately, if the bad guys get the upper hand here, some products will give Storm Knights a far more vicious time than we had originally planned. It's a truly collaborative campaign, between you, the other gamemasters of *Infiniverse*, and West End Games.

Templates: Villains and Heroes

From time to time we will be including new template types which you can choose to add to your campaign. These will be created by the staff at West End Games.

We will also occasionally ask for Storm Knights or villains to be submitted from subscribers' campaigns, along with background, picking one or two for publication in *Infiniverse*.

Now, on to the first of the new stuff.

Sherwood Forest, England

Overnight, springing up in land long since covered by suburbs, Sherwood Forest rose in Nottingham. Huge, dark trees burst full grown through the plain brick development houses, shattering walls and windows, flinging roof tiles to the suddenly forested ground.

The few residents who escaped, scratched and bloody, gibbered of strangling roots, dark, clammy fingers of moss, a maze of hulking, malevolent trunks. Often, they wandered for days after leaving their shattered houses before they stumbled upon the forest's edge.

Though the new Sherwood Forest covers thousands of acres, those trapped inside feel it is far larger, endless. The trees are huge and densely packed, allowing only shallow lines of sight. Daylight is diffused through layers of leaves, making it almost impossible to determine the sun's location. Dusk comes early, and night lingers long. The few trails are narrow, low animal tracks, often ending abruptly in impenetrable brambles.

And then there are the denizens of the woods. Skeletons and fey creatures shriek in the shadows of night, and often the woods are not large enough for them. They come looking for prey and sport in Nottingham, at least until the half hour before dawn. No one with sense ventures near the wood after sundown.

The Bogs

There is a strenuous debate about whether there is more than one bog in the forest, or whether there is a single large bog with a sinister enchantment which fools wanderers into believing they are elsewhere in Sherwood until they come across the bog. The bog is known to be the home to goblins, ghouls and the occasional skeleton.

There are also the large goblinish creatures that seem to be made of the muck, christened bogoblins by the mayor of Nottingham. Bogoblins are large, but are almost impossible to detect when they wish to remain hidden. They can even disguise their distinctive odor through use of their *stealth*, an innate magical ability their smaller goblin cousins lack. Bogoblins can see perfectly well at night, and have problems only in the brightest sunlight, an unusual condition in Sherwood Forest. Bogoblins rarely leave the confines of the forest, unlike ghouls and goblins which make almost nightly forays into human-held territories. Speculation is a bogoblin cannot wander too far from the bog which is his home. Bogoblins are surprisingly intelligent, and have a vicious cunning.

Bogoblin: DEX 10, STR 14, TOU 20, PER 8, MIN 10, CHA 4, SPI 4.

Skills: dodge 11, melee weapons 11, stealth 18, unarmed combat 15, find 12, tracking 12, trick 14, test 13, taunt (10), intimidate 10 (20).

Natural Tools: Claws +3/damage value 17, teeth +4/damage value 18.

Equipment: large stumps to club things with (+4/damage value 18), occasionally really big stumps to club things with (+5/damage value 19).

Cherylicid's Grimoire

One of the unusual features of Sherwood Forest is the Starry Birch found somewhere within the forest. The Starry Birch is notable for two reasons; the small luminescent flecks which adorn most of its leaves, and the fact that birch trees are not native to this Sherwood Forest. It was at the Starry Birch that the first entires of Cherylicid's grimoire were found.

The first entry was found by an Aylish woodcutter, whose unidentified body was found with scraps of parchment on which only the heading "Spells of Cherylicid" could be read. The second person known person to find the Starry Birch was Settleford-Dunne, who made it out of Sherwood carrying the mottled, grimy parchment with the spell of *iron wood* upon it, as well as a stylized seal containing the name "Cherylicid".

No one has heard of a mage named Cherylicid; many people suspect that the tree is from another cosm entirely, and that the parchment arrives through a *dimension gate* spell, or possibly the *herald* group power. Why (or whether) Cherylicid is sending these spells is not known.

Iron Wood

Axiom Level: 10
Skill: *alteration/plant* 19

Backlash: 18
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 20
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 18
Cast Time: 15
Manipulation: none needed

Iron wood allows the mage to strengthen saplings and twigs to withstand attack, sufficiently strong to prevent most melee weapons from doing any harm. The mage taps all of the wood he wishes to strengthen with the flat of an iron blade, muttering "cut not" in the old language, shaping them into a small domed hut 5 meters across . The hut has a *Toughness* of 20, and no attack can harm a character inside the hut until the hut has been destroyed (taken four or more wounds) or has been breached (a KO result or 20 or more shock points of damage taken). The mage can pass in and out of the hut, an action which requires an *alteration magic* total of 8 to succeed.



Valerie Valusek

Characters Around Nottingham and Sherwood

Ydreffim: DEX 13, STR 10, TOU 12, PER 10, MIND 11, CHA 11, SPIR 9.

Skills: acrobatics 14, dodge 14, flight 16, lock picking 15, manuever 15, melee weapons 14, prestidigitation 15, stealth 15, lifting 12, alteration magic 11, language 12, tracking 12, trick 11, apportation magic 12, conjuration magic 12, charm 13, taunt 12, faith 11, focus 11.

Arcane Knowledges: time, true knowledge, darkness, light, magic, inanimate forces, air, fire, avian, enchanted, folk, range, speed.

Spells: bleeding blade, cleanse, conjured fireball, floater, lightning, iron wood, mage dark, multiple selves, stay voice, sunstore, water scry.

Miracles: cure disease, enhance food, ward danger, ward enemy.

Equipment: usually none.

Goals: Find the others of her people.

Ydreffim bears a vague physical resemblence to the winged, flower-loving fairies of children's tales. It looks like a small girl with long hair, about a meter tall, swathed in swirling locks. The hair hides its wings, which fold up like a grasshopper's when not in use.

It is not sure where the rest of its folk got to, and it is searching for them among shadows of Sherwood. In a playful mood, Ydreffim can be delightful, but it is not overly fond of humans. They are too big and coarse. It is nocturnal, and most often encountered at dusk, searching for its folk, or gathering supplies. It takes offense easily at curiosity and rudeness alike. It will talk to humans, dwarves and other large folk if they are polite, and knows enough about the woods to warn Storm Knights of times or places which are particularly dangerous.

Elspeth Fenella MacVaig: DEX 11, STR 7, TOU 10, PER 12, MIND 9, CHA 9, SPIR 8.

Skills: melee weapons 12, swimming 12, climbing 8, divination magic 15, find 13, land vehicles 13, water vehicles 13, artist (drawing) 13, artist (dance) 13, test of will 11, persuasion 10, reality 10.

Arcane Knowledges: living forces, earth, water, folk.

Spells: known to have detect magic, pathfinder, possibility shadows, water scry; based on Unwilling Seer template — see *Aysle Sourcebook*.

Possibilities: 11.

Equipment: herbal teas, scrying cups, mace (+4/damage value 11), leather armor (+2/armor value 12).

Goals: Be at peace with her visions, find her fiance, protect Nottingham from the creatures in her visions.

Elspeth is the MacVaig of clan MacVaig, the cheiftain of her family. Since the invasion, what used to be an on-again, off-again ability to dream premonitions has blossomed into full-blown divination magic. She migrated from the center of the Aylish pure zone in Scotland to Sherwood Forest as a result of her visions. She had a repeated vision in which Errol Flynn's Robin Hood is transformed into a gibbering, hulking bogoblin, which goes on a rampage through the forest until it reaches the Starry Birch. In some versions of the vision the bogoblin falls asleep in the glow of the birchlight, to awaken as Robin Hood again. In the other the bogoblin never awakens, but it transformed a second time into a grassy mound.

Since arriving in Nottingham, Elspeth has used her abilities to warn against the predations of Uthorion's minions. While useful, Elspeth would rather not have these abilities, as her sleep is all-too-often shattered by horrible nightmares of destruction and injury. She is researching all of the old lore to find a way to tone down the visions, and focus them for her own use.

She is a small, sturdy woman of 28, with auburn hair and wide gray eyes. She is engaged to Hamish MacRae, currently missing.

Miles Brian Settleford-Dunne: DEX 9, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 11, MIN 10, CHA 11, SPI 9.

Skills: beast riding 10, dodge 11, fire combat 10, missle weapons 10, stealth 12, find 12, first aid 12, land vehicles 12, trick 12, faith 10.

Possibility Potential: Some (25).

Equipment: Longbow (+6/ 14), Lee Enfield MK1 (damage value 19), field glasses, mayoral costume, camouflage gear, camping equipment, ammunition, bullet proof vest (+6/ armor value 14).

Goals: Keep Nottingham together.

Miles is the Sheriff of Nottingham, and has been in policework for nearly 35 years. He may not have seen it all, but he's seen a lot, from quiet neighborhood beats to mobs and protest marches, even to invaders from *someplace else*, now.

The invaders are by far the strangest, most dangerous threat to peace and order that he's ever faced. With the dark new Sherwood Forest at his doorstep, Miles is stretched to the limit to keep his city from toppling into chaos. He has relied on the advice of Ramasingh Chamshad, who seems to have a good grasp of the weird which has struck Nottingham.

Gariad Corcairja: DEX 11, STR 8, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 11, SPI 10.

Skills: beast riding 13, dodge 14, lock picking 13, manuever 14, melee weapons 12, running 12, stealth 14, unarmed combat 14, alteration magic 12, divination magic 12, trick 12, charm 14, reality 12.

Arcane Knowledges: darkness, magic, living forces, earth, plant, water, acquatic, folk.

Spells: detect magic, fog, increase charisma, iron wood, pathfinder, turn to stone, water scry, water spray.

Possibilities: 13.

Equipment: Fine elven enchanted leather (+5/armor value 15) which she boasts she stole from a Elven mage (actually she paid two years service for the armor), longsword (STR+6/ damage value 14), dagger (+3/damage value 11).

Goals: Gold and excitement to excess, companionship in moderation.

Gariad Corcairya (GAIR-ee-add cor-CARE-ya) came over the water bridge after Uthorion's vikings. She figured her trade was likely to be in higher demand in the invasion area, and she was tired of the brutes of her hometown taverns. They didn't treat a girl gentle. And they didn't pay very well, either. She crossed the sea to London, but Core Earth was too crowded, too strange. But some of the transformed lands in the interior sounded exciting.

Here in the new towns, there are plenty of new marks, both for her physical charms, and her thieving wiles. She owes no loyalty to Uthorion, and would rather oppose his designs. Magic still intrigues her, and rumors of Cherylicid's griomire have reached her. She has lifted spells from whatever source comes to hand, mixing dwarven and elvish and what-not freely; a tree should prove no great challenge.

Ramasingh Chamshad: DEX 12, STR 7, TOU 14, PER 15, MIND 11, CHA 12, SPIR 12.

Skills: acrobatics 13, beast riding 13, dodge 14, maneuver 15, melee weapons 15, prestidigitation 14, running 14, stealth 15, alteration magic 12, divination magic 13, first aid 12, scholar (mythos) 12, trick 11, water vehicles 11, apportation magic 11, artist 11, cojuration magic 11, test of will 11, persuasion 13, taunt 14, intimidation 11, reality 13.

Arcane Knowledges: true knowledge, darkness, light, inanimate forces, living forces, fire, metal, plant, water, folk, earthly, enchanted, entity, control, duration, state.

Spells: away sight, bleeding blade, conjured fireball, disguise self, iron wood, lightning, mage dark, multiple selves, stay voice, open lock, water scry, weakness.

Possibilities: 15.

Equipment: Clothing enchanted to act as armor +5 (armor value 19), grimoire written in miniature on bones (writing must be magnified many time to be read; Chamshad uses a spell of his own devising).

Goals: recontact Uthorion.

Ramasingh Chamshad (RA-masing SHOM-shod) often passes for a Pakistani in the ethnically mixed city of Nottingham. He's pleased that his natural coloring fits in so well with the natives, for it makes his undercover work much simpler. Chamshad is not sure what happened to his High Lord, but he is confident Uthorion will contact him soon.

In the meantime, he travels up to Sherwood Forest, keeping in touch with the fell beasts that have made the brooding wood their base, and patronizingly sympathizes with Settleford-Dunne, the ineffectual human who likes to think he has stuck his finger in the dyke. He also is cultivating Settleford-Dunne for the time, almost inevitable now, when he shall become a stormer.

Creatures

Below are some additional creatures which are not listed in the World Book, nor are they listed in the sourcebooks. They are bonus beasts with which you may confound your players.

Living Land Creatures

Aviax

The aviax is the "missing link" between the reptile and the bird. Though still possessing the talons and razor-sharp beak of their lizard cousin they boast feathers instead of scales. This, and their slightly smaller size, grants them greater speed and maneuverability than flying reptiles like the lakten. The aviax has a wing-span of three meters and grows to a length of two meters. Aviax always attack in flocks of six to eight, which allows them to bring down large prey.

Aviax: DEX 13, STR 8, TOU 10, PER 8, MIN 7, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: dodge 15, flight 15, unarmed combat 14, maneuver 15.

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: beak, damage STR+3/11, talons, damage STR+3/ 11, wings (speed value 13).

Slitha

Slitha are huge earthworms that make their homes in the volcanos that dot the Living Land. Their hides are especially tough and capable of withstanding the extreme temperatures in their natural habitat. Although practically blind, the slitha is essentially one huge sense organ—nerves that run the length of its body can sense vibrations and guide the worm unerringly to its prey. Slitha are omnivores, eating anything they can find,and they kill their prey by crushing it beneath their bulk. Slitha grow to a length of 15 meters.

Slitha: DEX 8, STR 24, TOU 21, PER 8, MIN 4, CHA 3, SPI 3.

Skills: tracking 11, tunneling 12 (speed value 10), unarmed combat 11, trick (13), test (13), taunt (18), intimidate (25).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +3/24.

Beleterox

Beleterox are insects that inhabit the Eastern Land. They resemble huge hornets, and possess eight legs, wings, and a sharp stinger. The beleterox feed on small dinosaurs and have been known to prey on edeinos and humans. The beleterox attacks by stinging its prey with a venom that causes paralysis. It can then consume the catch at leisure or, during spawning season, wrap eggs and victim in a cocoon to give the hatching young something on which to feed. Beleterox stand upright, have a wing span of four meters and grow to a height of three meters.

Beleterox: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 13, PER 6, MIN 6, CHA 3, SPI 3.

Skills: climbing, 11, dodge 11, flight 12, maneuver 11, running 10, unarmed combat 11, trick (10), test (15), taunt (7), intimidate (15).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +2/ 15, stinger, damage STR+3/ 12, venom (damage value 18), wings (speed value 11).

Note: if stinger causes damage, venom does damage on the following round. The venom does no direct physical damage, instead it has a special effect; the shock points of damage done (it makes only one attack) act as a negative bonus modifer for all *Dexterity* related actions, until the poisoned character generates a *Toughness* total equal to or greater than the damage value of the venom.

Sashar

A sashar is a large mammal resembling a cougar which makes use of its phenomenal eyesight to hunt in the Deep Mist. It is a fierce predator known for killing more than it needs, almost as if it derived sheer pleasure from the bloody act itself. The sashar grows as large as eight meters, and has a gray coat that allows it to blend in with the mist. Its four claws are used to slash its prey, and its bite has been known to tear the leg off a bargon.

Sashar: DEX 15, STR 17, TOU 16, PER 9, MIN 8, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: acrobatics 16, climbing 17, dodge 16, , maneuver 16, running 17, stealth 17, tracking 11, trick (12), test (12), taunt (8), intimidation 7.

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: claws, damage STR+2/ 19, teeth, damage STR+3/ 20.

Skritteck

Skrittecks are small rodents that feed on carrion left behind by larger animals. Skrittecks travel in packs of up to 150, and grow to about a meter in length. Their primary offensive weapon is a set of needle-like teeth. Skrittecks live in tunnel networks under the surface, and will attack a living creature only if their tunnels are

disturbed. Then they swarm above ground with frightening speed, and have been known to devour the flesh of a full-grown edeinos in two minutes. Skrittecks have been rumored to carry diseases.

Skritteck: DEX 12, STR 7, TOU 8, PER 3, MIN 3, CHA 3, SPI 3.

Skills: climbing 13, dodge 13, maneuver 14, tunneling 15 (speed value 3), unarmed combat 13.

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: teeth, damage STR+4/11.



Orrorsh Creatures

Zuvembie

A zuvembie is one of the walking dead, a reanimated corpse slave to the bidding of the one who made him rise. Zuvembies are created through the use of complicated magical rituals, and are often used as servants and laborers. They have tremendous strength and do not feel pain, continuing to pursue a goal until they achieve it or are utterly destroyed. It is impossible to taunt, charm, or persuade a zuvembie, as they are virtually mindless. Their skin is usually chalk-white, their movements stiff, and their eyes blank. They are incapable of speech.

Zuvembies can be destroyed by physical attack.

Zuvembie: DEX 8, STR 20, TOU 20, PER 1, MIN 1, CHA 3, SPI 10.

Skills: climbing 22 (speed value 8), dodge 9, unarmed combat 10, lifting 23, trick(25), test (25), intimidation 11 (15).

The Faceless Ones

The Faceless Ones are creatures with humanoid appearance, reptilian wings which are ill-suited for flight, and perfectly smooth, featureless faces. Although they are incapable in their "normal" form of speech, sight or hearing, they are able to sense the body heat of a living creature and thus know where to attack. Their strength is prodigious, and once they have a grip on a humanoid being (which is whenever the Faceless One scores a knockdown or a wound level), their victim's features are transferred on to them. The victim loses all facial features, becoming as smooth the Faceless One was before; as this prevents breathing, seeing, or hearing, the victim dies in six rounds after the transfer. A Faceless One can retain the features of their victim for one hour (or until they are killed; at which time the features are transferred back to their original owner), during which time they possess the knowledge and memories of their victims. They will often use this knowledge and a now trustworthy appearance to claim other victims. They gain all of their victim's skill adds, except where the skill adds are less than their own.

A Faceless One can be destroyed by exposing it to a mirror while it is in its natural state.

Faceless One: DEX 10, STR 15, TOU 14, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 7, SPI 5.

Skills: unarmed combat 11, charm 8,persuasion 8, stealth 12, tracking 12, trick 11, test 12 (20), taunt (20), intimidation 15.

Note: A Faceless One can take on the Skills of his victim for one hour, although the creature's attribute values do not change. Example: a Faceless One with a DEX of 10 slays a Victorian with a DEX 11 and a *lock-picking* skill value of 13, the Faceless One would get the two *lock-picking* skill adds for a value of 12.

• The Faceless One is hit by an attack with a damage value of 25 whenever he catches his reflection in a mirror.

Natural Tools: wings (speed value 9).

Sentinel Ghosts

Sentinel ghosts are the spirits of the dead, which have remained on the physical plane to plague the living, or warn others of the presence of the living. In Orrorsh, all sentinel ghosts are malevolent spirits, bent on terrorizing their victims.

A sentinel ghost is capable of passing through solid objects, and cannot be harmed by a physical attack, nor can it initiate one. A sentinel ghost may appear as a white blur or may resemble its physical incarnation. Since it is incapable of action on the physical level, the ghost's primary offensive weapon is the fear it sparks in its victim.

Sentinel Ghost: DEX 3, STR 1, TOU 11, PER 11, MIN 10, CHA 15, SPI 15 .

Skills: stealth 22, find 20, tracking 13, persuasion 16, trick 12, taunt 16, intimidation 23.

Incubae/Succubae

Incubae and succubae are "male" and "female" demons, respectively, that thrive by draining the life-force of living beings. They have great strength, but more often work by taking on the appearance of an attractive member of their victim's species and luring it to destruction. The shape-shifting abilities of these creatures are limited by their gender (i.e.,an incubus cannot appear as a female, and a succubus cannot appear as a male). The demons communicate with each other through a keening wail which has often been mistaken for that of the banshee. Once an incubus/succubus is in contact with its victim, it takes little time for it to drain the living energy that resides in the body. This energy is commonly drawn through the eyes, and the victim of such a demon will have charred eye sockets in place of eyes.

These demons can be destroyed in physical attacks, but only if struck with weapons made of iron.

Incubae/ Succubae: DEX 11, STR 14, TOU 11, PER 12, MIN 11, CHA 14, SPI 5.

Skills: alteration magic 15, gaze 13, charm 16, dodge 12, trick 13, unarmed combat 12, intimidation 12.

Natural Tools: gaze attack (damage value 23), must catch the victims gaze. If the victim is avoiding the creature's gaze, the succubus must get a "setback" or "player's call" result on a trick in order to make the attack.

Your Letters

Infiniverse is the publication which links your campaign with West End's plans for the *Possibility Wars*. Your feedback is valuable to us, and part of that feedback is your letters. We will select and publish letters which raise questions about the rules or the mythos, speculate as to what might be happening in *Torg*, or comment on what we have done so far.

Here are some of the comments from the playtesters who had advance copies of *Torg* and our answers.

Q. Why are there three kinds of damage (wounds, KO-condition, and shock damage)? My players would really appreciate it if you could get rid of one category.

—M. Fortner

Nothing like starting with a tough one. The reason is we wanted the *Torg* scale and system to handle combat between characters regardless of attributes and skill levels. With character's (particularly ords) of damage values of 12 and *Toughness* of 9, say, the KO-condition seems to come into play at about the same time as falling over from shock damage. But as the attribute levels increase, this is no longer true. If we ever did a superhero variant of *Torg*, say where *Toughness* of 40 is not unreasonable, without the KO-condition we would either have to have a separate table for those characters, or concede that almost all combats would end in the death of one character. This is because the shock damage needed to take a character out increases while four wounds always kills them. Eventually you reach the point where receiving four wounds is far more likely than knocking a character out through shock damage. This could be avoided by saying all characters take the same amount of shock damage before falling over (say 10 points), regardless of *Toughness*. We rather liked that idea, but playtesters pretty much universally disliked it; they wanted to feel that tougher characters could take more points of damage, and didn't at all buy our argument that tougher characters could take more damage, as the blow which gave 1 point to a troll could clobber the average human. So greater *Toughness* increased the amount of shock damage you could take, and KOs entered the picture.

Do Core Earth clerics get all of the Core Earth miracles?

— E. Aldrich

Technically the rules say that they do. This is because otherwise we would have had to list the miracles of every religion.

If you are familiar with the mythos of a particular religion, you can make a judgment prior to the start of the game. If a miracle is mentioned in the religious text, or other body of lore from that faith, then clerics of the faith can use that miracle. It's up to you.

Gee, this sucker is big.

— C. Kubasik

Yes. Part of what made this project so exciting was putting together a large mythos, linked from top to bottom with plenty of interconnections at different levels. The game system grew to accomodate, and the source material expanded to try to cover the whole of the Infiniverse. And we aren't even close to done yet.

Are you really going to let players decide the course of the Possibility Wars? We mean, what happens if they end it? What do we sell then?

—Nervous Guys in marketing

We're nervous about this part. Not so much because the players could end the war tomorrow; we do have a rough outline of the campaign through 1992 and beyond, with enough contingencies built in that we are confident that we can keep gamemasters and players everywhere on their toes.

But someday it will end. Eventually either the Storm Knights or the High Lords are going to get enough of an upper hand to effectively settle the issue on Earth, once and for all. It could take a while, but the Possibility Wars have been designed to be won by one side or the other.

What bothers us is what happens if the Storm Knights lose? It is possible that the High Lords could completely crush Core Earth and most of the Storm Knights in every realm— not probable, but possible. What a rotten way for the story to end. But that's not going to happen, right?

What if players just want to play a single genre, say pulp fiction or fantasy. Won't all of this Possibility Wars stuff just get in the way?

—R. Winninger.

If you and your players are intrigued by the Infiniverse, but would rather concentrate on one genre, there is nothing to stop you. The gamemaster could pick and choose what elements of the Possibility Wars she wishes to incorporate in her campaign, maybe some skills, a monster or character or two, maybe a plotline, and then leave the rest behind. Part of what is fun about the Infiniverse is that somewhere the world works just as the gamemaster wishes it to (technically, according to our game mythos the Earth in which we publish Torg fits into the Infiniverse as well); such a place may not be in the mainstream of the *Possibility Wars*, but it is still a legitimate part of *Torg*.

The Response Form

The response form is your link with West End, the way you report what is happening in your campaign. Each response form reports on a completed adventure. You send in one response form a month; if you have completed more than one adventure in a month, select one for your report. You then send in the form where our crack team of computer operators (i.e., an editor who is having a bad day) enters them. On a certain date each month we stop entering and start computing.

Here is what you need to know to fill out a response form.

Name and Address

Okay, maybe not all of the response form requires explanation. Be kind to the bleary-eyed editors and please print. We will already have plenty of other opportunities to mess up your name and address, and probably do not need any more.

Campaign Number

Each subscriber is assigned a campaign number, which is used to keep track of your subscription. It is also used to identify your reponse form, following it through all the calculations, and tagging the end result as yours. If you are not a subscriber, write "NS" in the space provided for the campaign number. Your campaign number will appear on the mailing label of your first (and every subsequent) issue of the newsletter.

Issue Number

Fill in the number of the issue to which you are responding. This is used to determine your effect on the rumors and dispatches listed in that issue. If you are not responding to an issue, write "NR" in that space.

Storm Knights

Enter the number of Storm Knights in the group who were played by players (as opposed to gamemaster character Storm Knights).

Dispatches

There are five spaces listed under this heading. List the number of any dispatches with which your Storm Knights have been involved (from the issue number you listed above). If they have been involved with more than five dispatches as part of their adventures (WHEW!), then pick the five you feel were the most important.

Rumors

There are five spaces (each with a slash in the middle) under this heading. List the number of any rumors which you and / or your Storm Knights have confirmed or proven false in an adventure on the left of the slash. Put "T" to the right of the slash if the rumor turned out to be true, and "F" if the rumor turned out to be false.

Adventure Realms

Enter the number of different realms (or home cosms of the realms) in which a significant scene of the adventure took place. Each invading realm is listed on the form, as well as three blank lines. Check the box of each realm that was visited in the adventure. If you are playing in realms of your own creation, or (gasp) campaign setting produced by another company, fill in the name in the space provided. Heck, we're curious.

The blank lines to the side of the realm names are for a numerical estimation of the impact your adventure had on that realm. The numbers range from 0 to 10, and all numbers entered must add up to 10. In other words, each point equals 10% of your adventure's impact. An entry of "Aysle 2, Cyberpapacy 6, Living Land 2" tell us that most of the impact was felt by the Cyberpapacy, but that the adventure had some impact on Aysle and the Living Land. Note that the realm which the adventure impacted does not have to coincide with the realms in which your adventure took place. For example, you might run an adventure which concerns thwarting Nippon Tech's diplomatic initiatives in Aysle. The effect might be felt entirely in Nippon (an impact of 10) while the adventure was played in Aysle and the Cyberpapacy.

When filling out this section the key phrase to keep in mind is "in which a significant scene of the adventure took place." If all the scenes in a realm contribute little to the impact of the adventure (as measured by your impact numbers) then do not check the box for that adventure realm. If the Storm Knights were downed in a reality storm, then had a tense, successfully stealthy trek across the Cyberpapacy on their way to Core Earth Spain, the situation may have been fun to play. But if no one saw them, and they interacted with no one, the odds are their presences wouldn't have had much impact on events. However, if they interfered with the Inquisition's plans, even if the Inquisition is not aware that their schemes went awry because of Storm Knight activity, then the course of events in the Cyberpapacy (or elsewhere) might very well be affected.

Adventure Outcome

The adventure outcome is rated on a scale from 1 to 9; each point on the scale is described below.

An outcome of "1" is a dismal failure for the Storm Knights. They failed in their main objective, probably failed in some of the earlier acts as well. They gained no knowledge of the campaign which might prove useful in the future. They probably spent or wasted far more resources than they gained.

An outcome of "2" is a serious loss, one in which they failed to gain the main objective of the adventure. They did however succeed at side goals, or earlier goals of the adventure, and probably gleaned some information which may help them in future confrontations with the High Lords and their minions.

A "3" indicates a costly victory. The Storm Knights succeeded at the main objective, perhaps sacrificing any side goals to get there. The group has fewer resources (including Possibilities) than they began the adventure with.

In a "4" the Storm Knights have scored a solid victory, at least breaking even on Possibilities, and perhaps gaining allies, information and tools along the way which will serve them well in future adventures.

Scoring a victory and scoring a surplus of Possibilities for all Storm Knights in the group is an outcome of "5".

If the group succeeded at playing a *glory* card, and won the adventure scoring the Possibility surplus as in "5", the the Storm Knights have achieved a "6".

A "7" builds on the result above and adds two more conditions: the Storm Knights must have sparked the people with their story, as described on page 104 of the Rulebook. They also must have successfully (successful in the sense of producing a good story) resolved any subplot cards in play, and there must have been at least one subplot card in play.

An "8" is a seven plus one; the group must have played one more *glory* card during the adventure, for a total of at least two *glory* cards.

To score a "9" requires the Storm Knights to fulfill all the conditions of "8", and in your opinion scored a victory so spectacular and startling to you as a gamemaster that you had to give it extra recognition.

We have established this scale so that an average result of 5 is actually a substantial victory for a group of Storm Knights. West End does expect you and your players to have fun, which generally means the good guys have to win. We also have to assume that other events are going on in your cosmverse with which your Storm Knights have very little connection, events in which the High Lords fare better than they do against your Storm Knights, who are after all the heroes of your saga.

We urge you to ignore the temptation to inflate your group's victories. This is not so much because inaccurate reporting will wreak havoc with our marvelous computer model of the Possibility Wars (we seriously doubt it, anyway), but that the further away your results are from the "average" for all the campaigns in the Infiniverse, the harder it is for the result of your campaign to affect the Infiniverse. This is analogous to the link difficulty chart where the "farther away" or "more different" two axiom sets are, the harder it is to reestablish the link to that different reality.

Possibilities Lines

On the *Starting Possiblities* line put the total number of Possibilities the Storm Knights had at the beginning of the adventure. The *Ending Possibilities* are the total number of Possibilities the Storm Knights had after the adventure was over, but before the players spend them to improve their characters' abilities. The *Card Total* line is for the total number of Possibilities awarded due to *drama* or *glory* cards.

Herald Messages

The *herald* group power (page 109 of the Rulebook) sends information from one cosm to another. The Herald Messages are your chance to send brief messages to the other gamemasters and readers of *Infiniverse*. The messages must be printed neatly and be no longer than 50 words. West End will print as many acceptable messages as we can fit into half a page each issue. Also, this space will be used for herald messages from gamemaster characters under the control of West End Games.

WEG Notes

If you have something you want to tell us, and what you want to tell us is brief, this is the space in which to do it. While the volume of mail is such that we don't have nearly enough time to answer questions, your comments and notes are read by someone at West End. Your comments and feedback affect what we do at West End, and we want to hear from you.

What It All Costs

Subscriptions to Infiniverse cost $25.00 for 12 issues ($30 for Canadian and foreign orders). First-time subscribers to Infiniverse will receive an additional two issues free — that's 14 issues for the price of 12. Each issue features new dispatches, rumors, letters, herald messages and special articles on Torg and the Possibility Wars. The response form in the back of each issue allows you and your gaming group to have a real impact on the course of the war in this unique interactive campaign. You can help determine the outcome of the Torg saga. Good luck to all, and we hope to hear from you.

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Final Note

Want to see your work published? Send your rumors or Torg features to the address above and you may see your writing published in Infiniverse. Please be sure to include a note giving WEG permission to print the material.

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TORG™

Roleplaying the Possibility Wars™

Response Form

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Campaign No.	Issue No.

Number of Storm Knights ☐

Dispatches

☐
☐
☐
☐
☐

Rumors (# / T or F)

/
/
/
/
/

☐ **Starting Possibilities**

☐ **Ending Possibilities**

☐ **Card Total**

☐ **Adventure Realms**

- ☐ Aysle _____
- ☐ Cyberpapacy _____
- ☐ Living Land _____
- ☐ Nile Empire _____
- ☐ Nippon Tech _____
- ☐ Orrorsh _____

Other:

_____

_____

_____

☐ **Adventure Outcome**

Herald Messages

WEG Notes

WEST END GAMES®

The Near Now

"... repeat. Is anyone receiving this message?
We need help. The invaders are
everywhere... reality itself has gone crazy.
My God, can anyone hear me?
Can anyone help us...?"

— a voice on a CB radio,
somewhere in upstate New York

The Possibility Wars Have Begun



Roleplaying Game with Limited Edition die

Novel

Adventure with GM Screen

Sourcebook

At Waldenbooks, hobby shops, and bookstores everywhere.

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9

You try to outflank!

S: V — H Flurry

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

6

8

You try to outflank!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

8

7

They're on the run!

S: H Up V —

D: H Inspiration V —

Act: Any

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

7

6

They're on the run!

S: V — H Up

D: V — H Inspiration

Act: Any

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

6

5

They're on the run!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V — H Inspiration

Act: Any

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

5

4

They're on the run!

S: H Flurry V —

D: H Inspiration V —

Act: Any

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

4

3

They're on the run!

S: V — H Up

D: V — H Inspiration

Act: Any

Skill A B D

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

3

2

They're on the run!

S: H Up V —

D: V — H Inspiration

Act: Any

Skill A B C

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

2

1

They're on the run!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H Inspiration V —

Act: Any

Skill A B

Adrenalin
Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

1

18

You spot a weakness!

S: V — H Up

D: V Up H —

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A D

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

18

17

You spot a weakness!

S: H Up V —

D: V Up H —

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill B C

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

17

16

You spot a weakness!

S: H Up V —

D: H — V Up

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill B D

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

16

15

You try to outflank!

S: V — H Flurry

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Possible Setback

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

15

14

You try to outflank!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Complication

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

14

13

You try to outflank!

S: H Flurry V —

D: H Fatigue V —

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Critical Problem

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

13

12

You try to outflank!

S: V — H Flurry

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B D

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

12

11

You try to outflank!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

11

10

You try to outflank!

S: H Flurry V —

D: H Fatigue V —

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A B

Add +3 to the value of Dexterity, Strength or Toughness or a related skill.

Adrenalin

10

27

You're thrown back!

S:	V Flurry	H	—
D:	V Flurry	H	—

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

Skill B D

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

27

26

You're thrown back!

S:	H	—	V Flurry
D:	V Flurry	H	—

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

Possible Setback

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

26

25

You're thrown back!

S:	H	—	V Up
D:	H Fatigue	V	—

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

Complication

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

25

24

You're thrown back!

S:	V Up	H	—
D:	V —	H	Fatigue

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

Critical Problem

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

24

23

You spot a weakness!

S:	H Up	V	—
D:	V —	H	—

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B C D

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

23

22

You spot a weakness!

S:	H Up	V	—
D:	H —	V	—

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B D

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

22

21

You spot a weakness!

S:	V —	H	Up
D:	V Up	H	—

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B C

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

21

20

You spot a weakness!

S:	H Up	V	—
D:	V Up	H	—

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

20

19

You spot a weakness!

S:	H Up	V	—
D:	H —	V	Up

Act: TAUNT/INTIMIDATION

Skill A C

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Willpower

19

28

Willpower

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Skill B C

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

D: H Setback V Flurry

S: H — V Flurry

You're thrown back!

28

29

Willpower

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Skill A D

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

D: V — H Setback

S: H — V Flurry

You're thrown back!

29

30

Willpower

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Skill A C

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

D: V Flurry H —

S: V — H Fatigue

You're thrown back!

30

31

Willpower

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Skill A B

Act: DEFEND/TRICK

D: H Setback V —

S: H Fatigue V —

You're thrown back!

31

32

Willpower

Add +3 to the value of Perception or Mind or a related skill.

Skill A B C

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

D: V — H —

S: H — V Stymied

You seek an advantage!

32

33

Alertness

You notice an otherwise unseen item, character, or clue. Set this card out, facing the GM.

Skill A B D

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

D: V — H —

S: V Stymied H —

You seek an advantage!

33

34

Alertness

You notice an otherwise unseen item, character, or clue. Set this card out, facing the GM.

Skill A B C D

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

D: H Fatigue V —

S: H — V Stymied

You seek an advantage!

34

35

Alertness

You notice an otherwise unseen item, character, or clue. Set this card out, facing the GM.

Critical Problem

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

D: V — H —

S: H — V Stymied

You seek an advantage!

35

36

Action

+3 to the bonus of any action.

Complication

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

D: V — H —

S: V Stymied H —

You seek an advantage!

36

45

They hesitate!

S:	V —	H Flurry
D:	V —	H —

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A B C D

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

45

44

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V —
D:	V —	H —

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A B D

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

44

43

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V —
D:	H —	V —

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A B C

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

43

42

They hesitate!

S:	V —	H Flurry
D:	V —	H —

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A B

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

42

41

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V —
D:	V —	H Fatigue

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A C

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

41

40

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V —
D:	H Fatigue	V —

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Skill A D

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

40

39

You seek an advantage!

S:	V Stymied	H —
D:	V —	H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B C

Action

+3 to the bonus of any action.

39

38

You seek an advantage!

S:	H —	V Stymied
D:	V —	H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B D

Action

+3 to the bonus of any action.

38

37

You seek an advantage!

S:	H —	V Stymied
D:	H Fatigue	V —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Possible Setback

Action

+3 to the bonus of any action.

37

54

Closer to victory!

S:	V Fatigue	H	—
D:	V —	H	Flurry

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B C

Master Plan

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

54

53

Closer to victory!

S:	H —	V	Fatigue
D:	V —	H	Flurry

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B

Master Plan

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

53

52

Closer to victory!

S:	H —	V	Fatigue
D:	H Flurry	V	—

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill A C

Master Plan

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

52

51

Closer to victory!

S:	V Fatigue	H	—
D:	V —	H	Flurry

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill A D

Master Plan

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

51

50

Closer to victory!

S:	H —	V	Fatigue
D:	V —	H	Flurry

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill B C

Master Plan

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

50

49

Closer to victory!

S:	H —	V	Fatigue
D:	H Flurry	V	—

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill B D

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

49

48

Closer to victory!

S:	V —	H	Up
D:	V —	H	Flurry

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Possible Setback

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

48

47

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V	—
D:	V —	H	—

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Complication

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

47

46

They hesitate!

S:	H Flurry	V	—
D:	H —	V	—

Act: ATTACK/TAUNT

Critical Problem

Haste

You gain a bonus action at any time during the round.

46

61

They regroup!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill B C

You may either keep the current card on the action stack for another round, or flip a new one for this round.

Seize Initiative

61

62

They regroup!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A D

You may either keep the current card on the action stack for another round, or flip a new one for this round.

Seize Initiative

62

63

They regroup!

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V Up H —

Act: MANEUVER/TRICK

Skill A C

You may either keep the current card on the action stack for another round, or flip a new one for this round.

Seize Initiative

63

58

They regroup!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: TEST/TRICK

Complication

+3 to the bonus of any action.

Action

58

59

They regroup!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: TEST/TRICK

Possible Setback

+3 to the bonus of any action.

Action

59

60

They regroup!

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: TEST/TRICK

Skill B D

You may either keep the current card on the action stack for another round, or flip a new one for this round.

Seize Initiative

60

55

Closer to victory!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H Flurry V —

Act: TEST/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B D

You may pick up any card just discarded in exchange for this one.

Master Plan

55

56

They regroup!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: V — H —

Act: TEST/TRICK

Skill A B C D

+3 to the bonus of any action.

Action

56

57

They regroup!

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V — H —

Act: TEST/TRICK

Critical Problem

+3 to the bonus of any action.

Action

57

72

Comeback!

S: V — H —

D: V — H Inspiration

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B C

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

72

71

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill B D

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

71

70

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: H — V Up

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Possible Setback

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

70

69

They strike!

S: V — H Fatigue

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Complication

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

69

68

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Critical Problem

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

68

67

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: H — V Up

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B C D

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

67

66

They strike!

S: V — H Fatigue

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B D

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

66

65

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B C

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

65

64

They strike!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: H — V Up

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B

Hero
May be played as an additional Possibility.

64

81

You take it to them!

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A B

Connection

You know someone in the area who can aid you.

81

80

You take it to them!

S: H — V Breaks

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A C

Alertness

You notice an otherwise unseen item, character, or clue. Set this card out facing the GM.

80

79

The going gets tough!

S: H Setback V —

D: H — V Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A D

Second Chance

You may immediately re-attempt any action at which you have just failed.

79

78

The going gets tough!

S: V — H Setback

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B C

Rally

All players may discard and immediately refill their hands.

78

77

The going gets tough!

S: H — V —

D: V — H —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B D

Opponent Fails

This card negates an opponent's successful action upon you.

77

76

The going gets tough!

S: H — V —

D: H Setback V Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill Complication

Opponent Fails

This card negates an opponent's successful action upon you.

76

75

The going gets tough!

S: V — H —

D: V — H Fatigue

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B C D

Opponent Fails

This card negates an opponent's successful action upon you.

75

74

Comeback!

S: H — V —

D: H Inspiration V —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B D

Opponent Fails

This card negates an opponent's successful action upon you.

74

73

Comeback!

S: H — V —

D: H Inspiration V —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B C

Hero

May be played as an additional Possibility.

73

88

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B C

Idea

Used to gain clues indicating the next course of action you should take.

88

89

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B D

Idea

Used to gain clues indicating the next course of action you should take.

89

90

You give up ground!

S: V — H —

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A B C D

Second Chance

You may immediately re-attempt any action at which you have just failed.

90

85

You take it to them!

S: H — V Breaks

D: H Flurry V Up

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A D

Idea

Used to gain clues indicating the next course of action you should take.

85

86

You take it to them!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A C

Idea

Used to gain clues indicating the next course of action you should take.

86

87

You take it to them!

S: V — H Flurry

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A B

Second Chance

You may immediately re-attempt any action at which you have just failed.

87

82

You take it to them!

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H Flurry V Up

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A B C

Connection

You know someone in the area who can aid you.

82

83

You take it to them!

S: H Flurry V —

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A B D

Connection

You know someone in the area who can aid you.

83

84

You take it to them!

S: V — H Flurry

D: V Up H Flurry

Act: MANEUVER/INTIMID.

Skill A B C D

Connection

You know someone in the area who can aid you.

84

99

You're driven back!

S: V — H Fatigue

D: V Flurry H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Complication

99

Presence

Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

98

You're driven back!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V Flurry H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Possible Setback

98

Presence

Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

97

You're driven back!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: H Confused V Flurry

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Critical Problem

97

Presence

Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

96

You're driven back!

S: V — H Fatigue

D: V Flurry H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Skill A B

96

Presence

Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

95

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: V Up H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill A C

95

Monologue

All hostile actions cease while you make a dramatic speech.

94

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill B C

94

Glory

Played after a roll of 60+. This card increases the adventure award by three Possibilities.

93

You give up ground!

S: V — H —

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill B C

93

Glory

Played after a roll of 60+. This card increases the adventure award by three Possibilities.

92

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Skill B D

92

Glory

Played after a roll of 60+. This card increases the adventure award by three Possibilities.

91

You give up ground!

S: H — V —

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: DEFEND/TAUNT

Complication

91

Glory

Played after a roll of 60+. This card increases the adventure award by three Possibilities.

108

Do you risk an opening?

S: V — H Inspiration

D: H — V Flurry

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill B C

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

108

107

Do you risk an opening?

S: H — V Breaks

D: V Flurry H —

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill B D

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

107

106

Do you risk an opening?

S: H — V Stymied

D: H — V Flurry

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill A B C D

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

106

105

Do you risk an opening?

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V Flurry H —

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill A B C

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

105

104

Do you risk an opening?

S: H Inspiration V —

D: V Flurry H —

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill A B

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

104

103

You're driven back!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V Flurry H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Skill A C

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

103

102

You're driven back!

S: V — H Fatigue

D: V — H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Skill A D

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

102

101

You're driven back!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: V — H Confused

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Skill B C

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

101

100

You're driven back!

S: H Fatigue V —

D: H Confused V Flurry

Act: DEFEND/TEST

Skill B D

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

100

117

"I have you now!"

S:	V Fatigue	H —
D:	V Trick/ Intimidation	H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A D

Coup De Grace
This card allows you to add +3 to your effect value.

117

116

"I have you now!"

S:	H —	V Fatigue
D:	V Trick/ Taunt	H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill B C

Coup De Grace
This card allows you to add +3 to your effect value.

116

115

"I have you now!"

S:	H —	V Fatigue
D:	H Stymied	V Trick/ Taunt

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill B D

Coup De Grace
This card allows you to add +3 to your effect value.

115

114

"I have you now!"

S:	V Fatigue	H —
D:	V Trick/ Taunt	H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B C D

Coup De Grace
This card allows you to add +3 to your effect value.

114

113

"I have you now!"

S:	H —	V Fatigue
D:	V Trick/ Taunt	H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B D

Coup De Grace
This card allows you to add +3 to your effect value.

113

112

"I have you now!"

S:	H —	V Fatigue
D:	H Setback	V Trick/ Taunt

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B C

Campaign
If a player and the GM both agree, this card makes a subplot permanent.

112

111

Do you risk an opening?

S:	V Stymied	H —
D:	V Flurry	H —

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill A B

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

111

110

Do you risk an opening?

S:	H —	V Stymied
D:	V Flurry	H —

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill A C

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

110

109

Do you risk an opening?

S:	H —	V Stymied
D:	H —	V Flurry

Act: ATTACK/DEFEND

Skill AD

Presence
Add +3 to the value of Charisma, Spirit, or a related skill.

109

126

"The battle is mine!"

S: H — V —

D: V Trick/ Intimidation H —

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A C

126

Nemesis

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

125

"The battle is mine!"

S: H — V —

D: V Trick/ Intimidation H —

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A D

125

Personal Stake

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

124

"The battle is mine!"

S: H — V —

D: H Stymied V Trick/ Test

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B C

124

True Identity

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

123

"The battle is mine!"

S: V — H —

D: V Trick/Test H —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill B D

123

Mistaken Identity

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

122

"The battle is mine!"

S: H — V —

D: V Trick/Test H —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B C D

122

Martyr

Subplot. You may defeat any opponent at the cost of your own life.

121

"The battle is mine!"

S: H — V —

D: H Stymied V Trick/ Test

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B D

121

Romance

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

120

"The battle is mine!"

S: V — H —

D: V Trick/Test H —

Act: MANEUVER/TEST

Skill A B C

120

Romance

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

119

"I have you now!"

S: V Fatigue H —

D: V Trick/ Intimidation H —

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A B

119

Second Chance

You may immediately re-attempt any action at which you have just failed.

118

"I have you now!"

S: H — V Fatigue

D: H Stymied V Trick/ Intimidation

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A C

118

Second Chance

You may immediately re-attempt any action at which you have just failed.

135

That old chestnut?

S: V Setback H —

D: V Test/ Intimidation H —

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A B

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

135

134

That old chestnut?

S: H — V Setback

D: V Test/ Intimidation H —

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A C

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

134

133

"I shall triumph!"

S: H — V —

D: H Stymied V Test/ Taunt

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill A D

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

133

132

"I shall triumph!"

S: V — H —

D: V Test/ Taunt H —

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill B C

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

132

131

"I shall triumph!"

S: H — V —

D: V Test/ Taunt H —

Act TAUNT/TEST

Skill B D

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

131

130

"I shall triumph!"

S: H — V —

D: H Stymied V Test/ Taunt

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill A B C D

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

130

129

"I shall triumph!"

S: V — H —

D: V Taunt/ Intimidation H —

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill A B D

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

129

128

"I shall triumph!"

S: H — V —

D: V Taunt/ Intimidation H —

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill A B C

Drama

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

128

127

"I shall triumph!"

S: H — V —

D: H Setback V Taunt/ Intimidation

Act: TAUNT/TEST

Skill A B

Suspicion

Subplot. May be turned in for Possibility, or gain one Possibility per Act for subplot.

127

144

"I'm not through yet!"

S:	V Breaks	H	—
D:	V Inspiration	H	—

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B C

You may play two cards into other characters' card pools from your hand and/or discard, immediately refilling your hand.

Leadership

144

143

"I'm not through yet!"

S:	H	—	V Breaks
D:	V Inspiration	H	—

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B

You may play two cards into other characters' card pools from your hand and/or discard, immediately refilling your hand.

Leadership

143

142

"I'm not through yet!"

S:	H	—	V Breaks
D:	H	—	V Inspiration

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A C

You may play two cards into other characters' card pools from your hand and/or discard, immediately refilling your hand.

Leadership

142

141

"I'm not through yet!"

S:	V Stymied	H	—
D:	V Inspiration	H	—

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A D

You may play two cards into other characters' card pools from your hand and/or discard, immediately refilling your hand.

Leadership

141

140

That old chestnut?

S:	H	—	V Flurry
D:	V Taunt/ Intimidation	H	—

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill B C

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

Drama

140

139

That old chestnut?

S:	H	—	V Flurry
D:	H Stymied	V	Taunt/ Intimidation

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill B D

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

Drama

139

138

That old chestnut?

S:	V Flurry	H	—
D:	V Test/ Intimidation	H	—

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A B C D

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

Drama

138

137

That old chestnut?

S:	H	—	V Flurry
D:	V Test/ Intimidation	H	—

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A B D

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

Drama

137

136

That old chestnut?

S:	H	—	V —
D:	H Setbackd	V	Test/ Taunt

Act: MANEUVER/TAUNT

Skill A B C

May be used as a Hero card or turned in after the adventure is over for three Possibilities.

Drama

136

153

You warily engage.

S: V — H —

D: V — H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B D

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

153

152

You warily engage.

S: H — V —

D: V — H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B C

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

152

151

You warily engage.

S: H — V —

D: H — V —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A B

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

151

150

You warily engage.

S: V — H —

D: V — H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill A C

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

150

149

You warily engage.

S: H — V —

D: V — H —

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

Skill AD

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

149

148

"Oh no !"

S: H — V Breaks

D: H — V Setback

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill BC

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

148

147

"Oh no!"

S: V Breaks H —

D: V Setback H —

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill B D

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

147

146

"I'm back!"

S: H — V Breaks

D: V Inspiration H —

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B C D

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

146

145

"I'm not through yet!"

S: H — V Breaks

D: H — V Inspiration

Act: TRICK/INTIMIDATION

Skill A B D

Leadership

You may play two cards into other characters' card pools from your hand and/or discard, immediately refilling your hand.

145

154

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

Skill A B C D

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

D: H — V —

S: H — V —

You warily engage.

154

155

Supporter

+3 to any other character's bonus for any action.

Skill A D

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

D: V — H —

S: H — V —

You warily engage.

155

156

Escape!

You and your party may escape an encounter. Must be first card played into pool.

Skill A C

Act: INTIMIDATION/TRICK

D: V — H —

S: V — H —

You warily engage.

156


TORG
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TORG

WORLDBOOK

Introduction

Legends. They speak of The Place, in the Time of Nothing. The Void was alone in The Place, possessed by an unending hunger but unable to sate it. Then Eternity entered The Place, full of dreams and possibilities locked within its infinite instant with no method of release. Void and Eternity met, and The Maelstrom was formed.

The Void tasted the essence of Eternity, and it became aware of what it craved. Eternity boiled away into the Void and billions of possibilities were destroyed. Whole galaxies came and went as the Void fed. The Maelstrom endlessly tossed out possibilities that were destroyed in the whirling currents of creation. But, eventually, two possibilities survived.

The Nameless One, a being that took after the Void, was destruction personified. Apeiros, created from realized possibilities, was of Eternity's image. The two waged a war of creation and destruction - Apeiros setting possibilities free, the Nameless One feeding on their power. But as fast as the Nameless One could feed, Apeiros could create. There could be no victor. Then the Nameless One invoked the Void.

With no other course available, Apeiros left The Place. It appealed to Eternity and saw an infinite number of possibilities opened before it. Apeiros took them all, diffusing the possibilities throughout the new place — throughout the cosmverse.

The Nameless One, now alone in The Place with the Void, vowed to hunt down Apeiros and Eternity, no matter how long it took. It used what limited creative powers it had learned during its war against Apeiros to create the Darkness Devices. Then it sent these items of evil into the cosmverse to perpetuate acts of destruction and capture the dispersed shards of Eternity.

Legends. They tell of the discovery of the first Darkness Device, and how it elevated its possessor to High Lord and then led him to other cosms to destroy and drain possibilities. Thus was born the first of the Possibility Raiders; thus was spoken The Prophecy — there would arise a High Lord with the knowledge and power to absorb so much energy as to become immortal, all powerful, a god. And this High Lord would be called the Torg!

Legends. They whisper of the Gaunt Man, most powerful of the High Lords. It was he who discovered Earth, a world richer in possibilities than any ever discovered before. It was he who planned the Possibility Raid, gathered other High Lords to help him, and orchestrated the conquest. It was he who proclaimed himself Torg!

The Near Now. It is a time of legends in the making, of designs that do not proceed as smoothly as planned. It is a time of The Possibility Wars!

The Possibility Wars have sundered Earth's reality, overlaying much of it with invading realities from other cosms. This book is an introduction to the world of the Possibility Wars. The complexities of the Possibility Wars and the invaders' realities, however, can only be touched upon in this book.

This World Book is a handy reference tool for the *Torg* universe. The invading realms of the Living Land, the Nile Empire, Aysle, the Cyberpapacy, Nippon Tech and Orrorsh, as well as what remains of Core Earth, are briefly described in this book. But these descriptions are only starting points — capsule reviews, if you will. West End Games publishes sourcebooks on each of the invading realms,



Timothy Bradstreet

and will update campaign events through the *Infiniverse Newsletter.* We recommend you pick up those sourcebooks that detail the realms that interest you the most, as well as subscribing to the newsletter. But it all begins here, and there is plenty to get you started.

Each of the chapters that follow cover one of the realms, including details on the environment and axioms, important personalities, and creatures native to the area. They also talk about relations with others realms, upcoming plans and strategies, new rules, new equipment, and other things of interest.

Using the World Book Entries

The World Book contains history, characters, creatures, spells and other rules for the realms. Some of the character templates (located in the back of this book) require the rules listed in their section. For example, the Gadget Hero needs the power rules found in the Nile Empire chapter, while the Werewolf template needs the shape change rules found in the Orrorsh chapter.

Before setting an adventure in a realm, read the realm entry to see if there are any rules or background material which are important to your adventure.

Note: A realm is a portion of Earth transformed and operating under the axioms of a different reality.

Creatures and Characters

Creatures and characters are listed with their attributes first, and these are abbreviated as follows:

DEX *(Dexterity)*, STR *(Strength)*, TOU*(Toughness)*, PER*(Perception)*, MIN *(Mind)*, *CHA (Charisma)*, SPR *(Spirit)*.

Possibility Potential. Creatures are also listed for their possibility potential, whether or not the creature is possibility rated or not. If a creature has a potential of "all", it is always possibility rated. If the creature has a possibility potential of "none", the creature is never possibility rated. If the potential is "some", the gamemaster can decide whether or not the creature is possibility rated. As a guide, there is a number given in parentheses beside the "some". You may choose to roll a die; if your final roll (rolling again on 10s and 20s) is equal to or greater than the number, the creature or character is possibility rated.

Natural Tools. Natural tools include claws and teeth, or magical abilities (but not skills), which are part of the creature or character.

Equipment. Equipment includes tools which have to be given to the character or creature. Cyberware, now part of a character's body, is considered equipment because it did not originate in that character's body. If a character type always has certain equipment, the equipment is listed under the equipment section. He may have more if you decide to give it to him.

Skills. Creatures and characters may have skills which are only used defensively, as the difficulty numbers for another character's actions. Most commonly these are interaction skills; while it may be very difficult to taunt an Udatok, it is certainly not the case that an Udatok could easily taunt your average character. Defensive skills are listed parenthetically next to the skill names.

If a creature or character is listed with an ability which is not found in the Rule Book, it will be defined in the realm chapter where it is listed.

Currency

As the High Lords have invaded Core Earth, they have brought with them their own societies, with their own economic systems. One of the most obvious differences is the currency they use. In the Rule Book, the prices for equipment are given in Core Earth US dollars. The table below gives the equivalents for the currency of other realms.

For the game, you often need the values of the measure of money for determining equipment availability. If the price is given in dollars, you just look up the value of the measure of that number of dollars. For other currency use the value modifier listed in the realm column, applying it to the value of the measure.

Example: The price of a Peugeot 707 is 50,000 francs in the Cyberpapacy. A measure of 50,000 has a value of 24. The modifier for a price given in francs is -4; the value for determining availability is 20, which is the same as saying 50,000 francs is worth approximately 10,000 dollars.

The column labeled US$ translates the values of dollar prices into the value of realm currency. You can use The Torg Value Chart (Rule Book, page 43) instead of dividing the price in dollars by the exchange rate to find the realm price.

Example: You believe the price of a Nippon Tech motorcycle should be about $2500. A measure of 2500 has a value of 17. The modifier is +11, for a yen value of 28. The motorcyle costs 400,000 yen.

In the World Book entries, all values are given in terms of US$ for checking equipment availability. The prices are given in the local currency of the realm.

	Unit	Equivalent in Core Earth US $	Value Modifiers Realm	US $
Aysle	Trades	0.50	-2	+2
Equipment	Dollar	1.00	0	0
Cyberpapacy	Franc	0.15	-4	+4
Living Land	barter	na	na	na
New Nile	Royal	10.00	+5	-5
Nippon Tech	Yen	0.007	-11	+11
Orrorsh	Sterlings	5.00	+4	-4



Chapter One

Core Earth and the Still World

The Possibility Raiders came from alien cosms of differing realities, invading Earth in order to strip this cosm of its enormous amount of possibility energy. The invasion was coordinated by the Gaunt Man, the High Lord of Orrorsh. Earth was too large a prize for even so powerful a High Lord, so the Gaunt Man contacted others to help him invade Earth.

He contacted Baruk Kaah with his primitive reality, a reality higher in spiritual energies than any other cosm subdued by a High Lord. The Gaunt Man cajoled Uthorion, once his chief officer and now lord of the fantasy cosm of Aysle, into participating in the invasion, although Lord Uthorion was suspicious and had goals of his own. Another of the Gaunt Man's ex-lieutenants, now High Lord of a techno-horror realm, was invited to join, and accepted in light of recent setbacks. Pope Jean Malraux I, High Lord and antipope of a dark, medieval world, was asked in by both the Gaunt Man and Uthorion. Through an elaborate maze of contacts, the lord of Orrorsh contacted Dr. Mobius, the insane genius who proclaims himself Pharaoh of a reality where the Nile Empire still exists. Finally, a series of complex, tense and expensive negotiations with the Kanawa Corporation brought the Nippon Tech cosm into the plan.

The Gaunt Man's Prize

From his squat, ugly observatory in Orrorsh, the Gaunt Man, most powerful of the current High Lords, began his search for new worlds to plunder. He sent agents via dimthreads to dozens, then hundreds, of cosms in search of one filled with enough possibility energy that he might fulfill an ancient and legendary prophecy — that he might become the Torg. Decades of futile expeditions were necessary. Thousands of valuable agents disappeared or were destroyed. But the Gaunt Man perservered. Eventually he found Earth.

The High Lord was astonished by the amount of possibility energy which flowed through Earth. At a loss to explain why this single planet was situated in such a dense possibility nexi, the Gaunt Man was not about to overlook his good fortune. He prepared for the invasion by sending several of his best agents through. Their appearance was spread over many, many years, for the Gaunt Man approached Earth cautiously. This prize, more than any of his earlier plunders, had to be understood in order to be fully exploited. Earth could be the cosm which made the Gaunt Man the Torg, a true immortal with god-like powers.

The invasion ran into an obstacle large enough to temporarily halt the Gaunt Man's plans. Earth had too much possibility energy. In every invasion there is a contest of realities, in which possibility energy surges from the invading cosm, then from the defending cosm, then back to the invading cosm, until one reality is triumphant (see page 92 of The Rule Book). Each High Lord uses his Darkness Device to sustain and absorb the surge from the defending cosm. But the defensive surge from Earth was too large to be handled by Orrorsh. The excess energy would destroy stelae, removing the protective boundary from the invading reality, and Earth's reality would quickly reassert itself.

The Gaunt Man experimented, theorized, worked obsessively on the difficulties of draining Earth, but the problem remained beyond even his enormous powers. After years of brooding, the Gaunt Man decided there was only one solution: invade Earth from several cosms within a short span of time. This tactic would spread the defensive surge across a number of cosms, and allow all of them to survive.

The Gaunt Man's calculation indicated that nine cosms was the safest number for invasion. With nine there would be no chance of failure. The minimum number which had any chance of succeeding was four; with four invading cosms there was a slight chance Earth's possibility surge would not eradicate all four invading realities. At five through eight, the chances of an invading realm being eliminated dropped off rapidly, and Earth's surge manifested itself in more or fewer stormers. In the end, the Gaunt Man decided to invade with seven cosms, giving each High Lord a substantial gain in possibility energy, while being safe enough to virtually guarantee the success of the invasion.

Now the Gaunt Man's large problem was broken down into two smaller problems— finding six other High Lords he could trust (or manipulate) well enough to plan the invasion, and then coordinate the details of the invasion.

The High Lords Attack

The invasion took a number of years to prepare. The High Lords sent agents to infiltrate Earth, to scout and report on the forms and strength of resistance. Most cosms, but particularly the False Papacy and Nippon Tech, sent agents to help prepare the people of Earth to accept the new realities which were about to establish bridgeheads. A few weird events were reported, but only the tabloids carried the news. Then, as the cycle of events quickened, respectable news agencies carried the news. Reuters, the BBC, Gemini News Service, Asiaweek, Le Monde, IRNA, all began to carry stories as too much physical evidence was gathered to be ignored. Only in Nippon Tech were the effects virtually invisible, as the Kanawa Corporation worked carefully to integrate itself into the existing society before changing reality.

The Gaunt Man was the first to invade, dropping a maelstrom bridge in Indonesia. He brought with him a formidable army of horrors, more than enough to establish a pure zone. Most of the army then splintered into small groups, more herded than led by the agents who had been previously sent to Indonesia. Sabotage and reality storms did their work; for a short period of time Indonesia was completely cut off from the rest of the world. The incidents of terror increased a hundredfold.

Almost immediately the Gaunt Man moved his Darkness Device and his possibility machine to the realm of Orrorsh on Earth. At the same time he unleashed waves of savagery across the countryside, and in their wake he planted fields of gospog.

The second invasion came from the Living Land. Baruk Kaah dropped three bridges down onto North America, one in Canada and two in the United States. Whole tribes of edeinos swarmed down the bridges. Extremely violent reality storms wracked North America as two hugely disparate realities struggled against one another. Huge winged reptiles called lakten were pushed beyond their breaking point, held together only by the power of faith of their riders; these edeinos then planted stelae to increase their High Lord's demesne.

Canadian and United States military forces were devastatingly effective outside of the stelae bounds, but virtually useless within the reality of the Living Land. Official doctrine is not changing as fast as the battlefield conditions, and a few field-brewed solutions are being attempted. Security forces currently have their hands full trying to maintain order in the areas they still hold, as there are millions of refugees streaming away from the Living Land.

The fantasy cosm of Aysle invaded next with several bridges, but the High Lord Uthorion declined to personally partake in the invasion, holding back until the situation became a little more stable for his tastes. Transformation of the Scottish countryside, and many of its people, posed the most immediate danger to the United Kingdom. As the realm of Aysle spread, the deterioration of technology became a far greater problem than the occasional pixie or ghost. London remained a hardpoint for the British, and Ireland and parts of Wales seemed to be less affected.

Norway fell completely to the invaders. Resistance continues, but Viking raiders have taken over many of the smaller cities and cyclically loot the larger ones.

Sweden fell as the Stockholm bridge converted a large number of Swedes and allowed the Viking fleets access to the Norwegian Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia. As the Vikings roamed, the areas fell to the fantasy axioms. But the town of Mora, Sweden remained a Core Earth hardpoint. Storm Knights were drawn there, and there a plan for

Schemes Within Schemes: Uthorion and Jean Malraux

The High Lords of Aysle and the False Papacy cosms had known each other for several decades, and had developed an appreciation for each other's cynical manipulations of their suppressed peoples. Uthorion was unsettled by the Gaunt Man's offer, edgy at again dealing with his old master. But the prize was too great for him to turn down the offer. He and Jean Malraux each requested, and received, more detailed information on the invasion from the Gaunt Man. They each began to plan, then joined in a conspiracy to maximize their own gains.

Uthorion was to encourage Baruk Kaah into overextending himself, and lend him help in a destructive form, most likely the Wild Hunt. Jean Malraux was to gain territory originally allotted to Uthorion, and contain the expansion and influence of the clearly insane Dr. Mobius.

liberation formed. Small adventures were soon followed by heroic deeds. As tales of the heroes spread, the people in the Stockholm triangle began to reconnect to the Core Earth axioms. The possibility storms raged for hours, but in the end a mixed area supporting both magic and technology emerged. When the Viking fleets returned they were swiftly eliminated by Swedish airpower.

The False Papacy arrived next, reverting France to its medieval mindset and theocratic dominion.

The horror-tech realm belonging to another former lieutenant of the Gaunt Man invaded next. When the bridge dropped into the Soviet Union, that country's psychics had already located one of the stelae and Soviet forces had disposed of it. When the maelstrom bridge appeared, Core Earth quickly built a tremendous surge of possibility energy, culminating in a storm severe enough to completely eliminate the competing horror reality and remove the bridge.

The next few days produced the greatest amount of tension of the early invasion. Enough gospog fields were being harvested to provide fresh forces for the invaders. At the same time, only four cosms had successfully invaded. The possibility storms were growing more severe, threatening all four, so the High Lords could afford to pay less attention to increasing the progress of the invasion, and had to focus on retaining what they had gained so far. For a brief time it looked as though Core Earth was about to free herself from the invaders. Then the Nile Empire arrived.

Dr. Mobius quickly established himself as Pharaoh of a new Egyptian empire. With him came an army equipped with reality bombs, weird science constructs which allowed them to temporarily overrun a battlefield with their own reality, denying Core Earth troops the use of most of their best weapons. The Pharaoh's armies made two lightning strikes. The first against Israel, the second (and far longer) strike south through Sudan into Ethiopia and beyond. Dr. Mobius was extravagant in his expansion, covering vast tracts of desert with precious stelae. This act alone was enough to convince most of the High Lords that Mobius, if perhaps brilliant, was completely insane.

Dr. Mobius and his Nile Empire represented the fifth cosm, distributing Earth's retaliatory energy five ways; the timely appearance greatly increased the chances of the Possibility Raiders, significantly enough to convince the Kanawa Corporation that there was now more to be gained by joining the invasion than in trying to subvert it. The first bridge came down silently, almost invisibly. Kanawa Corporation began their expansion in the same manner of controlled quiet, and the Nippon Tech realm was formed.

Schemes Within Schemes: The Kanawa Plan

To: Kanawa Corporation; Section Blue Mountain.
From: Kanawa Corporation; Section Harvest Gold.
Date: Code 14 Office Access Denied.

Kanawa Sama,

The weather in Moscow was beautiful yesterday, and although I could not identify the sweet fragrance in the breeze, I was reminded of the calming air of your garden. I well remember the perfect Yorosai and the arrangement along the walk. It was by the Yorosai that you imparted the wisdom which I have kept close to me, the wisdom which has always guided me as I travel these new lands.

While I am sure you already know this, I would be remiss in my duty if I did not give you my conclusions in the matter for which I have traveled so far.

First, little direct aid must be given the Soviet government, and less indirect aid, in order to assure their discovery of the stelae. Their Bureau of Psychic Research has several promising candidates, and they are most likely to find the invasion site without our intervention. They should be able to destroy the stelae before the Gaunt Man's client lord can establish a bridge. The realm should then be destroyed when the bridge drops. I recommend we shift covert resources to sufficiently damaging the Soviet infrastructure so that they will accept our invitations of direct aid.

Second, we should increase our contact with this Wu-Han of the Nile Empire. His desire for superior technology is strong, and if we can convince him to delay Mobius' entrance into Egypt, there will be only four realms on Earth: the Gaunt Man's, Baruk Kaah's, Uthorion's and Jean Malraux's. Each would be destroyed by the powerful surge of this cosm's possiblity energy. With one blow we could rid ourselves of two competitors and badly damage two others.

Core Earth

The areas of Earth not conquered by the Possibility Raiders are collectively referred to as Core Earth. Much of Core Earth is in turmoil, as the political, military, and social upheaval caused by the invasion continues to grow. But resolve is growing, and possibility-rated Storm Knights are appearing faster than the High Lords can destroy them. Core Earth faces a grim situation. But Core Earth is not without hope.

Africa

Africa is reeling from the rapid expansion of the Nile Empire, while Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia are also preoccupied with the appearance of the Cyberpapacy. During the initial confusion following the invasion, Angola, Mozambique, South Africa and Zimbabwe took advantage of being out of the international spotlight by engaging in ferocious bloodletting to settle old scores. As Soviet-



supplied weapons began to dry up, South Africa gained the upper hand. Then its economy teetered on the brink of collapse, partially from strikes, largely from Mobius suddenly producing gold, diamonds and minerals in quantity (and cheaply enough) to provide virtually all of the world's dwindling needs. Coupled with the loss of Israel as a technological partner, South Africa halted its offensives. The nations of southern Africa are now in an uneasy truce, willing to put energy into keeping their own house in order rather than pummeling themselves.

The central African nations, spearheaded by Zaire and Kenya, are attempting to form a united front to deal with Mobius and the Nile, but Mobius has plans which so far keep frustrating the diplomatic initiatives. Libya has arranged a separate peace with the Nile Empire, but for how long is anybody's guess.

Asia

The rise of the Kanawa Corporation and the coming of Nippon Tech has been largely invisible. This invisibility is due in part to the carefully laid plans of the Kanawa Corporation, partly due to the distractions — dinosaurs in New York, witchburnings in France, dragons over London, and horrible occurrences in next door Indonesia — which have softened the focus on Japan. Core Earth nations desperately need the industrial might of Japan, and they are willing to look a little blindly at changes in the internal workings of that nation.

Korea, China, and the Soviet Union are the only nations whose governments have branches which suspect something is amiss in Japan, and they are keeping quiet about it for the moment. Other Pacific nations have become mildly concerned by the increasingly interventionist rhetoric coming out of Tokyo, rhetoric with eerie echoes of Imperial Japan's Co-Prosperity Sphere philosophy prior to World War II, but the leadership of Japan is still sought in this time of crisis.

India has been drawn into the conflict spiritually more than materially, as many of the myriad spiritual sites in India have increased their power. Thousands of pilgrims drawn to these sites are not even aware of why they were called. Many stay in India, but some journey out again. Most of those who journey out travel to Sumatra or Java to help build the spiritual resistance against the horror realm.

The Phillipines and Thailand are locked in a struggle with Orrorsh. Their valiant struggle is doomed if they are forced to face the horror realm without help.

Australia

Australia is entrenching. Creatures have been boiling out of Orrorsh, whose southernmost boundary is within a couple hours boat travel from Australia. Perth is preparing for a siege. Many have chosen to flee to the east, but those who have stayed are staying for the long haul. Churches are used as storehouses with the rationale that they are most resistant to the forces of evil, and civilians are not allowed to travel alone. The government is trying to secure adequate supplies for what they believe will be a bloody, protracted struggle. They are purchasing most of their materials from Japan, and they are receiving a small quantity of goods from Japan in a lend-lease style program. Australia is in turn lending what aid they can to the Phillipines, less to Thailand, as they too are battling Orrorsh.

Europe

Germany has reunified in the chaos of the early days of the Possibility Wars, consolidating their nations for mutual defense. With the Soviets suffering from internal upheaval made worse by Kanawa provocateurs, Germany has become Core Earth's largest economic power. There is still cooperation between Germany and Japan,

as Bonn has little reason to suspect Nippon Tech even exists. Germany is doing what it can to halt the Cyberpapacy and help African nations slow the advance of the Nile Empire. While the vast majority of American troops have returned to the United States, a few units are "on loan" to the German government, being supplied from existing NATO stockpiles.

Italy is locked in a death struggle with the Cyberpapacy. The Antipope Jean Malraux I has declared the Core Earth Roman Pope to be, or at least allied with, the antichrist. Avignon and Rome battle for the souls of millions of worshippers, and the military might involved pales in comparison to the spiritual significance of the struggle. Spain is leaning toward Rome in this struggle.

Eastern Europe is slowly gravitating toward the German sphere of influence as the USSR wanes. Greece and Turkey had a brief five-day clash over Cyprus, but then aggression from the Nile Empire cooled that conflict.

The Middle East

Saudi Arabia is buying every weapons system they can get their hands on, mostly from the Germans and the Japanese. German and American advisors are trying to help the Saudis counter the threat of Dr. Mobius. Help is pouring in from the Islamic world as Mobius is increasing troop concentrations at Bur Sudan, across the Red Sea from Mecca. Jordan and Iraq have received permission to send troops through Saudi Arabia. Syria and Iran may soon receive similar permission.

North America

Canada and the United States have been invaded from Takta Ker, as Baruk Kaah forms the Living Land realm. There are still large areas of these two nations not under the dominion of the primitive High Lord. While the Canadian government is struggling in Regina, Saskatchewan, the turmoil suffered by the United States is even greater. The President and Vice-President disappeared while attending a United Nations conference when the invasion began. The Speaker of the House assumed the Presidency, appointed the Secretary of Defense as Vice-President, and was assassinated during his first few weeks in office, after establishing the Delphi Council to deal with the crisis at hand. The new President, Dennis Quartermain, is a member of the Delphi Council, and is restoring what order he can to the nation.

Mexico has a severe refugee problem, as tens of thousands of people are crossing the border to escape the changes further north. Many of them are repatriates, returning to the country of their birth. Some are Americans desperate to flee the alien war which threatens to engulf the whole continent. Food, water, and basic necessities are in short supply, especially since France stopped shipping aid. Mexico is turning away from the United States, and is working with the nations of Central and South America to form a joint policy on the invasion.

South and Central America

Argentina, Mexico and Brazil are spearheading initiatives to form a joint coalition against the invaders. Colombia, Bolivia and Peru are consolidating their hold on their own countries, sweeping clear the drug lords whose markets have largely disintegrated. Religious revival, support of the Pope in Rome, and education in cultural heritage to support Core Earth beliefs are among the first items on the agenda.

Baruk Kaah appears to be the nearest threat, but emotionally the Cyberpapacy is far more dangerous and occupies a greater portion of policymakers' time. This interest is returned by Jean Malraux I, who has shown an intense interest in the leaders of traditionally Catholic nations. Cyberpapal agents have been agitating in South America, but so far with only very limited effect.

The Still World

To become Torg requires three basic conditions. The first is a tremendous quantity of possibility energy. Second is gathering a vast amount of physical energy, energy equal to thousands upon millions of times the energy of the Earth's entire nuclear arsenal. The third is the ability to sort possibilities, which the Gaunt Man accomplished by building a device which used stormers as sensing devices. The Gaunt Man has hoarded possibility energy for years, and with the huge potential of Earth's cosm before him he could quickly strip the Earth of what he needed.

The physical energy required would be more problematical. To this problem the Gaunt Man harnessed his considerable knoweldge, filtered through his personal bent to cause misery in as spectacular a way as possible. The solution he eventually decided upon was slowing the Earth's rotation so that it matched its period of revolution. Doing so would face the same portion of Earth toward the sun all year long, causing nearly boiling temperatures on the light side, while freezing the dark side. It more than amused him that the other Possibility Raiders would not have time to strip the Earth of its possibilities before the world's population became extinct.

Using a combination of eldritch knowledge and Orrorsh physical engineering, the Gaunt Man built the machine necessary for the job, a machine patently impossible by the reality of Core Earth. It worked too well, absorbed and distributed heat too perfectly. Even so, the Gaunt Man had to send agents to mystically prepare several volcanoes around Indonesia to accept what little heat bled off from the machine.

The machine was built, piece by piece, by his agents, at a spot on the ocean floor several nautical miles due north of Christmas Island, in the Java Trench. When the Gaunt Man invaded, the machine was within a stelae bounded area, and could now work within Orrorsh axioms. Earth's rotation began to slow. The linked volcanoes erupted in their most fiery display ever, spewing dark ash high into the atmosphere to be carried by the winds around the world.

The plan was working perfectly, until a group of Storm Knights (as chronicled in *The Possibility Wars* novel trilogy) interfered with his efforts,

neutralizing the Gaunt Man. Thratchen, a demon who helped ease the Gaunt Man to his demise, had no real knowledge of this portion of the Gaunt Man's plans. He did not even know the location of the machine. While this would-be lord of horror had reason to stop the Gaunt Man's device, he had no way of doing so. The Still World arrived despite no one remaining who wanted it.

Still World Climate

The adventure in the Adventure Book, "Before the Dawn", chronicles a party of Storm Knights' efforts to find the Gaunt Man's machine and begin to respin the Earth, using Orrorsh technology against its master's intentions. In *Torg* products, we assume the Storm Knights succeed. If they do not, or if another High Lord tries to stop Earth again (with the Gaunt Man's machine or a method of his own choosing), or if you simply like that as a campaign setting, the section below describes the condition of the Still World over time.

Four Days

North and South America are in the light, portions of Britain, France, Spain and Africa are in perpetual twilight. The heating and cooling begin very rapidly; the interior of the Americas is 140 degrees fahrenheit or greater. At that temperature no common Core Earth cooling technology works. Refrigeration, air conditioning, and the like break down.

Central Asia goes into a deep freeze which is still barely livable. The twilight nations settle into temperatures ranging from the 40s to 60s. Storms begin to rage along the twilight zone. They only get worse as time goes on.

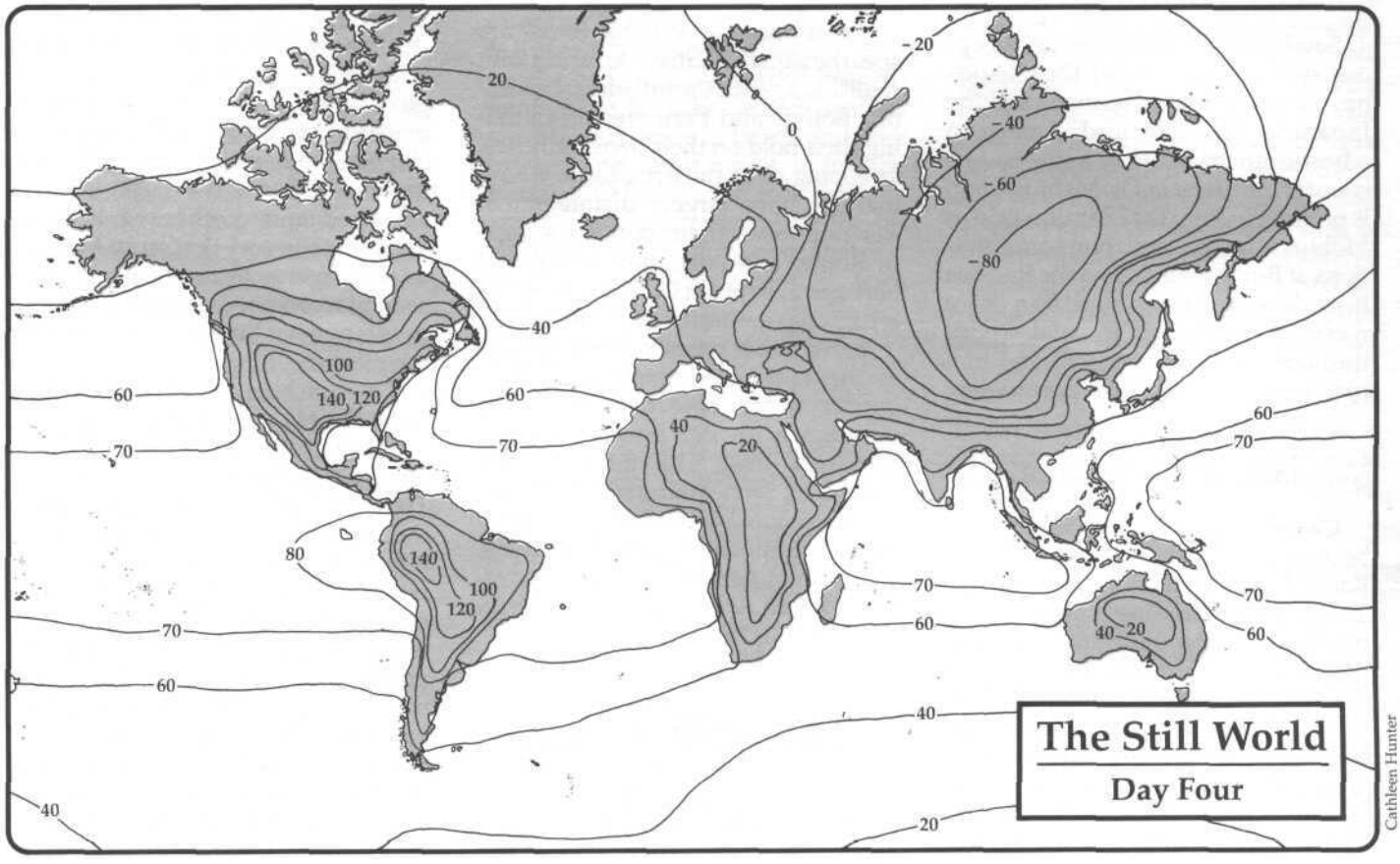
One Month

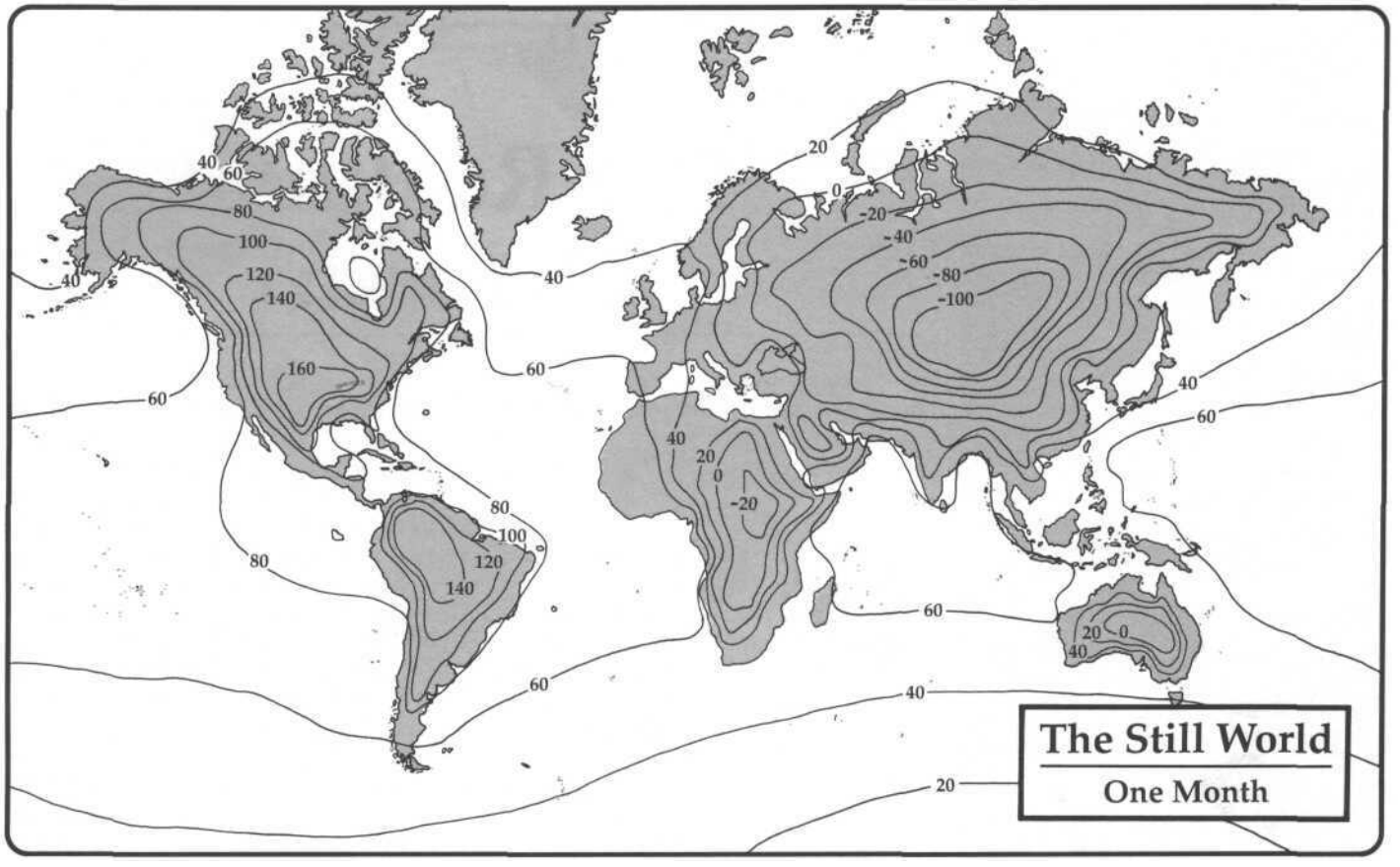
The interior of North and South America are dead lands. Much of the Amazon Rain Forest is destroyed. Alaska has warmed to the 40s and 60s, and the coastal areas of the Americas, particularly those to the extreme north or south, are livable. Greenland looks good for real estate speculators. The Antarctic icecap begins expanding north into the Indian Ocean.

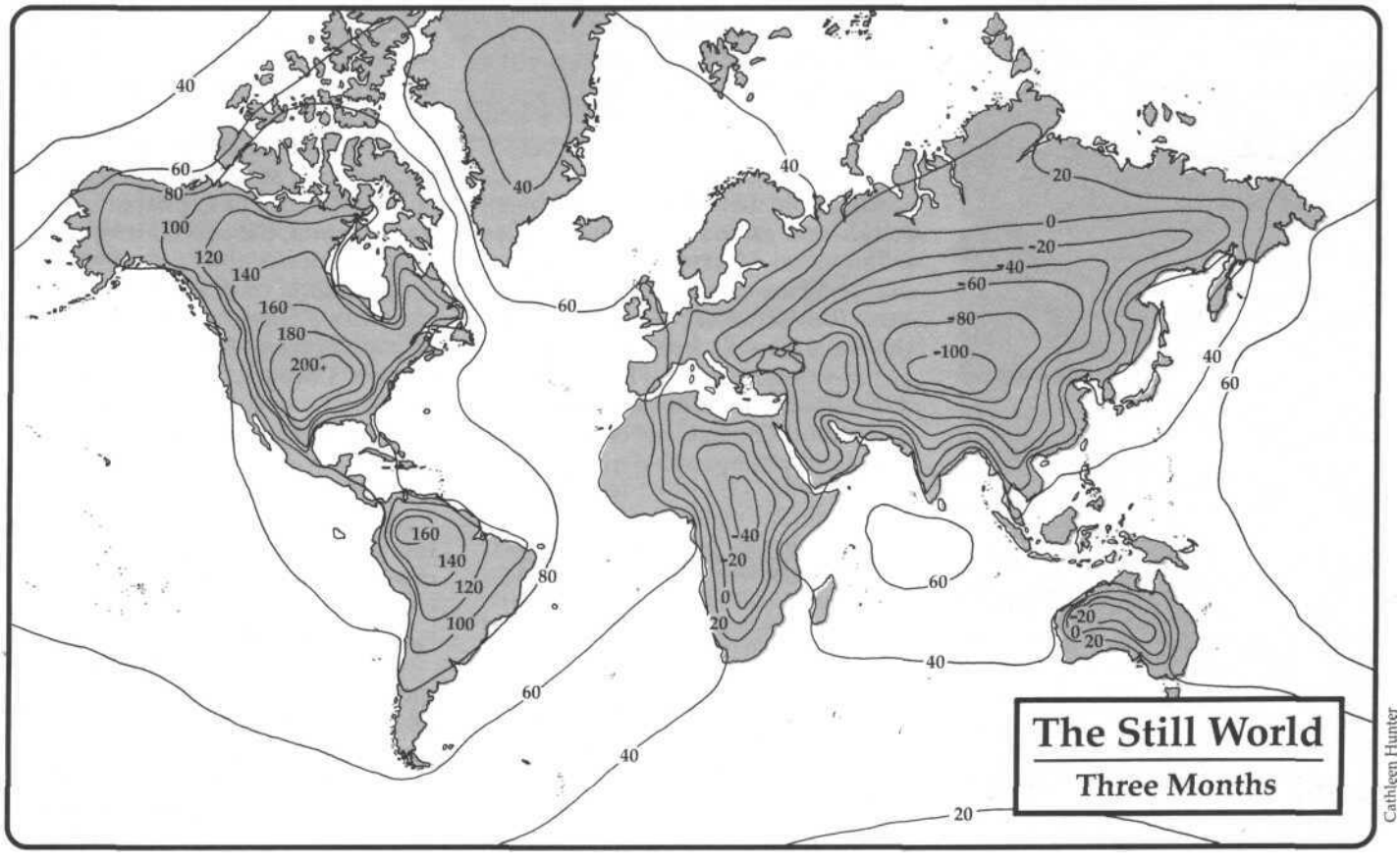
Three Months

Alaska basks in the 80s, only the southern tip of South America is livable. The Greenland icecap melts more rapidly. Britain, France, Spain, and West Africa are the only other livable areas on Core Earth.

Unless the High Lords provide magical, spiritual, or technological means to support life on Earth, the planet and its lifeforms will die. This does not make for fun roleplaying. We suggest that you stop the dramatic temperature changes at something livable (via a High Lord's intervention) or allow your Storm Knights to restart Earth's spin at some point during your campaign.




The Still World
One Month


The Still World
Three Months
Cathleen Hunter



Chapter Two

The Realm of Orrorsh

"I need the possibility energy to succeed. The misery and despair are an added bonus."

— *The Gaunt Man*

Orrorsh is the horror realm. It is a place of agony and despair, where monsters stalk the night while men huddle in terror, waiting for the day. Orrorsh is the realm of the Gaunt Man — the instigator of the Possibility Wars and would-be Torg.

Though the Gaunt Man is for the moment imprisoned (see *The Possibility Wars* novel trilogy), his evil presence still infects the land like a cancer. A cunning and powerful demon, Thratchen, inhabits the High Lord's keep on Borneo, seeking to learn the power of the Darkness Device and become a High Lord himself before the Gaunt Man escapes.

On Earth, the Orrorsh realm covers roughly the same area as the countries of Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, excepting the eastern portion of Indonesia (the island of New Guinea is for the moment still free). Orrorsh also encompasses several Phillipine and Australian islands, as well as sections of the South China, Celebes and Banda Seas (see accompanying map).

Before the Storm

This portion of the world contains more than 150,000,000 people spread out over 13,000 islands, in conditions ranging from isolated tribes living in jungles, to teeming masses crammed in the highly-technological city of Singapore.

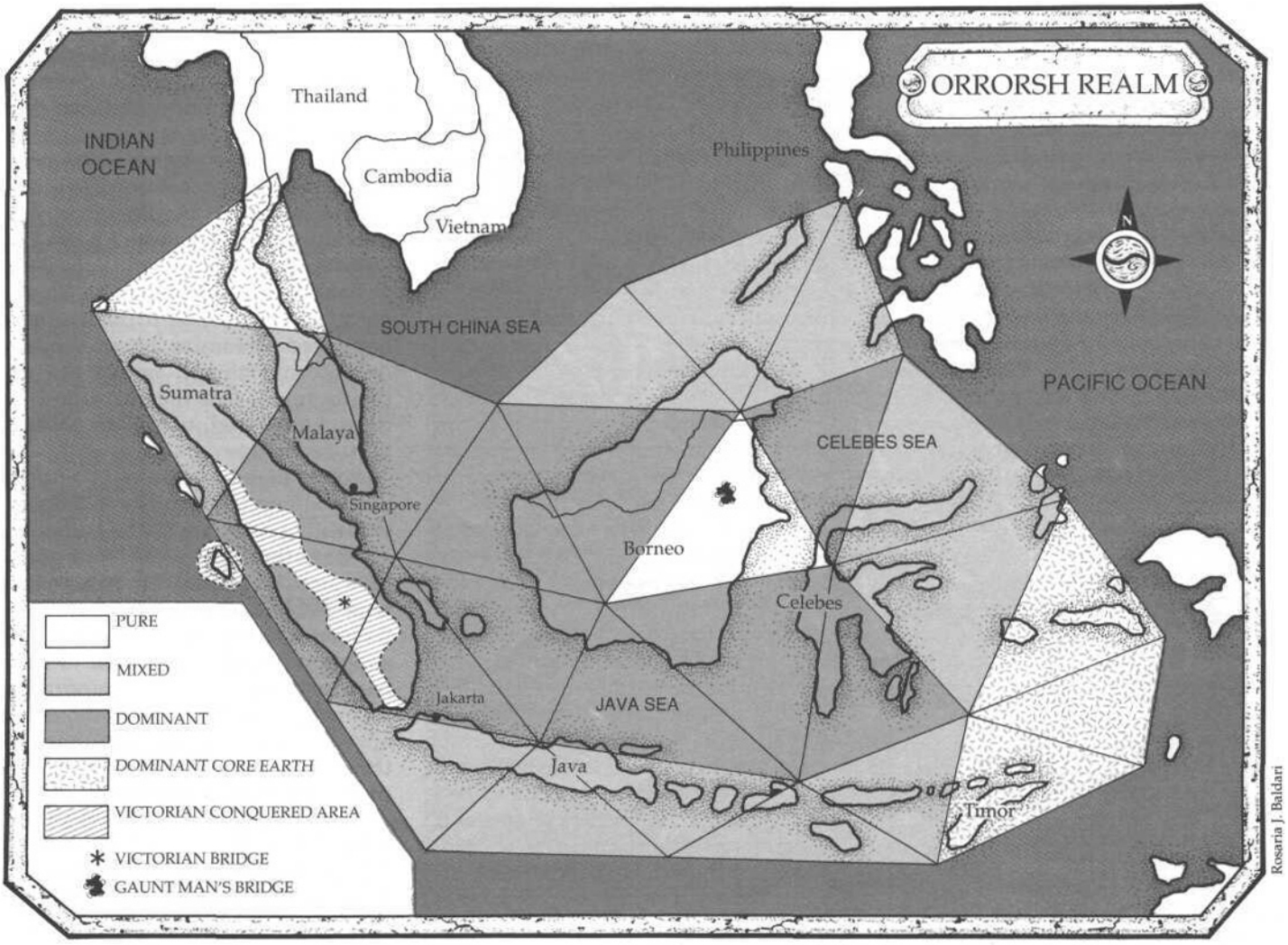
The terrain is rugged, with steep mountains descending almost to the sea. The climate is hot and wet, though the mountains are cooler than the lowlands. Tropical rain forests and jungles cover much of the countryside, though many acres have been destroyed to create farmland to support the huge population.

The land is geologically unstable and subject to frequent earthquakes and volcanic activity, including the infamous Krakatoa volcano which erupted in 1883, destroying an entire island and darkening the skies across the entire globe.

Indonesia is a democratic republic. It contains a wide variety of ethnic cultures, including Malay, Chinese, and Irianese. Eighty percent of the population is Moslem. Thirty percent of the population lives in urban areas — the island of Java is one of the most densely populated places in the world, with 1,500 persons to the square mile — the remaining 70 percent are farmers, living in small villages scattered on the islands. The capital of Indonesia is Jakarta; the official language is Bahasa Indonesian.

Malaysia is a parliamentary democracy with a constitutional monarchy. Its population is 60 percent Malays, 30 percent Chinese, and nine percent Indian. The major religions are Moslem, Hinduism, and Buddhism. The population is evenly split between urban and rural. Heavily industrialized, Malaysia produces 30 percent of the world's output of rubber. The capital city is Kuala Lumpur; the official language is Malay, though many speak English and Chinese.

Singapore is a parliamentary democracy. The entire country is virtually one large city; with an area of 224 square miles (smaller than New York City), it has a population in excess of 2,600,000 people. Seventy-seven percent of the population is Chinese, 15



percent Malays, and six percent Indian. Virtually all of the world's major religions are practiced in Singapore. Singapore is heavily industrialized and relies on imports for nearly all its agricultural needs. With an excellent harbor, it is one of the great commerce and manufacturing centers of the world. The capital of Singapore is Singapore; Chinese, Malay, Tamil, and English are all official languages.

The Cosm of Orrorsh

Orrorsh is similar in many ways to late 19th century Earth. Orrorsh's geography is very much like Earth's, and it is inhabited by people, animals and plants which, for the most part, could easily be taken for natives of our planet. Though Orrorsh has a higher magical and spiritual axiom than Earth, much of the planet's history bears a striking resemblance to ours, at least through the late 17th century. Then the Gaunt Man appeared.

He came with his numberless slaves and creatures of horror — ravagons, gospogs, ghosts, werewolves, and other monsters. In a few short years he overran much of the Orrorsh American continents and all of Asia and Africa. Millions were wiped out or driven mad. He deliberately let Europe survive untouched — on the surface, anyway — while subtly corrupting the leaders and destroying the populace very, very slowly from within.

It was more fun that way, and he thought that he might someday need the humans alive — his other minions were absolutely loyal and very tough, but often not quite intelligent or subtle enough for his purposes.

Currently, in Orrorsh Europe, the most powerful people are the Victorians, very similar to Earth's English in the 19th century. They are not aware that their planet is under the domination of the Gaunt Man, except for a very few of their ruling class who work for him directly — and even fewer who fight against him. The people know that their planet was invaded by *something* out of nightmare, but they have no comprehension what that something is.

Even though they don't know what they are fighting, the Victorians are warriors: they fight the Gaunt Man's monsters whenever and wherever they

find them, seeking to reclaim their world.

The Gaunt Man savors the hopeless battle, feeding off of the Victorians' emotions and the possibility energy spent in a losing cause. He lets the Victorians win often enough to make them think eventual victory is possible — but if they are *too* successful, he unleashes a relentless fury of monsters to drive them back, or his thralls in the Victorian upper classes find a way to impede their progress.

In a final piece of irony, the Gaunt Man has duped the Victorians into helping him invade and overrun Earth. While they believe they come as saviors, they are in fact the agents of much of the pain and misery suffered by the people of Indonesia.

The Invasion of Earth

First came the creatures. Vampyres, werewolves, things which looked human but were something much, much worse. Dead things. Creatures which gibbered and capered madly, or moved silently with ominous purpose. They came down the dimthreads, bearing their master's stelae. They planted dozens all across Indonesia.

At first, no one noticed. The telephones kept working; the tribesmen in the jungles who suddenly found that their magic and religious incantations worked were ignored. Most people were unaware that anything had changed at all.

Then the terror started. Fisherman went out to sea and were never heard from again. A bizarre rash of ritual killings rocked Singapore. It rained blood in the Celebes. A child was born with wings and fangs. Across the country, people began to dream of a pale, thin white man, dressed in rags and with burning eyes. His laughter rang in their ears, even after they awoke screaming.

Then the maelstrom bridge came down in Borneo. A horrible, evil, somehow living thing, built of twisted and tortured bodies, mortared with the blood of innocents. The Gaunt Man descended, followed by armies of his monsters. Within hours, the area between Tanjungselor, Sukadana and Balikpapan was overrun. Thousands — if not millions — of men, women and children were killed. The area transformed into the realm of Orrorsh.

The rest of the world didn't notice, even yet. But they soon would.

Settling into his castle, Illmound Keep, created instantaneously by possibility energy stolen from Earth, the Gaunt Man waited patiently for the second phase of his invasion to commence.

Several months earlier, back in the Orrorsh cosm, a scientist from Her Majesty's London Institute made an astonishing discovery. While on an expedition to the darkest reaches of Rhodesland (Orrorsh Africa), Dr. Wells found an ancient treatise of arcane knowledge which stated that there were other worlds in the void, worlds one could travel to if one had the will. However, there were risks — if one made a mistake, one could seriously weaken the very fabric of reality, allowing all manner of beasts and creatures to cross between worlds — or possibly opening a gate into hell itself.

Dr. Wells built the device described in the treatise. A master of science and magic, he used both arts in its creation. He was obsessed; he could neither eat nor sleep until he completed the machine. His friends and fellow scientists worried that he was going mad — a not uncommon fate for those who dabble in the arcane — but he was the greatest scientist of his day, and they respected him too much to interfere. He grew secretive, almost paranoid, working in his laboratory all through the night, refusing to let anyone see what he was doing.

Eventually, it was finished. He turned it on… and it worked.

It was as though the far wall of the science lab had disappeared, opening onto a long, dark bridge leading down into the middle of a jungle. He could hear the birds sing! He could feel the breeze! Dr. Wells was elated. He had found a new, clean world, where perhaps they could escape the terrors of this one! With tears in his eyes, he approached the portal. And retreated in horror.

While he watched, something stepped through the portal, onto the bridge and down into the jungle night. It came from nowhere, suddenly appearing before him as if it had been in his lab with him, unnoticed, and then passed through his gate into the new world. Paralyzed, he watched helplessly, as another creatured appeared. And then another. And another. And then dozens. Thousands. An army of monsters.

Shaking in terror, he ran over to the machine and turned it off. Nothing happened. Screaming, he smashed the delicate machinery, wiped out the pentagrams. The portal stood. A demon appeared, turned to point at him, and laughed.

Before he killed himself, Dr. Wells wrote a long letter to his colleagues, explaining exactly what he had done.

The authorities quickly set a guard to watch the portal, to ensure that none of the creatures stepped through the portal to the lab. Fortunately, the supply of demons appeared to have been exhausted, at least temporarily, for few more were seen, and those that appeared were quickly dispatched by the Victorian soldiers, priests and magicians stationed in the lab.

Though it appeared that the invasion was contained and no demons had used the gate to get into Orrorsh's London, no one knew how many creatures had been let loose on the New World. The Victorians were aghast. Through the actions of one of their people, an innocent world had been subjected to the same kind of calamity which had all but destroyed their own world, rendering nearly nine-tenths of it a place of hell.

They were responsible. Somehow, they must make amends. They must go and warn the populace of the New World and help defeat the monsters. Plans were readied. Troops were called up.

Two months later, the day after the Gaunt Man invaded Borneo, the Queen's Own 17th Lancers stepped onto the bridge, followed in short order by 30,000 other troops, support services, doctors, camp followers, lawyers and missionaries.

The Victorians had been duped. The Gaunt Man had caused Dr. Wells to discover the treatise, and he had ere-

ated the illusion that it had worked — the Doctor's pitiful machine had done nothing. The bridge, the monsters they saw stepping through, had all been illusory; the Gaunt Man sent his real forces down threads or through the real bridge on Borneo.

It was only when the Victorians prepared to cross that the Gaunt Man replaced the illusion with a real bridge, leading not to Borneo, but to the neighboring island of Sumatra.

The second phase of his invasion had begun.

When the Victorians went down the bridge into Sumatra, *they* were the invaders, *they* provided the believers to activate the stelae, *they* destroyed the Indonesians' reality. They brought the horrors of Orrorsh to Earth.

Orrorsh Realm Today

The realm of Orrorsh is a very unpleasant place. Monsters roam the Earth, killing thousands of innocent people. Sections of Indonesia have been transformed into *someplace else*, where Earth's laws don't work. The delicate infrastructure of this densely-populated area begins to collapse.

The Victorians are marching across the countryside of Sumatra, fighting monsters, alerting the population to the menace. As they do so, they create more believers in Orrorsh, causing new areas to flip, changing the area's axioms, causing more damage to the infrastructure and causing some of the natives to transform into monsters.

Seeing the new monsters, the Victorians are more than ever convinced of the rightness of their mission. The monsters must be stopped *now*, before they gain too strong a foothold on this planet. They send more and more soldiers—and, increasingly, colonists — exacerbating the problem even further.

Centers of civilization such as Singapore are paralyzed. Monsters roam the streets. The military and civil authorities are helpless. As technological equipment breaks down, vital services are interrupted. People begin to starve. Chaos grows.



Alan Jude Summa

The High Lord

Though few are aware of it, the Gaunt Man is in trouble. Several weeks after the invasion commenced, he became embroiled in a battle with an unlikely group of Storm Knights. Though not destroyed, the Knights were able at great cost to neutralize him for an indefinite period of time. The invasion of Earth is without its most powerful and dangerous leader.

In Orrorsh realm, his place has been taken by Thratchen, a techno-demon from another cosm. Thratchen does not have control over the Gaunt Man's Darkness Device—though he's working on it desperately. Until he does, or until the Gaunt Man returns, there is no real High Lord in power in Orrorsh realm.

Thratchen is doing the best he can to cover up the Gaunt Man's absence. He pretends to be acting in the Gaunt Man's name; he is able to fool most of the Gaunt Man's minions within Orrorsh, but the other High Lords are becoming suspicious, as are the ravagons.

None are yet willing to make a move against the horror realm, however; the Gaunt Man is famous for his deep plots and intricate traps to snare the unwary. The Gaunt Man may have gone into hiding to draw them to attack; once in his realm, he could swat them like insects. So they wait, and watch.

Without a Darkness Device, Thratchen cannot create stelae or expand the cosm's foothold on the planet. He's got a few extra stelae that the Gaunt Man made and had not yet placed; Thratchen is conserving them to replace stelae destroyed by Storm Knights. For the moment, the invasion of Earth by Orrorsh is contained.

Thratchen (Techno-Demon): DEX 15, STR 18, TOU 26, PER 24, MlN 25, CHA 16, SPI 24.

Skills: reality 28, charm 21, persuasion 22, taunt 23, dodge 17, energy weapons 17, fire combat 16, flight 19, maneuver 18, stealth 18, unarmed combat 23, faith 27, focus 26, intimidation 26, evidence analysis 26, find 27, scholar (The Nameless One) 27, tracking 25, trick 26, science 26, test 27, willpower 27.

Possibilities: 35.

Known Equipment: cybersenses, internal computer, cyberclaws (damage value STR+5), cyberwings (speed value 11), laser pistol (damage value 19), armor (defense value 30).

The Victorians

The Victorians are always firmly convinced that they are doing the right thing. That may be their single most important characteristic: self-righteousness. They fight to the death for Queen and Country; the Victorian Way is the best way; God has given them a mission to civilize their world — and, apparently, this New World as well.

They treat others as inferiors - European-stock people as poor second-cousins with the misfortune to have not been born Victorian, non-whites as savage children, needing control and guidance to achieve civilization (whether they want it or not). Though there are notable exceptions, most Victorians firmly believe that they are the chosen people.

On the other hand, Victorians are scrupulously honest and courageous, and fully believe in the principles of fair play. Believing themselves noble, they take *noblesse oblige* quite seriously. Secure in the rightness of their actions, they will fight to the death to defend them.

Victorians in Battle

Victorians fight with single-action revolvers (similar to Colt Peace makers), Lee-Hollings bolt-action rifles, Meecham water-cooled machineguns, and 15-pound breach-loading rifled field guns. Officers are armed with pistols and sabres; their infantry excel at the bayonette charge, and they have excellent cavalry (horse, not mechanized).

Victorian officers come almost exclusively from the aristocracy, the soldiers from the lower classes. They get along surprisingly well together.

Lee-Hollings Rifle

This is the standard weapon of the Victorian army. Virtually identical to the Lee-Metford rifle used in the late 19th century on Earth, the Lee-Hollings is a bolt-action rifle, with a magazine clip holding eight rounds of .303 inch cartridges.

Lee-Hollings Rifle: tech 19, damage 18, range 3-40/41-300/301-1800, ammo 8.

Special Loads: The Victorian soldier typically carries 100 rounds of normal ammunition. In addition, he is often equipped with two dozen silver bullets, specially blessed by the Regimental Chaplain in a mass ritual held once a month (see "Miracles"). He uses these when facing undead or other monsters, some of whom cannot be injured by normal bullets, to inflict spiritual damage upon them.

Bayonettes

The bayonette is a short sword, mounted below or to the right of the barrel of a rifle, turning the gun into a deadly hand-to-hand combat weapon. Many Victorian bayonettes are inlayed with silver, making them effective against certain monsters. Characters trained in the Victorian military automatically gain the *melee combat* skill (with the bayonette only) at the same adds as their *fire combat* adds.

Bayonette: tech 16, damage +5/19 max.

15-Pound Breach-Loading Rifled Gun

This artillery piece is pulled into battle by teams of six horses, oxen, or, in unusual cases, camels or elephants. It fires 76.2mm shells weighing 15 pounds each. The shells are explosive, designed to hit targets with shrapnel.

15-Pound Breach-Loaded Rifled Gun: tech 19, damage 25, range of shell 3-250/251-1000/1001-6000, range of shrapnel 4/6/10 from point of impact, ammo 1.

Special Loads: Artillery shells also can be made of silver (or at least a silver alloy). These are also blessed in the same religious ceremony for blessing the regiment's bullets (see "Miracles").

Victorian Technology

Victorian transportation consists of horse-drawn carriages, steam-driven railroads, and coal steamers. They have experimented with Zeppelins, but with little success. Long-range communication is by fast packet steamer or, increasingly, telegraph.

Coming from a lower tech level, Victorians are fascinated by the impossible devices they encounter on this planet—heavier than air vehicles, telephones, heart transplants, and so forth. However, they note that those things break with alarming frequency in Orrorsh realm (because of the lower tech level they have caused in their realm, though they don't know it); obviously, their way is the best.

Victorian Religion

Victorians practice a religion very similar to some sects of Core Earth Christianity. The mythos and religious rites are nearly identical; though the Victorians' deity is seen as somewhat harsher, more quicker to anger than most modern Core Earth views of God — more Old Testament than New.

The Victorians see the Core Earth Christian religions as tragically warped views of the truth. Having a high spiritual axiom, they have con-

stantly witnessed miracles, vastly reinforcing their faith. They pity the Christian Earthers their misguidedness, but generally do not interfere.

With non-Christians, however, the Victorians are ardent missionaries; as they spread across Indonesia fighting the monsters, they also proselytize to the natives. Saving the savages' souls is at least as important as defeating the creatures, if not more so. Victorians consider all non-Christian religions to be enemies.

Miracles

The miracles of the Victorian religion tend to be of the Old Testament sort: curses, plagues, pillars of salt, burning bushes, and so forth. The Victorians' god is a jealous god: (increase the difficulty of casting beneficial miracles on non-believers by 2).

Bless Missile

Spiritual Rating: 11
Community Rating: 10
Difficulty: variable (see below)
Range: voice
Duration: one month
Effect: imbues bullets, arrows, cannon shells, grenades, and the like with the faith of the firer.

The *bless missile* miracle is a ritual, typically performed by the Regimental Chaplain once a month during Sunday services. The missiles are piled to the right of the altar. After sprinkling them with holy water, the Chaplain calls the community (the regiment) to pray for God to allow their missiles to smite the unholy with His Righteous Anger.

The difficulty of the spell is equal to the value of the number of bullets blessed. Arrows are equal to 10 bullets, grenades to 30 bullets, artillery shells to 70 bullets.

If the chaplain equals the difficulty, the missiles are blessed for a month. When a blessed missile hits a target, it does both physical and spiritual damage. The physical damage is as normal for the missile type; the spiritual attack has a damage value equal to the *faith* value of the firer plus the bonus.

Note: the blessed missiles are only effective in the hands of a firer who took part in the ritual; they are merely normal missiles when fired by anyone else.

Curse

Spiritual Rating: 10
Community Rating: 6
Difficulty: 10
Range: sight
Duration: year and a day
Effect: marks target as enemy of the faith; lowers *Charisma* and *Charisma-based* skills.

Curse causes an ugly welt, scar, or blemish to appear on the target character's face. The mark cannot be eradicated and will quickly burn through cosmetics or plastic surgery. The character must either have the curse lifted by the character's religion or the religion which caused it, or go to a cosm whose spiritual level is not high enough to support the curse. Even then, the curse will return if the character subsequently goes to a cosm with a spiritual axiom of 10 or higher before the time period passes.

Curse lowers the character's *Charisma* values. It lowers these values by one when the character interacts with non-members of the religion; when interacting with members of the religion, it lowers them by one for each success level attained by the miracle (i.e., a *good* success lowers values by three).

Staff of Righteousness

Spiritual Rating: 11
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 12
Range: touch
Duration: permanent
Effect: imbues a staff with holy power to smite the enemies of the faithful.

A *staff of righteousness* may only be created in a ritual. The character who is to be the beneficiary of the miracle must be judged pure and righteous by the elders of the church (typically gamemaster characters). He must vow to always follow the church's instructions and die willingly to smite the enemy of the church, in sure knowledge of his reward in the next world.

If these conditions are met, the character is given a staff prominently marked with symbols of his religion. He fasts and prays for seven days. At the end of the seven days, the faithful appeal to God to make the character strong in His work. For each level of success in the miracle, the character's *Strength* and *melee combat* skill are increased by one when fighting with the staff. In addition, the staff acts as a focus for the character, with the same level as the level of success achieved in the miracle.

The staff loses its potency if the character breaks his vow.

Victorians and Magic

The Victorians' cosm of Orrorsh has a magic axiom of 15. This is high enough to give magic real power: spells may be cast, magical beings exist, and so forth. The Victorians accept the existence and power of magicians, alchemists, witches, and so forth.

However, there is a large stigma attached to the practice of magic. Because of the peculiar world rules of Orrorsh (largely due to the Gaunt Man's interference), it is easier to hurt than to heal with magic in Orrorsh — destruction is a lot easier than creation. Magic also has a distinct warping effect upon its practitioners: constantly tempted by the evil of the Gaunt Man, many are twisted, destroyed by the powers they wield, or simply go mad. There is nothing so frightening as a madman who wields arcane power.

There are exceptions. "White" magicians who scrupulously avoid doing evil and thus manage to avert the destructive side effects exist, but they are weaker than practitioners of the black arts. Black or white, all are viewed with justifiable suspicion and fear by the populace.

Spells

As stated above, in Orrorsh (realm or cosm), it is easier to use magic to hurt than it is to heal. Increase the difficulty of non-combat spells by one; decrease the difficulty of combat spells by one.

Following are several magic spells of common use in Orrorsh.

Boiling Blood

Axiom Level: 13
Skill: *alteration/folk* 15

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 10
Bonus Number to: Effect

Range: 10 (100 meters)
Duration: 8 (40 seconds)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: control

Boiling blood requires a torch or other open flame and small portion of blood from the folk type under attack. The magician pours the blood over his hand and places his hand in the flame. The pain is excruciating (hence the high backlash) but the hand emerges unscathed.

If the spell hits (the *alteration* total is higher than the target's *dodge* or *Dexterity),* the target's blood begins to boil. The effect value is compared to the target's *Toughness,* ignoring armor adds, and the target takes that level of damage for four rounds. The magician does not need to concentrate to keep the spell operating for the four rounds; once he has cast it, it continues to operate on its own for the full duration.

Madness

Axiom Level: 13
Skill: *alteration/folk* 20

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 15
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect
Range: 10 (100 meters)
Duration: 29 (one week)
Cast Time: 23 (10 hours)
Manipulation: control, duration

Madness is an impressed spell, cast in advance of need. To activate the spell, the magician thinks of images of hatred, pain, misery and despair, working himself into a frenzy of emotion. Then he hurls his emotions at the target, attempting to write them on the target's mind. The spell's effect value is compared to the target's *Mind;* if a *superior* success is achieved, the target is deranged for one week.

Note that if the caster is knocked unconscious by the backlash of the spell, *he* is affected by the madness — whether or not the target was. However, the caster is mad for only one day.

The exact form the madness takes is up to the gamemaster: paranoid delusions, catatonia, schizophrenia, homicidal mania, or a combination of the above are all possibilities.

Transmute Lead to Gold

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/metal 22*

Backlash: 24
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 1
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 0 (one meter)
Duration: 25 (one day)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration

By using this spell, the magician changes one kilogram of lead into one kilogram of gold.

The magician needs a kilogram of lead and a small coin, one side of which is covered in gold, the other in lead. The magician ties the coin to a string, and dangles it in the air. While making the correct incantations, the magician taps the coin's edge, causing it to twirl rapidly. At the end of an hour, the magician taps the coin sharply against the lead, causing it to transmute.

The gold is to all appearances real, except that if it touches cold iron, it will immediately revert to lead. The gold reverts to lead at the end of the spell's duration.

As lead is quite similar to gold, this is a relatively easy spell to cast. Lighter metals are more difficult; non-metals all but impossible. Magicians have been working intently to increase the spell's duration, with limited success (unless they are willing to spend weeks casting it); attempts to make the gold impervious to the iron test have thus far been completely unsuccessful.

Note that in Victoria, shopkeepers have iron plates to test all gold they receive. It may take Earth merchants several months to realize the dangers from arcane forgery — until they do, unscrupulous Victorian magicians will have a field day.

Victorians and Earthers

Indonesians

The Victorians treat the dark-skinned natives of Indonesia with everything from good-natured condescension to outright contempt. They are savages, to be treated fairly but firmly. The Victorians believe in the White Man's Burden: under the Victorians' guidance, the natives may some day be nearly as good as Europeans.

Naturally, this infuriates the Indonesians, who have spent the better part of this century ridding themselves of Core Earth imperialists, and they have no desire to be subjected to new ones from another cosm. The Indonesians are fighting as much against the Victorians as against the other invaders. Unfortunately, much of the Indonesians' modern weaponry is breaking down; without the ability to repair it, they are forced to use more primitive equipment against the Victorians.

With their discipline, esprite de corps, and unparalleled experience in small-unit combat — not to mention their access to magic and miracles — the Victorians are soundly beating the Indonesians, taking over territory as fast as their supply trains allow them to occupy it.

Australians

The Victorians are somewhat confused by their nearest European-based neighbors, the Australians. Obviously somehow distantly related, they feel that the Australians should join them (under Victorian command, of course) in stamping out the monsters and bringing civilization to the savages. They don't understand why the Australians disagree, and in fact insist upon viewing *Victorians* as invaders, as well.

Victorian gunboats which have ventured outside of Orrorsh realm into Australian waters have been fired on and destroyed by vastly superior Australian ships and airplanes; Australian vessels which have gone into Orrorsh realm have broken down and been summarily sunk by Victorian gunfire and magic.

A few on both sides are attempting to establish diplomatic relations, but with very limited success — the gap between the 19th and 20th centuries is almost insurmountable.

Lacking radio technology and concentrating upon consolidating their gains in Sumatra, the Victorians have had very limited contact with any of the other nations on Earth. For obvious reasons, few countries are willing to send diplomatic missions into the horror realm to open formal relations.



Alan Jude Summa

Shapeshifting

Shapeshifting is the ability (or curse) of changing form between human and animal. For most shapeshifters, the transformation is involuntary, triggered by stress, danger, or the full moon. They lose all memory of their humanity, becoming animal in body and mind. Possibility-rated shapeshifters maintain a modicum of self-control when shifted, though there are risks even for them.

Only characters from Orrorsh may have the *Shapeshifting* skill. Using the *Shapeshifting* skill in any other realm or cosm creates a contradiction. When a player chooses *Shapeshifting,* he must take the skill as the character's tag skill.

When a character shapeshifts, he transforms into another creature, typically a wolf; a player may choose a different animal for his *Shapeshifting* if the gamemaster agrees with the choice. The shapeshifter's animal form may be larger or smaller than his human form. The maximum difference is the character's initial adds in *Shapeshifting*. Once chosen the size does not vary.

Example: A character with a weight value of 10 and three initial adds of *Shapeshifting* may choose as his animal form a beast with a weight value of from seven to 13 (25 to 400 kilos).

A shapeshifter has the same total of attribute points in either form, though they can be distributed differently in each form. The *Spirit* attribute must be the same for both forms. In animal form a shifter may have very high attributes, beyond the normal character limits.

Example: Bill is a weretiger. In his human form he has: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 10, MIN 9, CHA 9, SPI 11. Bill's player decides that his weretiger attributes are: DEX 12, STR 14, TOU 12, PER 10, MIN 4, CHA 3, SPI 11. Both sets of attributes total to 66 points; the *Spirit* is 11 for both forms.

The shifter also has two completely different sets of skills. When a player designs a shapeshifter, he has 16 skill points for each form. He must assign three adds to *Shapeshifting* for each form. If he wishes to have any other skill in both forms, he must also purchase the skill separately for both forms. When improving skills, skills are improved independently for each form. *Shapeshifting* adds must be improved simultaneously for each form; going from *Shapeshifting* +3 to +4 costs eight Possibilities.

Human forms may start with any skill available in Orrorsh. They may learn others throughout their life, including skills from other realms.

Animal forms are limited to skills which animals might logically know. The gamemaster must approve all skill choices. When in animal form shapeshifters have a primary attack form with a damage value equal to their *Strength* plus their shapeshifting adds. A werewolf with a *Strength* 14 and *shapeshifting* +3 has a primary attack damage value of 17. For a werewolf, his bite is his primary attack. As the *shapeshifting* adds increase, the damage value of the primary attack also increases.

A shapeshifter's animal form also has the following power and weakness:

Resistance to normal weapons
Severe weakness to silver

This power and weakness **do not apply** to the character's human form. Human forms can be damaged by any normal means.

A *severe weakness* is an item or material that causes damage if placed against the creature's flesh. If the item is normally used to cause damage, such as silver bullets, use the damage value of the item. Otherwise the damage value of the touch is the *Spirit* or *faith* of the person wielding the item (unless the item itself has *Spirit* or *faith).* If the character did not have to roll a bonus to touch the monster, she rolls a bonus to generate a damage total.

A shapeshifter whose animal form falls unconscious automatically reverts to human form. No *shapeshifting* total is needed. If the damage is from friendly sources (i.e., players trying to avoid having the shapeshifter lose control) the gamemaster may insist on a *shapeshifting* total, as described below, to see if the gamemaster takes control of the character.

The difficulty of voluntarily shifting into animal shape is 10. When the moon rises, or the character is in a life-threatening situation, the difficulty of remaining in human form is 10 plus the amount of shock damage taken. When in animal form, the difficulty of returning to human form is equal to the time value of the number of minutes spent in animal form. This number is increased by the amount of shock damage the character has. If a character were in animal form for one hour, the *shapeshifting* difficulty is nine. If the character had six shock points at the time he tried to change back, the shapeshifting difficulty is 15.

If a character fails the shifting roll to return to human form, the animal nature has taken over. The gamemaster takes control of the character for a time equal to the time so far spent in animal form. During this time the gamemaster takes control of the character's sheet, and decides all actions for the character. At the end of this time the character automatically reverts to human form. The gamemaster does not take control if the character fails when trying to avoid changing to animal form.

Each time the gamemaster takes control of the character, the shapeshifter gains a *Corruption* point. Any evil done while under gamemaster control can increase this *Corruption.* The Power of Fear looks forward to the time when the shapeshifter becomes a true creature of Orrorsh.

Resistance to Normal Weapons: The creature can transform wound damage from standard weapons (non-magical swords, lead bullets) into shock damage. The first five wounds taken from an attack are converted into shock damage, one shock point per wound. Knockout conditions are ignored. A single attack which causes six or more wounds can wound a creature with this power. In addition, the "shock wounds" are treated as wounds when spending a Possibility to remove damage.

Example: Tanya, a gypsy woman from Orrorsh, is a shapeshifter, able to turn into a giant eagle. Tanya's player designs her character as follows:

Tanya's Human Form: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU9, PER12, MIN10, CHA9, SPI10.

Skills: reality 12, acrobatics 9, beast riding 9, dodge 10, melee weapons 11, alteration magic 13, divination magic 13, apportation magic 11, conjuration magic 11, shapeshifting 13.

Giant Eagle Form: DEX 14, **STR 9,** TOU 8, PER 13, MIN 6, CHA 5, SPI10.

Skills: reality 12, dodge 15, flight 15, stealth 15, unarmed combat 15, find 14, tracking 14, test 9, taunt 8, intimidation 11, shapeshifting 13.

Natural Tools: wings, speed value 9; claws, damage value 11; beak damage value 12.

Note: Resistant to non-magical, non-silver attacks (shock damage only).

Monsters of Orrorsh

There are thousands of monsters wandering Orrorsh realm. Some are under the control of the Gaunt Man (and now Thratchen); most are independent, killing and terrorizing humans for their own pleasure. The Gaunt Man's Darkness Device shields many of the monsters from casual sight; ghouls, vampyres and demons walk the streets of London, ignored by most, seen only by those with possibility energy (who are almost always judged mad by the rest of the population).

Common monsters of Orrorsh include the standard monsters from European legend—vampyres, werewolves, ghosts, ghouls, spectres, and so forth—as well as some rather nasty new creatures created by the Gaunt Man. Four of these monsters are listed below.

Werewolf

The werewolf hunts by the light of the moon, feeding on the flesh of men. It is cunning, evil, and very hard to defeat. By day, however, the creature is human, with nothing but confused, tortured memories of its actions during the night.

Some very few werewolves have the ability to control their curse — turning from man into beast and back again at will. However, these creatures may change involuntarily when excited or threatened, whether it be full moon or not (see "Shapeshifting," above).

The following monster is a standard werewolf, with average attributes and skills. Much tougher werewolves are possible, though rare.

Werewolf (Wolf Form): DEX 12, STR 12, TOU 14, PER 11, **MIN 6, CHA 5, SPI** 10.

Skills: dodge 13, maneuver 14, running 14, stealth 13, unarmed combat 16, tracking 12, test 9, taunt 8, intimidation 12, shapeshifting 13, willpower 12.

Possibility Potential: some (35).

Natural Tools: claws, damage value 14; teeth, damage value 15.

Note: resistant to physical attacks: takes shock damage only from non-magical, non-silver weapons.

Human Form: 70 points total: SPI 10, remainder determined by gamemaster.

Skills: as determined by gamemaster, but always including *shape-shifting* 13.

Vampyre

The vampyre also hunts by night. It feeds on man's blood, and can enslave the weak-willed with the power of its gaze.

During the day the vampyre is almost helpless and usually seeks the refuge of its coffin. If forced to battle during daylight hours, a vampyre is always *stymied* (that is, loses his first roll again). During the night, the vampyre always has an *up* result (that is, always gains a roll again).

In addition, a vampyre takes a wound every round it is subjected to direct sunlight. However, legend has it that older vampyres slowly gain immunity to sunlight, though they are never comfortable in it (and always *stymied).*

A vampyre also takes a wound for each round it is immersed in running water; it takes two shock points if it comes in contact with garlic. Characters with the *faith* skill and an appropriate *focus* may be able to damage vampyres with the power of their religion.

Vampyres are immune to most physical damage, taking only shock damage from non-magical weapons, including silver weapons. A vampyre is healed of all damage after spending a day in its coffin. Some vampyres are rumored to be able to change form, becoming wolf, bat, mist, or other shape at will. If true, this is not an innate ability; these vampyres must have learned *alteration magic* during their unnaturally long existences.

Vampyres are nearly immortal, and the older they are, the more powerful. The following vampyre is of average age, undead for perhaps 150 years.

Vampyre: DEX 12, STR 16, TOU 18, PER 11, MIN 14, CHA 14, SPI 9.

Skills: acrobatics 20, dodge 19, maneuver 17, running 17, stealth 20, unarmed combat 20, climbing 19, alteration magic 15, find 14, language 15, scholar 16, trick 16, test 23, willpower 23, charm 26, persuasion 21, faith 12, intimidation 17, reality 18.

Possibility Potential: some (7).

Natural Tools: fangs, damage value 18.

Note: resistant to physical attacks: takes only shock damage from non-magical attacks.



Alan Jude Summa

The Others

The Others are huge, shambling octopus-like creatures. They roam the jungles of Orrorsh realm looking for human prey. When fresh human prey is not available, they graze on the gospog fields, feeding on those gospog too slow or weak to escape.

Others are very strong, and wield their tentacles with unearthly speed and accuracy, but they are also rather slow movers and not particularly intelligent. They are almost always accompanied by Caretakers (see below).

Others are particular favorites of the Gaunt Man.

The Others: DEX 10, STR 20, TOU 17, PER 8, MIN 5, CHA 5, SPI 8.

Skills: unarmed combat 16, find 13, tracking 13, intimidation 14, test (20), taunt (20).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: tentacles, damage value 20.

Note: Ignore multi-action penalty to attack up to four opponents. If attacking five, penalty is 2; if attacking six, penalty is 3, etc.

The Caretakers

The Caretakers are second-generation gospog, specifically created to control the Others. Two are assigned to each Other, to herd them in the right direction, force them to follow orders, keep them out of mischief (though what second-generation gospog consider mischief is a frightening question).

The Caretakers are armed with huge, primitive blunderbusses; they fire these (with low powder charges) at the Others to control them.

Caretakers may be magically linked to commanders who are able to give them orders from miles away. Communication is normally one-way: a Caretaker cannot send messages to its commander unless the commander sets up the link specially. This is expensive and time-consuming and thus used only in emergencies.

Caretakers: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.

Skills: dodge 12, fire combat 14, maneuver 14, unarmed combat 13, tracking 13, trick 12, test 12, taunt 12, intimidate 12, willpower 10.

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor, defense value 12; fangs, damage value 12.

Equipment: blunderbuss; tech 15, damage value 18, range 3-10/11-20/21-40, ammo 1. (When controlling Others, Caretakers load weapons with half powder, reducing damage value to 12 and range to 10 meters.)



Chapter Three

The Living Land

"We bring new experiences to the Dead of this world. We show them what Life is. Then we kill them."
— *Baruk Kaah*

The Living Land is a primitive realm. It is dinosaurs and lizard men, action and adventure, unusable technology and high spiritual power. It is a "Lost World" superimposed over the world we know, thus adding to the mystery and horror of the place.

Baruk Kaah leads his slaves and followers in search of new experiences and greater power. He is a High Lord of strength and ambition who can be reckless in one instance, then overly cautious the next.

On Earth, the Living Land realm extends across three portions of North America — from New York to Wisconsin and James Bay to Kentucky on the East Coast, from Vancouver to Monterey on the West Coast, and around Canada's Great Slave Lake in the Far North (see the accompanying map).

Takta Ker

Takta Ker is a huge world of jungles, forests, and swamps, covered almost entirely by a Deep Mist. It is the home cosm of Baruk Kaah and his Possibility Raiders. The saurians who inhabit Takta Ker (literally translated as The Living Land) call themselves Edeinos. Because of the Deep Mist, the planet is constantly damp and warm — winter is unknown.

The Edeinos follow the ways of nature as personified in their goddess, Lanala. Lanala is the universe itself. She is all living things and all experiences. To honor Lanala is to live life to the fullest, to experience extreme sensations. This religion of extreme passion is called Keta Kalles. Its central concept is that the more intensely one experiences life through the senses, the more Lanala will reward you. The faithful become instruments of sensation so that Lanala (the universe) can experience Life through them. It does not matter what the emotion or experience is, as long as it is intense.

Because of this love for life, followers of Keta Kalles refuse to make use of anything that is dead — tools, weapons, and the like created from nonliving material such as rock, cut wood, etc. Further, organics not of Lanala are also considered dead, so humans from Core Earth who have not embraced Lanala are the living dead. The dead are anathema to Lanala, unholy. The only tools the Edeinos can employ are those living items formed by Lanala from hrockt shoots through prayer. The living hrockt can become a spear, club, or other implement in the hands of the faithful, and then be returned to the ground to continue its life.

Baruk Kaah changed some of these beliefs when he became Saar of the Edeinos and High Lord of Takta Ker. For one thing, his Darkness Device was a dead thing, as were the gifts it gave to him (such as stelae). But through his power and conquests he has given the Edeinos many new and intense experiences, so they remain loyal to his rule.

The Invasion of Earth

After conquering countless cosms, after bringing Keta Kalles to dozens of worlds, Baruk Kaah was approached to join other High Lords in the conquest of an extremely possibility rich

cosm called Earth. He readily agreed. In exchange for his services, the Gaunt Man provided Baruk Kaah with two types of aid — gospog seeds and ravagons.

The primitive High Lord's first maelstrom bridge of living jungle crashed into Earth's New York City. From there, Baruk Kaah and his followers quickly neutralized much of the north-eastern United States. Other bridges followed, spreading Baruk Kaah's primitive reality in the west and far north.

In those stelae areas of pure Takta Ker, technology does not operate and the "dead" people of Earth transform to the ways of Lanala and Life.

The initial stages of the invasion went very well. Baruk Kaah took much of the land with little trouble. It was when he tried to overturn a Core Earth hardpoint in California that Baruk Kaah suffered his first true defeat. Since then, the boundaries between primitive and Core Earth reality have remained stable. But many feel that the war will soon resume with its original ferocity as the Edeinos move to extend their reality.

The Eastern Land

The Eastern Land is the seat of Baruk Kaah's power on Earth. From the abandoned and overgrown cities through the outlying farm lands, the area is filled with all manner of dinosaurs and tribes of Edeinos fiercely loyal to the Saar. These tribes have been bolstered by Core Earthers who have transformed to the reality of Takta Ker and become savages — at least by 20th century standards.

The dense population has allowed the High Lord to expand quickly. This has provided not only new tribe members, but also plenty of bodies for fertilizing gospog seeds.

New York, considered to be a dead land by the Edeinos, has been left to those humans who steadfastly refuse to flee. Although a few areas remain under the control of the Edeinos, notably the bridgehead area around Flushing Meadow Park and Manhattan's Central Park gospog field, the rest is left for those "soft-skinned ones" who have not yet found Life in Lanala. But these people must make do without modern conveniences, as technology refuses to function in the pure zone.

Philadelphia is a Core Earth hardpoint that is surrounded on all sides by Takta Ker's Deep Mist. It serves as a place of refuge, a launching point for counter strikes, and a place of contact between the Living Land and Core Earth — as long as it can hold off the enemy army camped outside its bounds.

Scattered across the Eastern Land are resistance communities that refuse to fall to Baruk Kaah's raiders. Many of these communities are self-sufficient, but others need supplies that possibility-rated truckers transport from place to place. They tend to keep low profiles, not only to avoid the attention of the invaders, but to stay out of sight of the Delphi Council (see below).

Most of the battles still occurring in North America are taking place along the border zones of the Eastern Land.

The Western Land

As this was the site of Baruk Kaah's greatest defeat, many of the tribes in the west have turned away from the High Lord's rule. They feel that his association with and use of dead things is an abomination. Perhaps, they say, Lanala has abandoned him because of his familiarity with the dead. While there are huge forces still loyal to the Saar fighting to expand the stelae bounds, they also find themselves fighting renegade tribes from within their own realm.

A religious war is beginning in this portion of the realm. Certain Edeinos tribes have started helping Core Earthers resist the invaders. What will eventually happen in this hot bed of revolution is anyone's guess.

The Northern Land

The Northern Land was taken so that Baruk Kaah could perform experiments combining his Darkness Device with Keta Kalles in relative quiet and away from the watchful eyes of Lanala's optants (priests of Life).

It is rumored that Baruk Kaah and his gotaks (priests of the dead) have at least two secret projects under way in the northern reaches. If and when these reach fruition, it will only mean more trouble for the beleagured Earth.

The Land Below

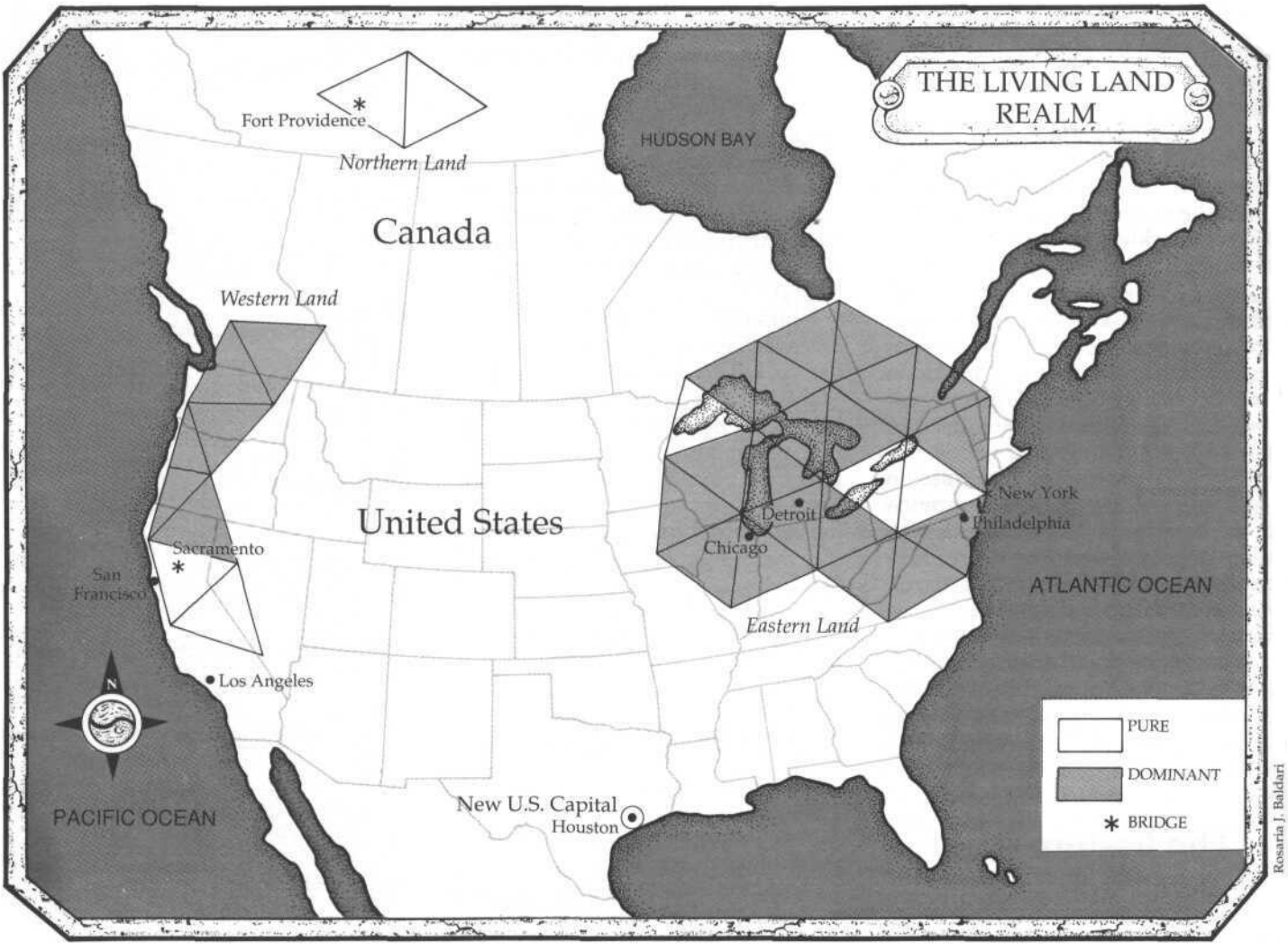
Rumors abound that the six realms that invaded Earth caused more changes to the planet than have been immediately obvious. One story speaks of an underground world of hollow spaces and twisting tunnels. It is said that one such tunnel connects the Living Land realm to the Nile Empire realm. If this is true, speculation continues, then perhaps all of the realms are connected in this way. But what else exists below the Earth? Which realities hold sway? Unless some brave adventurers decide to discover the truth to these rumors, then we may never know for sure.

The Delphi Council

Established by the late President Jonathan Wells, the Delphi Council is an emergency task force with the authority to act in "the best interests of the people of the United States." With the support of the new President, Dennis Quartermain, the definition of what those best interests are is truly staggering. The Council works under a war mentality, doing everything in its power to assure the continued existence of the United States — even if its measures are definitely not in a democratic vein.

Border towns are placed under martial law and converted into armed camps in order to defend the interior nation. A military draft is about to be reinstated. Property is being confiscated for the greater good, and people are being forced to move if it is suspected they are unwittingly providing possibility energy to the invaders.

Special agents, codenamed Spar-



tans, work to promote the decisions of the Council. The primary function of the Spartans is to enter the Living Land, find and log resistence communities, and then remove them from the Living Land by any means possible so that the enemy cannot become stronger — including extermination.

Spartan: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 11, PER 9, MIN 8, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: charm 11, persuasion 12, taunt 10, dodge 12, fire combat 12, melee weapons 11, stealth 12, unarmed combat 11, intimidation 12, evidence analysis 10, tracking 10, plus three others at +2 adds (at gamemaster's discretion).

Possibility Potential: some (40).

Equipment: variable.

The Common Ground Association

The Common Ground Association is a grass-roots movement that is gaining popularity throughout the United States and Canada. This group believes that there are Edeinos who are not a part of the invading forces, and they demand that Keta Kalles be treated like any other religion in America.

Many Americans feel that members of the movement are simply enemy sympathizers, and the Delphi Council is doing its best to destroy the movement. This has caused many clashes at CGA demonstrations, and if support continues to grow it could lead to a civil war to add to the United States's troubles.

The Folk of the Land

The following are the predominant types of folk currently living in the realm of the Living Land.

Edeinos

Edeinos are the primary beings that make up Baruk Kaah's forces. The High Lord himself is of this race that obviously evolved from Takta Ker's dinosaurs. They are tall, powerful folk, with scaled hides, clawed hands and feet, and sharp-beaked heads. They have long tails they use for balance, and occasionally for attack. The main types of Edeinos are: the warriors who

The Deep Mist

The Deep Mist of Takta Ker has spilled into the realm of the Living Land. It pervades everything, causing the land to remain warm and humid through day and night. It confuses travelers, obscures vision, hides dangers. It is a thick gray fog that produces strange echoes and muffles sounds.

Characters in the mist can see no further than 30 meters on a good day, much less on a bad day or in specific areas where the mist gathers more thickly. Whatever the case, objects beyond 10 meters distant appear as vague shapes in the fog.

Because of a powerful miracle of Lanala, the Deep Mist also confuses compasses and other navigational equipment, even those items used by a possibility-rated character. Being lost is a permanent feature of the Living Land.

live to experience sensation through battle; the optants, priests of Life dedicated to Lanala and the religion of Keta Kalles; and the gotaks, the priests of the dead who Baruk Kaah appointed to deal with stelae and the gospog.

Edeinos Warrior: DEX 11, STR 9, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI10.
Skills: 13 adds, variable.
Possibility Potential: some (65).

Edeinos Optant: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI 12.
Skills: 13 adds, variable, including faith (Keta. Kelles).
Possibility Potential: some (45).

Edeinos Gotak: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 8, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI 11.
Skills: 13 adds, variable, including faith (Keta Kelles/Baruk Kaah).
Possibility Potential: some (55).

Jakatts

The followers of Lanala and Keta Kelles are known as Jakatts. While most Edeinos are also Jakatts, here we will describe those other races which have taken up the faith of Life. Each of these races was conquered by Baruk Kaah and then decided to join his continuing conquest of the cosmverse because of the sensations it provided.

The Benthe are small, amoeba-like beings who can manipulate pheromones, thus controlling other beings and creatures through emotional releases. Baruk Kaah often attaches Benthe to dinosaurs to provide them with intelligent control.

Humans who have transformed to the reality of the Living Land often hear the call of Lanala and take up her faith. These savages form perhaps the second largest force in Baruk Kaah's armies, if one does not count the gospog.

Stalengers are starfish-shaped beings that fly by sucking air through a hole in the top of their bodies and then forcing it out through holes in the bottom and tips of their appendages. Thin tentacles uncoil from the bottom of their bodies for use in navigation, sensory input, defense, and communication.

Benthe: DEX 7, STR 7, TOU 12, PER 17, MIN 14, CHA 11, SPI 11.
Skills: 13 adds, variable, including faith (Keta Kelles). Immune to taunt attacks, cannot taunt another.
Possibility Potential: some (30).
Natural Tools: pheromone manipulation.

Human Jakatt: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.
Skills: 13 adds, variable, including faith (Keta Kelles).
Possibility Potential: some (65).

Stalenger: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 9, MIN 8, CHA 7, SPI 8.
Skills: 13 adds, variable, including faith (Keta Kelles), flight, tracking.
Possibility Potential: some (65).

Core Earthers

There are those people from Core Earth who refuse to let the invaders drive them away. Of the many types, two are most often encountered — stayers and realm runners. Stayers are humans who refuse to leave their homes. Some stayers are solitary, existing like hermits within their walled dwellings. Others join together to form resistance communities. The stayer's best friend is the realm runner, Core Earther's who shuttle back and forth between Core Earth and the Living Land bringing supplies, news, and other important items with them, often in the back of powerful rigs.

Stayer: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.
Skills: survival 11, fire combat 9, melee weapon 9, faith 9, intimidation 10, land vehicles 9, first aid 9, trick 9, plus three skills at +2.
Possibility Potential: some (45).

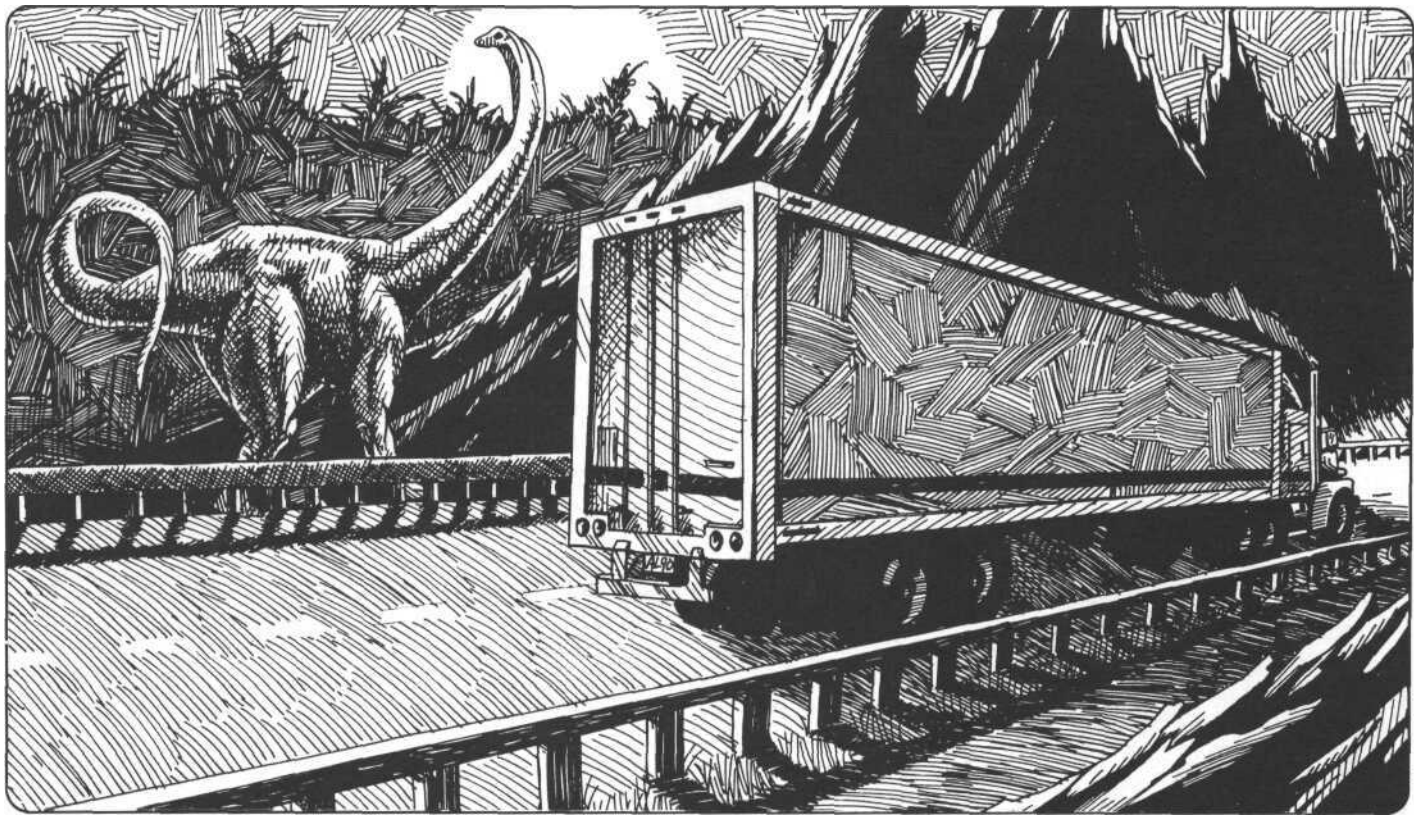
Realm Runner: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.
Skills: charm 10, persuasion 9, taunt 9, fire combat 10, missile weapons 9, unarmed combat 9, land vehicles 11, trick 9, lifting 9, plus three skills at +1.
Possibility Potential: some (35).

Living Land Miracles

The coming of the invaders changed the reality of the United States and Canada in many ways, but none was as profound as the rise of miracles of faith. These are some of the miracles available to the faithful of Lanala.

See Through Mist

Spiritual Rating: 10
Community Rating: 8
Difficulty: 12
Range: result points +5
Duration: 24 hours
Effect: lets the blessed Jakatt see through the Deep Mist without impairment



Alan Jude Summa

See *through mist* is usually a bless upon an entire tribe to provide clear sight as though the Deep Mist was not present. Those blessed by this miracle are not hindered by the Deep Mist.

Heightened Sight

Spiritual Rating: 11
Community Rating: 6
Difficulty: 10
Range: sight
Duration: result points +3
Effect: makes everything the blessed character looks at more clear and vibrant

Heightened sight makes everything within sight much clearer, more vibrant. Every detail becomes distinct. A character under the effects of this miracle receives a PER+2 for all rolls involving sight, but also suffers a DEX -2 and MIN-2 because the brain and body cannot assimilate all of the information coming in through the eyes.

Pain Sacks

Spiritual Rating: 11
Community Rating: na
Difficulty: 13
Range: touch
Duration: until triggered
Effect: creates a device for causing pain to one's enemies

Pain sacks draws its power from Baruk Kaah's Darkness Device, and therefore can only be invoked by a gotak. It allows a gotak to create a sack of dead items that must be buried in the living ground. When a non-Jakatt steps over the sack, it explodes and inflicts damage on the victim. The *Strength* of the sack is determined by the success achieved when it was created — minimal 10, average 12, good 14, superior 16, spectacular 18.

Duration: until re-planted
Effect: turns a hrockt shoot into a spear

Simple spear allows a Jakatt to take a hrockt shoot and pray to Lanala to turn it into a weapon. The tip becomes sharp, the shaft strong. Damage is STR+3.

Intense Fear

Spiritual Rating: 11
Community Rating: 11
Difficulty: 15
Range: sight
Duration: result points +5
Effect: strikes terror into the hearts of those cursed by Lanala

Intense fear causes anyone so cursed to be seized by an extreme terror. This causes the victim to flee for a place of safety and hide there until the miracle dissipates. Once in safety, the victim can try to shake the fear before it elapses by making a *faith* roll of 15 difficulty.

Increase Toughness

Spiritual Rating: 13
Community Rating: 10
Difficulty: 17
Range: sight
Duration: one scene
Effect: increase the ability to withstand wounds

Increase toughness is one of the more perverse miracles available to the faithful of Lanala. It allows a Jakatt to feel all the pain inflicted upon him, but it has no physical effect. An Edeinos warrior, for example, ignores shock and KO damage in combat and does not fall. Instead, he keeps fighting, relishing the intense pain. All damage is real. The warrior simply ignores it until the battle ends. The miracle lasts throughout a scene, so the only way to stop the blessed warrior is to cause so much damage the body cannot continue to fight (seven wounds).

After the scene, the shock, KO, and other damage takes effect. If he has taken four or more wounds, the warrior must make a successful healing roll of TOU+10 to lower it to a mortal wound. Failure brings on automatic death.

Creatures of the Living Land

The creatures of the Living Land are many. Here are a few. For more, see *The Living Land Sourcebook.*

Baragon

Baragons are great two-legged monsters with powerful arms and rending teeth. They resemble reptilian bears, covered with heavy scales instead of fur. They are meat eaters, and very violent. They grow to a height of six meters and love to feed on larger dinosaurs.

Baragon: DEX 11, STR 18, TOU 19, PER 6, MIN 5, CHA 4, SPI 2.

Skills: unarmed combat 14, running 12, stealth 12, climbing 18, lifting 16, taunt (10), intimidation 10, trick (10), test (10).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +2; claws, damage STR+2; teeth, damage STR+3.

Kylot

Kylots are large, tanklike dinosaurs that walk on all fours beneath a heavy shell. Three spiked tails extend behind them. They can manipulate these tails independently to inflict damage on three separate targets at the same time. They grow to a length of eight meters and a height of three meters.

Kylot: DEX 8, STR 22, TOU 21, PER 3, MIN 3, CHA 3, SPI 2.

Skills: club 14, ram 11, intimidation 17, taunt (11), trick (8), test (8).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +5; clubs, damage STR+6; ram, damage STR+3.

Lakten

Lakten are flying lizards that Edeinos use as mounts. They have a wingspan of four meters, and grow as long as three meters. They have only two legs, but these are equipped with sharp talons. Their beaked heads can also cause extreme damage.

Lakten: DEX 12, STR 9, TOU 12, PER 7, MIN 6, CHA 4, SPI 4.

Skills: dodge 14, flight 14, unarmed combat 13, maneuver 14, intimidation (6), taunt (11).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: beak, damage STR+2; talons, damage STR+3, wings, speed 12.

Carnol

Carnol are large predators with powerful jaws. An average carnol measures 15 meters from head to tail, has a spiked ridge running along its spine, long teeth, and useless forelimbs. It is a fast, graceful monster, able to deliver a terrible bite surprisingly quickly. Its hind legs are built for running and dodging, but its spiked tail can cause much damage.

Carnol: DEX 13, STR 26, TOU 30, PER 6, MIN 5, CHA 4, SPI 3.

Skills: dodge 16, bite 17, tail 14, maneuver 14, tracking 8, intimidation (22), test (12), taunt (10), trick (15).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +2; teeth, damage STR+6; tail, damage STR+2.

Tresir

The tresir is the hunter of the Living Land, prowling in search of prey. It is a catlike warm-blooded reptile of unusual grace and savagery. The average tresir has a sleek, black body with a mane of black fur falling around its head. Claws on each of four legs are designed to rend and tear, and its teeth are extremely sharp. A tresir grows as large as nine meters.

Tresir: DEX 15, STR 19, TOU 19, PER 8, MIN 7, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: acrobatics 16, dodge 18, maneuver 16, running 18, intimidation 9, find 12, tracking 14, trick 10, test 8, willpower 9, taunt (8).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: claws, damage STR+5, teeth, damage STR+6.



Chapter Four

Aysle Realm

"We remain to right the wrongs perpetuated upon these people by the evil Uthorion. We shall stay until that task is finished."

— *Lady Pella Ardinay*

Aysle is the fantasy realm. It is a place of dreams and nightmares, of folk both magical and mundane, of creatures of light ... and darkness. It is a realm thrown into confusion, a realm split along the lines of two powerful beings who can both claim to be its High Lord — Lady Pella Ardinay of the light, and Lord Angar Uthorion of the dark.

Humans, dwarves, elves, and giants are the predominant races that arrived from the cosm via maelstrom bridge, mingling with Earth humans and the newly-created races, goblins and faeries, as well as a huge increase in the population of the half-folk. Creatures include unicorns, dragons, basilisks, manes, manticores, trolls, and will'o'wisps.

On Earth, Aysle realm extends from the United Kingdom through Norway, Sweden, Finland, and parts of Denmark (see the accompanying map).

Before the Invasion

Long ago, on the world of Aysle, in a cosm where fantasy was reality, a terrible war took place. Aysle was invaded by horrific raiders under the control of Uthorion. This evil High Lord was once the Gaunt Man's chief lieutenant, but one day he discovered his own Darkness Device. The Gaunt Man, knowing that he might need to call on his lieutenant at some future time, helped Uthorion work out a plan.

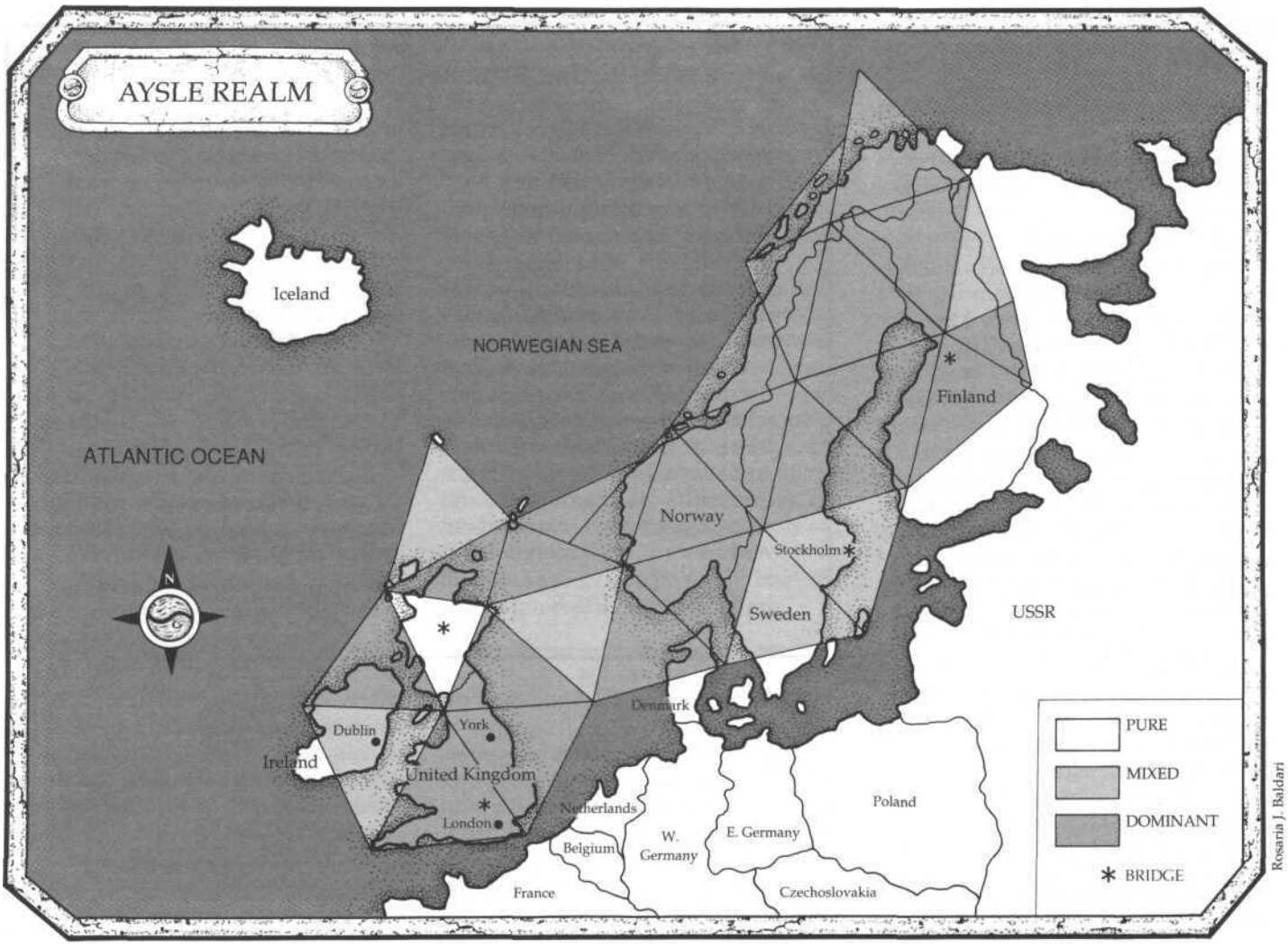
If Uthorion found a cosm to his own liking, the Gaunt Man would provide the forces to conquer that cosm. Then Uthorion could establish his own power base using what remained of that conquered reality. The cosm Uthorion chose was Aysle.

Using all manner of nightmare creatures, ravagons, gospog, and even the dread Carredon, Uthorion attacked. Aysle, though, was not without its own defenders, and these heroes rallied around their leader, the Lady of the Houses of Aysle, Pella Ardinay.

The final battle occurred within Ardinay's castle, out of the sight of the folk of Aysle. As the Carredon tore through the Knight Protectors, Ardinay faced off against Uthorion. There was no contest. With the power of his Darkness Device to aid him, Uthorion placed his spirit within Ardinay's body. Her own spirit was sundered as Uthorion took charge of her physical form. He re-attuned his Device to the new body and reality, thus making himself High Lord of Aysle. But it was an Aysle transformed to Uthorion's liking, full of dark and evil things.

The Gaunt Man saw that the conquest was complete, and he called his forces back to Orrorsh. The people of Aysle, of course, assumed that the monsters were retreating. Lady Ardinay must have triumphed! Uthorion did nothing to dispell that belief.

But when Aysle attacked Earth many centuries later, a group of Storm Knights returned Ardinay to her body and sundered Uthorion's spirit from her body. Now Aysle contains aspects of both light and dark, and Lady Ardinay is working to restore her world to its former glory — first in the realm on Earth, and then back in the cosm. Rumors abound, though, that Uthorion has taken another form and is desperately seeking a way to reclaim his Darkness Device. Ardinay, of course, refuses to use it, though it promises her quick and easy solutions to the problems she works to correct.



The Cosm of Aysle

The Aysle homeworld is a disk-shaped planet with a hole cutting through its center, connecting the top half of the disk with the bottom. The world's sun travels through this hole, providing day and night to each side in turn.

The cosm has suffered under the oppressive rule of Uthorion (working throughthe body of Ardinay)formany centuries. As such, much of the land is dark and twisted. Evil creatures abound, as do malicious supernatural entities.

The cosm is in flux. Lady Ardinay has definitely changed since the invasion of Earth began, and many of the leaders of the ruling houses are preparing to make their own claims at total power. Many are in their vaunted positions because of the oppressions imposed by Uthorion (who the people thought was Ardinay), and they are reluctant to so easily return to the ways of old which the changed Ardinay is proposing.

But Lady Ardinay has not yet returned to the cosm to deal with these issues. She remains on Earth to handle matters there. So, all kinds of mischief is occurring in her absence, especially by the Vikings, who seem most stringent in carrying out Uthorion's original plans.

Aysle on Earth

Aysle on Earth is a realm of magic and fantasy. In Aysle, elves and dwarves and giants roam, and the feeling that eldritch power saturates the very air, there for the taking by those adept, is once more commonplace.

But Aysle does not cast a single, monochromatic veil across the portion of Earth it overlays. With the sundering of Uthorion's spirit, and the re-investing of Pella Ardinay's spirit in her natural body (these events are chronicled in *The Possibility Wars* novel trilogy), the reality of Aysle has been thrown into flux. Uthorion's dark laws still hold in patches of Aysle, though in other locales the Lady of the Houses' rules of light are dominant. As yet, the boundaries between the two forces are fluid, blurred in places, and overlapped in others.

As it is in the cosm, so is it in the realm — some of Uthorion's minions still function, their loyalty and their visages unchanged. Some have transformed into hideous caricatures of their former selves, the evil of their natures

reflected in the contortions of their bodies. And some of the Ayslish have been released from the bondage of the evil High Lord to become friends, even champions, of the native peoples in the realm.

If the residents of Aysle are a mixed lot, the peoples of the realm they occupy are a veritable smorgasbord. While the realm of Aysle on Earth may not have the largest number of different cultures ever to be invaded by a single High Lord, it does have the most active post-invasion mix.

The actual war for the land now occupied by Aysle realm was relatively short. Uthorion's forces fought savagely in the areas where the maelstrom bridges descended, but then were thrown into confusion when Ardinay ordered the fighting to cease. A truce was declared, and the Lady of Aysle worked to make reparations with the invaded nations. Only days passed, however, when those most loyal to Uthorion's dark vision took up weapons against Ardinay herself. Aysle seems caught in a destructive civil war, with the invaded nations trapped in the middle.

England

England was hardest hit by the invaders, in terms of actual fighting. It also suffered profound setbacks in technology due to the sudden lowering of tech and social axioms. The only places that computers and modern devices work are London and the lower Thames, within the walled city of York, and south of the line that transects Dover in the east and Land's End at the tip of Cornwall. Unfortunately, there is no coal to burn in the Tilbury electrical generating station within London's bounds, so even in this pure Core Earth area, the city current is down. An individual must have his own generator or batteries to run appliances.

For the majority of the English, horse-drawn carts are the most common transportation, though steam power still works. Bicycles? Most people can't seem to get the hang of how to balance any more, can't seem to pedal and steer and stay upright all at once. It's not so simple, riding a bike. When reality changes, you do "forget."

The sudden loss of technology has caused panic and fear of famine among the 47 million or more people who inhabit England. Refugees stream into the countryside from the cities. Continental drops of supplies along the Channel have drawn many folk south.

Schemes Within Schemes: Uthorion and Jean Malraux

Uthorion, the High Lord of Aysle, smiled. On his own face, the expression would have been a hideous rictus straining keloid scars. But he occupied the lovely body of Pella Ardinay now, and the wise, sad tilt of her lips was the vision Pope Jean Malraux I apprehended.

"Our Huntsman tells us that Baruk Kaah is failing daily. His spirit falters, just as we had hoped," said Uthorion through Ardinay's lips. Forestalling a question he saw in the Antipope's eyes, Uthorion held Ardinay's slim-fingered hand aloft. "Wait. The Gaunt Man will be occupied with that imbecile's realm. We descend. He notes our tardy presence. But his preoccupation is his undoing — for *then* we strike. India is ours, and Europe is yours, and together ..." He let the throaty contralto of the Lady's voice trail suggestively into silence.

Jean Malraux's milky blue eyes mirrored no passions; his white-haired crown nodded infintesimally. "And if Mobius strikes north?"

"Our raiders and mages are at your disposal against him." Ardinay who was Uthorion leaned forward, the Dark Lord's intensity hardening the Lady's soft features. "We will win."

Ireland

Ireland has developed very different lines of division. A maelstrom bridge landed in Belfast, pouring Aysle denizens into the city. The IRA, or what's left of it, retreated to Castlebellingham in the mixed zone where both magic and technology function. They regroup, resupply, and adjust their techniques to most fully harass the new, spell-casting and fantastical beings still loyal to Uthorion. The Ulster Defense League has done the same. Protestants and Catholics work side by side, if uneasily, against the greater evil of Uthorion's raiders, and their Christianity can support miracles of faith.

But in the south, Core Earth still holds sway. West of the line from Inishark Island to Knockadoon Head, magic is suppressed. The green hills of Kerry sprout tent cities like a summer crop as a non-combatant third of the almost four million Irish try to outrun the evil creatures that have not disappeared with the return of Ardinay. The beaches are crowded with fishing boats and dinghies fleeing south.

Scotland

Nearly 70 percent of Scotland's land is within the pure zone of Aysle. With the collapse of—and isolation from—the parliamentary government, and the influx of good, evil and neutral Ayslish, many Scots have regrouped at the clan level, depending on strong family leaders and local allegiances to see them through these strange times.

Technology is slightly harder hit than in England. Here, not only do the people not remember how to bicycle, but the metal itself sags or goes brittle and breaks.

Another result of the pure zone is that more Scots than other British cultures have transformed into Ayslish folk — and more have reached hero potential as well. The Second Sight, which has been in some families for generations, is particularly strong now.

North of the line from Kinnaird's Head to North Uist Island, west of the

line from North Uist to St. Bee's Head, and east of the line from St. Bee's Head to Kinnaird's Head, is the dominant zone, and the land is less affected.

Wales

The almost three million Welsh have not yet faced the brunt of the changing reality. But there are rumors of monsters deep in the caves and coal seams of "the Valleys," and small roving bands of Ayslish mercenaries terrorize outlying cottages and towns. The western tips of Pembroke, Anglesey and Caernarvon reach into the mixed zone that also encompasses the center of Ireland.

Sweden

Ayslish raiders hit the Scandinavian peninsula soon after they landed in the Scottish heather. The main peninsular bridge fountained up out of the Riddafjarden opposite Stockholm's City Hall. Aylish ships seemed to spring from the river-bottom like resurfacing Viking wrecks, except that the invaders were very much alive and for the most part dry.

About 32,000 Swedes living in Stockholm and its environs were transformed into Aylish folk in that first attack, as well. Fear runs high against them, but not all are loyal to Uthorion, and the armed forces advocate capture over more permanent solutions.

Uthorion's peninsular troops feature more Viking-like raiders than those that attacked Britain, because of the raiders' superior seafaring skills and their ability to bring boats over the water bridge. Like the Vikings of old, the raiders concentrate on coastal attacks.

Denmark

Only the northern third of the Jutland Peninsula is overlayed by Aysle. Most of Denmark still functions under Core Earth axioms, and the five million Danes have the support of their German neighbors by land, air and sea against the evil creatures that once made up Uthorion's army.

Finland

The demarcation line of the Aysle realm runs from Lieska by the Soviet border to Rauma on the Gulf of Bothnia, cleaving the Finnish lake district in two. South of the line, Core Earth is the dominant force. To the north, Vikings and giants roam, having come over the Finnish bridge in Oulu. More than half of the nearly five million Finns live south of the demarcation line, and refugees from the north arrive every day.

But if 42 wars lost to Russia have not dimmed the Finnish spirit of *sisu* (a word that has no English equivalent, but is often translated as "guts"), these most recent invaders have not broken the people, either. They are stubborn. They will fight. Rumors tell of eastern *laanit* (provinces) where technology and magic both function. It is a good place to start.

Norway

Viking raiders again ply the cold fjords of Norway, but this time they are not the landholders but the invaders. Fighting is heaviest in the south, where the bulk of the four million Norwegians live. North along the fjordlands, raiders make quick attacks, striking at fishing villages and derelict vessels alike.

Because nearly every square kilometer of Norwegian coast has been overlayed by dominant Ayslish zones (except the Svarlbard island group in the Arctic Sea, and Vardo, north of the Kola Peninsula), Norway's merchant marine fleet has been devasted. Those vessels that were within the stelae boundaries, and those that came home unaware of the trouble, are largely inoperable. Their crews cannot run the complex radar/sonar navigation systems.

Ayslish Folk

The following are the predominant races currently living in the realm of Aysle. It does not include Core Earth humans who have flipped to the new reality, stormers who still live here, or Storm Knights operating within the realm.

Ayslish

These humans have crossed the maelstrom bridges from the main continent back in the cosm and now reside throughout the realm. Like all races, there are good and bad among the Ayslish. Some follow the dark ways of Uthorion, others the path of light that Ardinay preaches. They are war-



Valerie Valusek

and mages, priests and thieves. And they are by far the largest contingent to come out of the cosm.

Standard Ayslish Yeoman: DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 7, MIN 7, CHA 7, SPI 8.

Skills: missile weapons 12, dodge 10, beast riding 10, melee weapons 10, running 10, lifting 10, find 9, tracking 8, trick 8, survival 8, plus three skills at +1.

Possibility Potential: some (55).

Dwarves

Dwarves are the oldest race known to exist in the Aysle cosm. They live underground there, in vast subterranean cities. They were forced into military service by Uthorion, and while the long-lived race remembers the days of peace under Ardinay, they also remember the dark days that followed while Ardinay was under Uthorion's control. Distrustful and cynical by nature, they have become even more so in light of Ardinay's seemingly miraculous change of attitude. Dwarves appear as merchants, warriors, scholars, scientists, even wizards, but they have little love for the priesthood or organized religion.

Standard Dwarf Mage: DEX 7, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 7, SPI 6.

Skills: conjuration magic 12, alteration magic 11, divination magic 11, apportation magic 11, languages 10, evidence analysis 10, trick 10, test 10, plus three skills at +1.

Arcane Knowledges: air 3, folk 3, earth 1, others at gamemaster's choice.

Spells: *Dvergamal,* others at gamemaster's choice.

Possibility Potential: some (45).

Vikings

A seafaring race of humans, the Vikings are savage warriors. They embraced the idea of conquest and have refused to let it go, even in light of recent developments. Crossing into Scandinavia via maelstrom bridges formed of water, the Vikings are looting, pilaging, and spreading the evil of Uthorion in the High Lord's absence. While not all are evil, the dictates of their society allow them to terrorize and behave cruelly. Uthorion encouraged this. Upon great, magical longships, the Vikings engage in piracy, trade, and land taking throughout Northern Europe.

Standard Viking: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 6, MIN 6, CHA 7, SPI 7.

Skills: dodge 11, melee weapons 13, maneuver 11, missile weapons 11, swimming 12, unarmed combat 11, scholar (navigation) 7, trick 8, water vehicles 7, plus three skills at +1.

Possibility Potential: some (65).

Goblins

The goblin race is not native to the Aysle cosm. Some Core Earthers transformed when Aysle reality washed over the land, becoming a new kind of folk — the goblins. Small, twisted beings, goblins have large, oversized heads and slender bodies. They tend to be malicious and depraved, and refuse to have anything to do with tools or machinery. Some other folk claim goblins can control and speak to insects, but that may only be a result of the abundance of bugs usually found around and on them. They have a penchant for crime, violence, and antisocial behavior, and many have begun to immigrate up bridge into the cosm.

Standard Goblin: DEX 11, STR 6, TOU 7, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.

Skills: taunt 13, intimidation (10), acrobatics 11, beast riding 11, dodge 11, lockpicking 11, maneuver 11, melee weapons 11, stealth 11, prestidigitation 11, willpower 10, find 9, trick (10), medicine 9, plus three skills at +1.

Possibility Potential: none.

Half-Folk

When Uthorion first invaded the Aysle cosm, the reality storms transformed the folk into beings that were half creature. This multitude of beings became known collectively as the half-folk. When Aysle invaded Earth, the process happened again and more half-folk were created from the human population. First generation half-folk are never possibility-rated, but each succeeding generation produces more possibility-rated beings. So, half-folk Storm Knights can only come from the cosm of Aysle. Half-folk range from normal human intelligence to very low, almost animal cunning. Varieties include minotaurs, centaurs, harpies, and mer-folk.

Standard Half-Folk (Minotaur): DEX 8, STR 12, TOU 7, PER 7, MIN 8, CHA 7, SPI 7.

Skills: tracking 11, melee weapons 11, unarmed combat 12, intimidation 18, test 14, taunt 14, trick 10, find 10, willpower 10.

Natural Tools: teeth, damage STR +3; minotaur hide, defense +7; charge, damage STR +4, to hit value -4.

Possibility Potential: some (60).

Ayslish Magic

The coming of the invaders changed the reality of Britain and Scandinavia in many ways, but none was as profound as the influx (or perhaps resurgence?) of magic. Many magic spells and effects duplicate or harken back to the old tales that modern Earth tolerantly regards as legends. In addition to the spells listed in the Rule Book, we present these from Aysle.

Ayslish Grimoire

Bleeding Blade

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *divination/true knowledge 23*

Backlash: 20
Difficulty: 16
Effect Value: 23
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 0 (one meter)
Duration: 23 (10 hours)
Cast Time: 21 (four hours)
Manipulation: control, duration, state

Bleeding blade allows the caster to determine unequivocally if the target is telling the truth. It is an impressed spell.

The mage uses the target's dagger, or any sharp metal object, such as a brooch or a sewing needle, which has been the target's exclusive property for at least a year and a day. The mage places the tip of the blade against the target's throat, and casts the spell. The caster then asks a question. If the target lies, the blade is stained blood red.

The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *persuasion* or *Charisma*. On a *Minimal* or *Average* success,

the caster can tell that some element in the target's statement is untrue to some extent, but not which or how much; on a *Good* success, the caster can identify the element (which may well be the entire statement); on a *Superior* or *Spectacular* success, the caster can gauge to what extent the statement is untrue.

Multiple Selves

Axiom Level: 12
Skill: *conjuration/folk 17*

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 15
Effect Value: 17
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 15 (1,000 meters)
Duration: 14 (10 minutes)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: mixed forces

Multiple selves allows a mage to confuse pursuit by creating physical duplicates which scatter in all directions. The mage folds his hands into fists touching each other, then quickly flings his hands wide, spreading his fingers to their fullest extension. Physical illusions of the mage (capable of cracking twigs, bending grass and twitching branches) scatter in all directions.

The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Mind* or *willpower* value. If successful, the target sees multiple images of the caster, the exact number dependent on the level of success achieved: *Minimal,* one; *Average,* two to three; *Good,* four to five; *Superior,* six to 10; *Spectacular,* as many as the caster wishes.

A *Mind* or *willpower* total of 17 is required to disbelieve the images.

Stay Voice

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *alteration/folk* 14

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 20
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 12 (four minutes)
Cast Time: 20 (2.5 hours)
Manipulation: apportation, conjuration

Stay voice allows the caster to use the power of his voice to stop a target from committing an action, essentially freezing him in place for the duration of the spell. It is an impressed spell. The mage commands "Stop" (in the old language) as he holds his arms before his body, crossed at the wrists. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Mind* or *willpower.* If successful, the target is prevented from moving as if his muscles had suddenly locked up. A *Mind* or *willpower* total equal to or higher than the effect value of the spell is required to "shake off" the paralysis.

Water Scry

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *divination/mixed forces* 16

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 16
Effect Value: 12
Bonus Number to: range

Range: 23 (40 kilometers)
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 17 (40 minutes)
Manipulation: apportation, mass, control, duration

The caster pours water into a silver basin, then places a veil soaked in divining oil (oil steeped with three hairs from the target) over his head, obscuring his sight. Slowly, he pulls the veil from the bottom, dragging the cloth from his face and crumpling it in the water. He withdraws the cloth, wringing out the liquid. When the surface of the oiled water goes flat, the current activities of the subject are revealed for one minute. The effect value of the spell is equivalent to the maximum *Perception* value which can be used to examine the scenes reflected.

Dwarven Grimoire

Dvergamal (Voice of the Dwarf)

Axiom Level: 11
Skill: *conjuration/air* 15

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 13
Effect Value: 9
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 10 (100 meters)
Duration: 15 (15 minutes)
Cast Time: 9 (one minute)
Manipulation: mixed forces

Dvergamal, literally "voice of the dwarf," can be used to confuse pursuit. The dwarf whispers into his hand, then "throws" the whisper in the direction he chooses an echo to come from. Targets of the spell must generate a *Mind* or *willpower* total greater than or equal to the effect value of the spell to disbelieve it.

Thistledown

Axiom Level: 16
Skill: *alteration/living forces* 18

Backlash: 20
Difficulty; 15
Effect Value: 24
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 0 (one meter)
Duration: 23 (10 hours)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: apportation

Thistledown lets the caster or his friends travel incognito as long as there is wind to carry them. A mage with synonymous knowledges might also create or direct the wind, so that he travels to the exact point he chooses.

The caster plucks three hairs from his head or his target's head, adds a piece of thistledown, and rolls the ingredients into a loose ball in his palm. He holds his open palm up before his face, and puffs the ball off in the direction he wishes to travel. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Toughness* on the Power Push table. To this result, nine is added. If the final result equals or exceeds the target's *Toughness,* then he is tranformed to thistledown and becomes capable of floating on air. The target now has DEX 1, STR 1, and TOU 1.

Turn to Stone

Axiom Level: 12
Skill: *alteration/folk* 18

Backlash: 25
Difficulty: 18
Effect Value: 25
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 29 (one week)
Cast Time: 23 (10 hours)
Manipulation: state, control

Turn to stone is an impressed spell. The caster touches his target, or a scrap

of the target's skin, hair or clothing with a pebble of the stone he is turning the target into. Most mages have only one stone; very powerful mages may be able to transform subjects into several similar lithic types. The most common stones are igneous rocks: basalt, granite, and obsidian.

The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Toughness* on the Power Push table. To this result, nine is added. If the final total equals or exceeds the target's *Toughness,* he is transformed to stone for the duration of the spell.

Creatures of Aysle

The creatures and monsters of Aysle are as varied as the land itself. Many resemble the myths and legends of Earth, while others are specific only to the cosm that spawned them. Here are a few. For more, see *The Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook.*

Draconis Teutonica

The evil dragons from the Rimward Seas of the Aysle homeworld are fierce, deadly creatures of superior intelligence and great egos. These beasts are long, serpentlike creatures with two powerful clawed appendages and a pair of huge wings. Armor covers their many coils, providing excellent protection. They have an affinity with elemental air, using its arctic blasts as a freezing breath weapon. A teutonic dragon can store arctic air within three internal sacs, which allows it to fire three blasts in quick succession (one per combat round). The sacs refill at a rate of one every three rounds. As the breath weapon is magical in nature, it can be defended against using elemental air magic. The older a dragon is, the larger it is. They continue to grow until they die. But the teutonic variety is larger than most of its cousins, averaging 40 meters from snout to tail. They have been known to work with the Vikings on occasion.

Teutonic Dragon: DEX 9, STR 27, TOU 23/35, PER 19, MIN 15, CHA 7, SPI 7.

Skills: reality 9, flight 12, unarmed combat 11, alteration magic 22, divination magic 22, evidence analysis 21, find 23, trick 22, test 21, willpower 18, taunt (11), plus three additional skill at +2 adds.

Possibility Potential: all.

Arcane Knowledges: darkness 4, air 6.

Natural Tools: armor +12; wings, speed 11; claws, damage STR+3; arctic air breath, damage 36, range 3-50/51-250/251-600.

Draconis Aysle

The good dragons from the Aysle continent are lizardlike, with four clawed legs and great wings. Scaled armor protects them from attack, and they are generally faster and more agile than the larger dragons. They have an affinity with elemental fire, using its searing heat as a burning breath weapon. An Aysle dragon can store fire within three internal sacs, which allows it to expend three blasts in quick succession (one per combat round). The sacs refill at a rate of one every three rounds. As the breath weapon is magical in nature, it can be defended against using elemental fire magic. This species averages 15 meters from snout to tail. Hating the tasks Uthorion forced them to accomplish, the Aysle dragons are pleased by Ardinay's seeming change of heart to do more good and honorable deeds.

Aysle Dragon: DEX 14, STR 21, TOU 19/27, PER 15, MIN 19, CHA 9, SPI 8.

Skills: reality 10, flight 15, unarmed combat 17, apportation magic 22, conjuration magic 22, evidence analysis 19, find 19, trick 24, test 21, willpower 21, taunt (12), plus three additional skill at +2 adds.

Possibility Potential: all.

Arcane Knowledges: light 3, fire 5.

Natural Tools: armor +8; wings, speed 15; claws, damage STR+3; fire breath, damage 28, range 3-30/31-100/101-250.

Ghouls

Ghouls are undead creatures of the night that followed Uthorion from Orrorsh. They feast on fresh corpses, delighting in killing a victim in order to create a meal. They are horrid, gray-skinned creatures with jelly-like flesh. They are extremely strong and have sharp fangs for rending corpses. Ghouls usually attack in groups.

Ghoul: DEX 7, STR 12, TOU 12, PER 7, MIN 6, CHA 6, SPI 7.

Skills: dodge 9, lock picking 8, unarmed combat 10, stealth 9, intimidation 9, trick (9), taunt (9), lifting 14, willpower 20.

Possibility Potential: some (60).

Natural Tools: fangs, damage STR+2. Immune to KO conditions. If *Hero Setback* card comes up, characters flee in fear if intimidated.

Skeletons

Animated skeletons are almost as plentiful as gospog in Aysle. While not as powerful, skeletons can be raised much faster than gospog. Uthorion and his chief unholy priests can pull the bones right from a dead corpse and order it into battle, even if the corpse was a fallen enemy. Skeletons can use a variety of weapons.

Skeleton: DEX 8, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 6, MIN 4, CHA 4, SPI 3.

Skills: dodge 9, melee weapon 11, unarmed combat 10, intimidation (7), taunt (8).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +2; sword, damage STR+4. Immune to shock and KO conditions.

Trolls

Trolls are giant creatures, standing eight feet tall and half again as wide as a man. Strong creatures, trolls are covered in fur or coarse hair. They are slobbering monsters, drooling constantly. They prefer caves, and have taken up residence in the British Underground. Rumors abound that many have placed themselves as leaders of goblin bands, propagating evil throughout the realm.

Troll: DEX 11, STR 18, TOU 19, PER 6, MIN 8, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: dodge 13, fire combat 12, melee weapons 14, unarmed combat 14, lifting 20, intimidation 13, test 10, trick 9, missile weapons 12, willpower 10, taunt 9.

Possibility Potential: some (85).

Natural Tools: claws, damage STR+3.



Chapter Five

The Cyberpapacy Realm

"Faith is for the masses. Power is for those who provide the faith."
— Pope Jean Malraux I

The Cyberpapacy is a mixed realm, formed from the joining of two distinct realities — a futuristic cybertech world and a dark ages' theocracy of spiritual power. Here, believers and non-believers alike pay homage to the God-Net, a massive computer that provides the path to God. Pope Jean Malraux I is High Lord and leader of a false church that sprang from a cosm where the Great Schism was never reconciled and the anti-popes were never abolished, but instead took control of the church.

On Earth, the Cyberpapist realm covers all of France. Paris, however, remains a Core Earth hardpoint, and Avignon has become the new capital as it is the seat of power for the Cyberpapist Church and headquarters of the Cyberpope. See the accompanying map.

The Cosm: Magna Verita

Jean Malraux I discretely and firmly warped Magna Verita into a cosm of evil. Originally Magna Verita was a world of noble spirit, a darker magic, and moderate technology. It was in a period of history much like Earth's Medieval era. But it was about to become the Dark Ages. Malaraux's Darkness Device amplified his own spiritual corruption until the whole of his cosm was woven into a cynical, despairing pattern.

Malraux was an ambitious bishop when he discovered his Darkness Device. Always fascinated with the supernatural, he first assumed the device to be the work of the devil, which did not deter him. Rather than report it to the College of Cardinals, Malraux experimented with the device himself. As he acquired power and became more comfortable with it, he began to corrupt other influential bishops and cardinals, discovering their fears and deep desires, and pandering to them. Those who resisted seduction were soon "retired" from active service. Jean Malraux displaced the spiritual leader of the people, Paulo Duchamp, and declared himself Pope with the puppet-like approval of the College of Cardinals. But in truth, he was an antipope.

Jean Malraux began the corruption of the land, beginning with renaming the College of Cardinals to the College of the Way. Technological progress which would have encouraged individualism was halted. The Inquisition was given powers which far exceeded its previous authority. Covert support was given to dabblers in the supernatural, providing a genuine threat from which the church could protect the citizenry. The dogma of the church became harsher, less forgiving of transgression. Sins were forever, damnation only a matter of time — and the only hope for salvation lay with Jean Malraux I (or so he claimed).

The greater his personal corruption, the more effort the antipope put into projecting an aura of purity. The more he destroyed the spirituality of his cosm's religion, the more his lackey's trumpeted him as the embodiment of the faith. Those who disagreed were burned as heretics, re-educated by the Inquisition, or "lost

from the fold", never to be found again.

Crushing the spirit of his people gave Malraux a warm, pleasant glow of power. But as all resistance was reduced to scattered whimpers, Pope Jean Malraux grew restless and bored. It was time to take his spiritual balm to another people.

Whispers in the Dark

Malraux received hints from his Darkness Device that there were far more worlds left to conquer and teach humility to. The antipope put his scholars to work on the prospect, and sent out expeditions to search for ancient records and artifacts. Eventually, a group of scholars unravelled the secrets of the maelstrom bridge. Upon successfully demonstrating the techniques, the scholars were excommunicated and burned as heretics. Then Malraux ordered a holy war to spread the faith to the world on the other side of the bridge. Pope Jean Malraux's Holy Crusades had begun.

After two successful invasions and a brief run in with another High Lord named Dr. Mobius, Malraux dropped an exploratory dimthread onto a new world: Aysle.

The pope was soon met by Uthorion, who occupied the body of Lady Pella Ardinay. After some initial tension, the two discovered a mutual interest in the subtleties of pain. Malraux considered the other High Lord a heathen scoundrel who might very well be possessed, but a heathen who had an appreciation of what was important in life. Uthorion explained that there were more than enough cosms to satisfy the antipope, and provided valuable advice on how to conduct a Possibility War.

Malraux, in turn, shared his expertise in finding what truly matters to an opponent, and then using fine, patient manipulations of that knowledge to get the opponent to self-destruct. The two shared in Malraux's destruction of another cosm.

When the Gaunt Man first presented his plan, the two High Lords were skeptical. Uthorion was more than a little afraid of his former master, but Malraux pointed out that anyone with a need so great as to require six other High Lords could surely be manipulated. They agreed to participate and immediately began their plan to destroy Baruk Kaah and Dr. Mobius, vastly increasing their share of Earth's possibility energy.

Malraux began his invasion of Earth by sending many agents from the College of the Way to France. These agents prepared the way, preaching, warning of the apocalypse to come, and laying the groundwork for that apocalypse. France became uneasy as the number of unexplained events became increasingly prominent in the headlines. Crucial, reliable technologies began to fail where they had always worked before. Then the maelstrom bridge smashed into Avignon, shattering France's reality.

France of the Cyberpope

When Malraux finally descended the bridge weeks later, he had changed. His confrontation with Storm Knights (as told in *The Possibility Wars* novel trilogy) changed his technological axiom, raising it greatly. When he came over the bridge, Malraux brought his Darkness Device with him, and tuned it to accept his new axioms. Malraux then sent the new axioms flooding through the stelae in France, reawakening Core Earth technology and advancing what was possible by decades, making the following possible: neural computer interfaces, artificial eyes which see different portions of the EM spectrum, limbs far more powerful than nature designed, human skills programmable upon etched silicon, nanotechnological machines capable of manufacturing and repairing flesh better than the body.

Malraux himself was the first to convert to the new technology. Jean Malraux I became the Cyberpope.

The first problem confronting Malraux was his own agents, many of them possibility rated. The members of the College of the Way lived under the axioms of Magna Verita, initially rejecting the technology of the Cyberpope, as technology went against everything that Malraux once stood for. A few disciples adopted Malraux's new technology, and these became the first cyberpriests. The New Inquisition hunted down those among the Cyberpope's old agents who refused to "be born again." The rest have been driven into hiding.

The second problem was reconciling his religion with the new technology. The Cyberpope grasped upon the concept of the sins of the flesh, and how spiritual experience was divorced from the experience of the body. Around these tenets he built a dogma embracing cybernetic replacement of human parts. His new religion also centered around spiritual experience beyond the body, experiences of heaven and hell accessible to the living. He constructed the GodNet — a super computer network.

Now France is torn into four factions. The most powerful is the Cyberpope's. His Inquisition grows in power and number every day, prying into the lives of hundreds of thousands of French citizens; in some weeks tens of thousands are rounded up by Church Police never to be seen again. The cyberpriests advocate the GodNet as the people's path to god, converting France to the new faith. Clinics hum 24 hours a day with the sound of laser scalpels as citizens are wired for jacking into the GodNet.

There is the France not yet transformed, its citizens holding true to the values of Core Earth France while embracing the technology of the Cyberpapacy. Some have formed an underground, not yet coordinated but of sufficient skill and daring to pose a tremendous problem to Malraux. Many have gathered in Paris — in the armed neighborhoods known collectively as Paris Liberte—to foster resistance to the Cyberpope.

There is the France of the average citizen struggling to survive. Most have accepted the Cyberpapacy with sullen resignation, some with an eye toward cautious resistance. A small minority have gladly embraced the dogma of Jean Malraux, accepting his spiritual path. This minority is rapidly growing, perhaps two years away from becoming a majority as propaganda, carefully orchestrated miracles, and the Inquisition take its toll.

There is the shadow France, where

the agents of Magna Verita hide. They are hunted with a fervor exceeding even the effort spent ferretting out the free French. For Magna Verita is under its original axioms, and the agents could rally the cosm to oppose the high technology of the Cyberpope, forcing Jean Malraux to fight the Possibility Wars on two fronts.

The Inquisition

The Inquisition exists to further the faith as promulgated by Jean Malraux I. They hunt down heretics, using the most sophisticated technology while still burning witches. They are not the same institution as the Church Police, but they can call upon the police and numerous tactical teams if a situation requires heavier firepower than the Inquisition normally has available.

The Inquisition has tens of thousands of informants, and thousands of plain-clothed agents. But their symbol, and their most feared members, are the cyberpriests.

One of the most feared weapons in the cyberpriests' arsenal is the *Net Damnation* miracle. If the miracle is successful, the target is sent to the Purgatory region of the GodNet the next time the target "jacks in" (see below).

Cyberpriest: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 9/14, PER 11, MIN 10, CHA 8, SPI 12.

Skills: dodge 10, fire combat 10, melee weapons 10, cyberdeck operations 14, find 12, scholar (Avignon doctrine) 11, trick 12, science (computers) 12, test 11, willpower 13, charm 11, persuasion 11, taunt 11, faith 15, focus 14, intimidation 14.

Additional Skills: three at +1 adds.

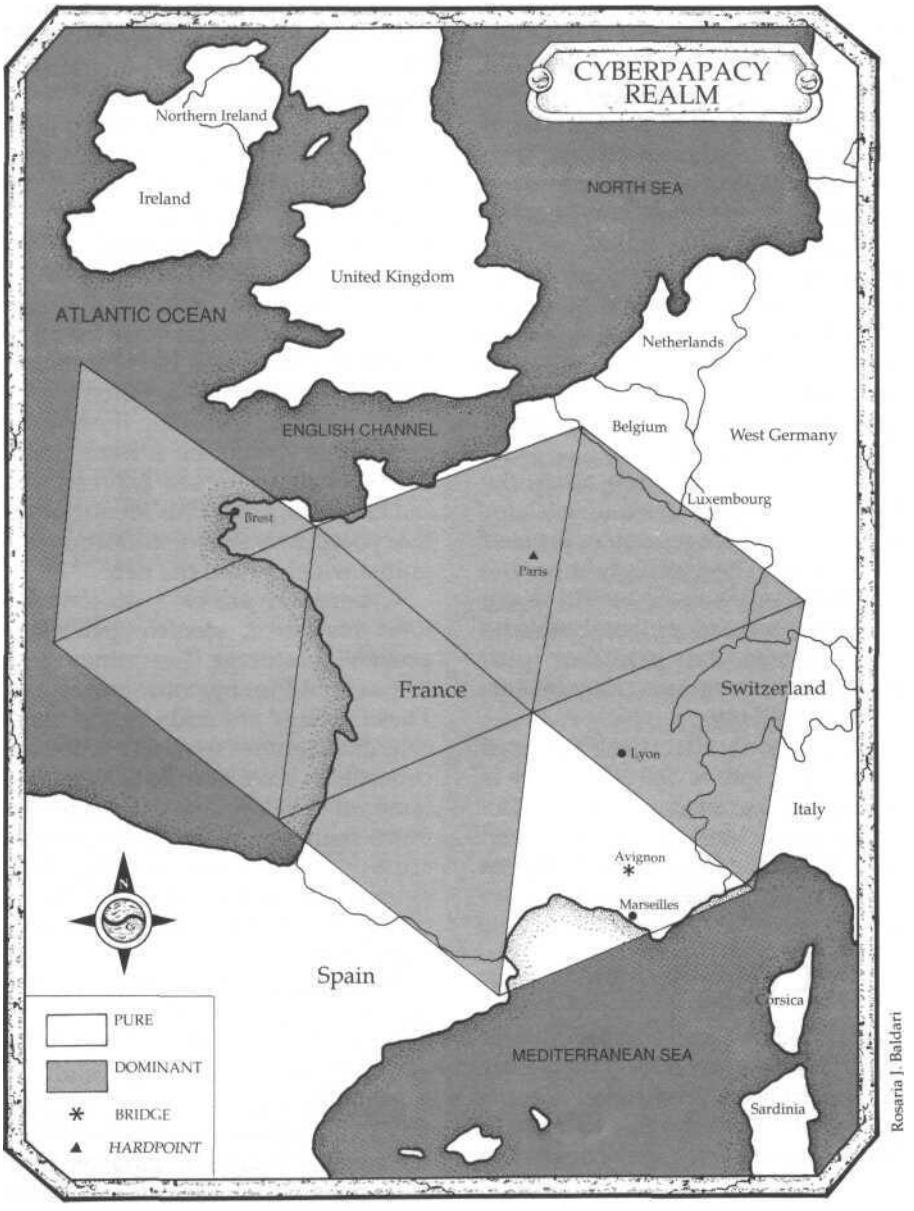
Possibility Potential: some (40).

Equipment: HallowMesh, armor value TOU+5/14; God Meeter, damage value 20; power dagger, damage value STR+5/13; Cyberware: NeuraCal EpiphaNeur, Belle View 20-20, CSI LEDs, CyberHam Receiver, TSE LeMotion, Throat Mike, Homer, DATAS Boomer, MB Charger, ChipHolder 3.

Cyber Value: 21.

Miracle: *Net Damnation;* spiritual rating 11, community rating 13. Difficulty (see below). Range: touch. Duration: until removed. Effect: sends GodNet user to the Purgatory file.

The difficulty of *Net Damnation* is the *Spirit* of the target. If the target is of a faith other than the Cyberpapacy, then the *faith* value of the target is used. When the target next connects to the GodNet, his virtual image will be surrounded by demons who eventually overpower him and transport him to Purgatory (see below).



Entering a Computer Net

Jean Malraux I carried with him the concept of the virtual experience computer net. Virtual experiences (VXs) are computer generated situations, characters and sensations which can pass for the real thing. Touch, taste, sight, sound, smell—all sensation can be duplicated through VX. A VX can damage a person, for the images/experiences are relayed to the user through a neural interface.

Neural interfacing, or jacking, can be done by any person who has been equipped with a neural jack. A neural jack's visible component is a socket, usually on the head or the neck. Its most important pieces are the miniature axion amplifier (called an ax) for boosting nerve current and the dipolar receding chip (dipchip) for translating mental commands and images to the computer net, and vice versa.

Neural jacks are fairly easy to implant (see "Cyberware" below). A user can jack straight into a VX net with no additional hardware needed.

A VX net has all of the traditional features of a large computer net, with access to all kinds of important data. Communications, financial records and transactions, technical secrets, production records and schedules, all exist on a VX net. A hot user can manipulate the VX features to gain access that would be impractical through normal programming techniques, but the danger increases as well. Most find it to be worth the risk.

When a user jacks into a net, the computer creates a "virtual self" for the user, one which resembles the user in most ways. The user finds he has the same skills in VX as he would in the real world, but any physical tools he carried are lost. Only mental or spiritual tools, or programs, may be carried into a VX net.

Users can only affect the VX net and those jacked into it. All VX reality is confined to the net. If a magician succeeded in an "end the world" spell while in VX, the net would crash, but the real world would remain.

Cyberdecks

While jacking into a net is enough to VX, it gives users little control over the experiences they have. CompPlexes have the capacity to modify VXs sent to users. CompPlexes are axion boosters, dipolar recorders, cyber-signal (cygnal) filters, and media chips integrated into a horrifyingly complex system coordinated by vast computing power. Cyberdecks are portable CompPlexes, with small VX work areas (compared to a full net) within them. Within these work areas the net's VX are modified by programs carried with the cyberdeck and controlled by the user. A cyberdeck can give a sophisticated user significant ability to control his experience in the net.

Using a cyberdeck requires either *cyberdeck operation,* which is a *Perception* skill native to the Cyberpapacy, or *scholar (computer science).* If a character is using the *scholar* skill, he is treated as unskilled when using the cyberdeck. Characters who do not have *cyberdeck operation* or *scholar (computer science)* may not operate a cyberdeck.

One of the benefits of decking is the user's ability to choose the appearance of his virtual self. There are a few restrictions: a character's virtual self must be roughly the same size as he is (within 25 percent), and must be humanoid in appearance. Truly skilled deckers *(cyberdeck operation* of 18 or more) can have less of a humanoid appearance, and can vary their size up to 100 percent. Choosing the appearance of his virtual self is more than a user's idiosyncratic self-expression. It can effectively mask his identity from the cyberpriests and identification programs which prowl the net.

Cyberdecks are rated in four factors: **response, stealth, processor power, and storage.** The ratings range from +1 to +5 for response and stealth. These ratings are adds to the user's *cyberdeck operation* or *scholar* skill. Most cyberdecks have +1 in both areas, and none yet developed have total adds of more than +5, although technicians are working feverishly on improving cyberdeck technology. Processor power ranges from 1 to 5, and storage from 3 to 10.

Response measures how quickly a cyberdeck can react to events within the net. When traveling through the net, a character moves through the computer-generated landscape at a perceived rate equal to his *Perception.* Response increases a character's virtual speed within the net; a character with a *Perception* of 10 and a cyberdeck with a response of +2 would have a base virtual speed of 12 when in the GodNet. Response also determines the speed at which data may be read; a decker can read a number of "data blocks" equal to the response adds of his cyberdeck each round.

Stealth measures how well the cyberdeck can prevent detection of the user from the net's defensive programs, or from net monitors and other users who might also be roaming the net. Each cyberdeck has a signature signal which can be traced. Stealth mutes, distorts and disguises this signal. Stealth adds and *cyberdeck operation* value yield the *stealth* value of the net raider.

Skill Use in the Net

Characters can use any skill they possess (as these skills are part of their self-image) at their full skill values. The adds of their *cyberdeck operation* or *scholar (computer science)* skill are added to these values to get the *net value* for the skill.

Even if a Storm Knight does not have a skill, he may increase his *net value* by his *cyberdeck operation* adds, but makes all rolls unskilled, losing his roll again bonus on die rolls of 20. *Cyberdeck operation,* but not *scholar (computer science),* even allows a character to use skills which cannot normally be used unskilled. That is part of the VX experience.

Sample Cyberdecks

Cyberdecks are literally a cottage industry in France. No one outside of the sanctioned research facilities in Avignon is even supposed to tinker with cyberdeck technology, but computer and technical literacy are too widespread to control completely. Attics, alleys, abandoned schools — all have been the site of makeshift labs where cyberdecks are assembled before being sold on the black market.

The three decks described below have reputations large enough to be known by almost every net raider in the realm. The Delicious is a standard cyberdeck, and almost every VX tech house can assemble one. Components may very, but the reliability of the Delicious is very high. The Marseilles Hermes was actually first introduced in Lyon, from a shop run out of the back of the Cafe Marseilles. It is difficult to find, and dealers are reluctant to discount the price under any circumstances. The IRCOM Custom Vee is rumored to be equal to any deck the Inqusition now has, although not the equal of the large terminals monitoring the GodNet. The IRCOM is impossible to find without an inside connection with one of the two VX tech houses which manufactures them. Finding the houses is not easy as they are constantly on the run from the Inquisition.

Delicious: Response +1, Stealth +1, Processor Power 3, Storage 4.
Cost: 17,000 francs (value 13).

Marseilles Hermes: Response +3, Stealth +1, Processor Power 4, Storage 3.
Cost: 40,000 francs (value 19).

IRCOM Custom Vee: Response +2, Stealth +3, Processor Power 4, Storage 5.
Cost: 100,000 francs (value 21).

Programs

The most common programs used by net raiders are programs which mimic skills in the VX environment, or which mimic physical tools or processes. An *attack+1* program might have a virtual image of a laser pistol, or perhaps a missile launcher if the decker has a high *cyberdeck operation* skill.

A program has a size equal to its adds; i.e., a program of *find +1* has a size of one, *combat +2* has a size of two. A cyberdeck can run a program of a size equal to its processing power. A cyberdeck with *processing power 3* can run a program with adds of +3. Alternately, it can run programs which have adds totaling to three, such as three +1 programs, or a +2 and a +1 program. A user cannot run programs which are too large for his processor, and must swap out programs to make room for new ones. A cyberdeck can have additional programs in storage; programs may be swapped from storage to the processor. This swapping counts as a simple action.

When reading a program from an outside source, how long it takes to read depends on the number of data blocks in the program. The number of data blocks in a program is usually five plus its adds, although a few may be smaller and several may be larger. The average size one program has six data blocks; a cyberdeck with *response +1* would take six rounds to read the data from an outside file of this size.

Program adds increase the user's *cyberdeck operation* value when using that skill.

Example: Valjean has a program *with find +1,* and a *cyberdeck operation* value of 13. His *find* skill value in the net is 14.

If a character has a skill and a program with that skill, only the higher adds apply, not both. In general, programs are used to provide a decker with skills he does not have naturally, or to provide tools and other equipment in the net.

The most sophisticated programs currently available for cyberdecks have adds +4, but these are charitably called beta-test versions and are prone to crash. Programs with adds +3 are the best generally available programs to date. The average costs of programs is given below.

Program Adds	Cost in Francs (Value)
+1	1,000 (11)
+2	3,000 (14)
+3	10,000 (16)

The GodNet

The GodNet is the spiritual and technological core of the Cyberpapacy, a computer network with the power to process tens of thousands of neural interfaces simultaneously, and its capacity is growing rapidly. The GodNet is now the true heart of France. Unwary users are awed by the sophisticated virtual experiences provided by the GodNet. As the VX is bolstered by strong, visceral religious symbolism, thousands of citizens within the realm are converted to the Cyberpope's religion each week.

Once he has jacked in, the first impression a user has of the GodNet is of a huge glowing cross with pulsating lines of circuitry etched into it and flowing out of it; the user is connected by a gossamer strand thrown off from one of these lines. As the user follows the strand down toward the cross, the other lines disappear and the cross expands to fill the field of vision, stretching to the vanishing points along the horizon. At the junction of the crosspieces is an angular, stepped tower which stretches into the sky. This is Babel Central. All information (including jacked-in users) entering the GodNet is routed through Babel Central for clearance and surveillance.

Combat in the GodNet

Net combat is a contest of decking skill and program power which can have lethal consequences. Combat in the GodNet is fought in the VX environment, but the neural connections make the damage real. The damage taken is mental damage, although there are often physical manifestations to go along with the mental damage.

When attacking in net combat a character's skill value is equal to his attack skill value plus *cyberdeck operation* adds plus *cyberdeck response* adds. When defending, his net skill value is equal to his defensive skill value plus *cyberdeck operation* adds plus *cyberdeck response* adds.

Example: Valjean *has fire combat* 10, *cyberdeck operation* adds +2, and a deck with *response +1.* His *net fire combat* value is 13. When attacking, he generates a *fire combat* total from the net value. When he defends, he uses his *net dodge* value.

Attack programs are like weapons, the program adds are combined with the user's *Mind* to get a damage value. Defense programs act as mental armor, increasing the decker's *Mind* by the armor value.

If a character suffers a knockdown in net combat, he cannot switch programs for a round, and can only defend himself that round.

A KO scrambles the cyberdeck for three rounds, but does not knock the character unconscious. When a cyberdeck is scrambled, none of its programs are accessible to its user.

A character who has taken shock damage equal to his *Toughness* does fall unconscious; both his virtual image and his physical self are unconscious.

A character who has taken a heavy wound or worse shows physical signs of damage. If a character is *mortally wounded* in combat, he must receive

medical attention or he will die. A character who takes four or more wound levels in net combat is dead, just as he would be anywhere else.

Net Defenses

The GodNet has a number of defenses, most of which are not yet known to net raiders or even to priests of the Cyberpapacy. The Darkness Device is responsible for most of the GodNet's defenses, and the purpose, presence and strength of many of them are unknown even to the Cyberpope.

The first line of defense, and the most numerous, are the priests who man the terminals hooked in through Babel Central. They share a massive CompPlex which is larger, more powerful than the mobile cyberdecks used by the net raiders. The standard terminal is the Penitence IV.

Penitence IV: Response +3, Stealth +0, Processor Power 7, Storage 15.

Jackpriests and cache monitors are hooked up to the GodNet from terminal stations throughout the Cyberpapacy. The largest terminal station is in Avignon, and has become known as Babel Central, although the real Babel Central is actually a VX construct. The priests and the monitors have 24-hour surveillance on the GodNet. They do not always pounce upon intruders. Often they "tag" them, trying to trace signals emanating from the intruder's VX persona to discover from where the intruder is jacking in. They then notify Church Police and the Inquisition of the location, and leave it at that.

More dangerous intruders, ones who are known to have evade defenses, or against whom there is evidence of data theft or net-tampering, are dealt with directly.

Jackpriest: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 10, MIN 9, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: dodge 9, fire combat 9, melee weapons 9, cyberdeck operation 12, find 11, trick 11, science 10, test 10, willpower 11, faith 10, focus 10, intimidation 10.

Additional Skills: three at +1 adds

Net Values: net attack (fire combat) 14, net defense 14, net find 16, net stealth 10, net manipulation 15, net tracking 13.

Possibility Potential: some (40).



Timothy Bradstreet

Babel Monitor: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 12, MIN 10, CHA 8, SPI 9.

Skills: dodge 10, fire combat 10 melee weapons 9, cyberdeck operation 16, find 13, trick 13, science 11, test 11, willpower 13, persuasion 11, taunt 11, faith 12, focus 11, intimidation 12

Additional Skills: three at +1 adds

Net Values: net attack (fire combat) 17, net defense 17, net find 20, net stealth 12, net manipulation 19, net tracking 12.

Possibility Potential: some (21).

Entities

Entities are self-aware programs which inhabit the net, occasionally by design of the Cyberpope, most often by the machinations of the Darkness Device. Most are known to inhabit specific regions of the GodNet. A few have been known to travel from region to region. Some short-lived entities have been introduced by ambitious net raiders, but Babel Central quickly finds and destroys virtually all of the entities not sanctioned by the Cyberpope or created by the Darkness Device. Rumors that other entities exist which they have no power over have yet to be verified.

When an entity is listed, its attributes are given as they appear in VX. Natural tools and skills are sub-programs, such as attack and defense programs, which the entity can use.

Beast of the Apocalypse: DEX 10, STR

22, TOU 25, PER 14, MIN 26, CHA 10, SPI 12.

Skills: stealth 22 (until beast manifests), find 17, missle combat 15, unarmed combat 17, trick 17, test 27, taunt (23), intimidate 17 (23), reality 14.

Net Values: net attack (melee) 20, net attack (missile) 18, net defense 14, net find 20, net stealth 25, net manipulation 17, net track 17.

Possibilities: 12.

Response/Processor/Storage: 3/16/32.

Programs: Onslaught 6 (5), Scramble 3 (3), MindWipe 3 (4), BrainBurn 1 (2), Surge 1 (2), DeckWipe 2 (3), Armor 4 (3), Scan 3 (3), Trace 4 (4), Grapple 2 (3).

Natural Tools: claws, damage value 28; bite, damage value 29; gaze, damage value 26, hide, armor +4.

Note: gaze is a missile combat attack. The pupils of the beast's eyes seem to whir and detach, propelled at unbelievable velocity toward the victim. The pupils reform in a round; its vision is unaffected by the attack.

Description: This entity is rumored to be able to appear in any region of the GodNet. Looking like the huge Apocalyptic beast, with seven heads, horns and a diadem, this horrible creature can cause such a surge of power that net raiders literally explode on the ends of their neura-jacks. The beast can travel nearly undetected, until it manifests itself by generating a VX form to use its attack and defense programs.

Regions of the GodNet

Babel Central

Babel Central is carefully screened by several watchdog programs (known as Gatekeepers) and constantly monitored by jackpriests and their superiors. Inside, Babel Central looks like a glass, chrome and light tower. Stairs lead to nowhere, balconies hang upside down, passages wind labyrinthine and transparent, so that you can see your goal but can't quite get there. Thousands of VX personas are in Babel Central at any one time. There are several gardens, full of subdued pastel light plants, which are fairly accessible to users. These are popular spots for rendezvous, drawing heavy traffic and monitoring.

Gatekeepers appear in many guises, most frequently as friendly monks willing to help the lost in Babel Central. Their appearance is normal, except they have perfectly white, nearly glowing teeth, upon which encoded signals occasionally flash.

Gatekeeper: DEX 8, STR 7, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 11, CHA 10, SPI 10.

Skills: melee weapons 10, stealth 10, find 11, trick 10, test 12, charm 15, persuasion 15, taunt 15, intimidate 11.

Net Values: net attack (fire combat)m 8, net defense 8, net find 9, net stealth 8, net manipulation 9, net track 9.

Possibility Potential: none

Response/Processor/Storage: 0/6/8.

Programs: Attack 3 (3), Defense 3 (3), Scan 2 (2).

Cathedrals

Almost all data on the GodNet is housed in one of a myriad cathedrals scattered throughout the net. The term cathedral includes the smaller, out of the way churches, some of which are quite hard to find, and whose location often changes. The larger, more conspicuous cathedrals are less likely to move around the net. Jackpriests usually patrol the better known cathedrals, and some have their own entities to help serve worshippers and protect data.

Heaven

No net raider has ever made it to Heaven, and so the many rumors about it are based entirely on the few faithful whom the cyberpriests have allowed entry. While there are the to-be-expected stories of angels and a perfect paradise, what interests deckers most about Heaven are the rumors about speaking to God.

Heaven is surrounded by a low wall, beyond which nothing can be seen. If one tries to scale or go over the wall, the wall rises higher to block passage. If one tries to dig under, he is similarly blocked. The wall instantly repairs any damage done to it. The only apparent gate is guarded by the VX Peter. Peter is reported to be infallible in knowing whether or not a user is allowed to enter Heaven, even rejecting some who were sent by the cyberpriests. Only with Peter's blessing can one then walk through the seemingly open gate.

Inside, the faithful have reported speaking to angels who have communicated their wishes to God. Upon leaving Heaven, they have noticed many of their desired changes worked into the fabric of the GodNet. In Heaven it might be possible to alter the entire configuration of the GodNet.

Hell

Again, no net raider has descended into Hell and returned. Those whom the cyberpriests have excommunicated and damned face Hell. The gates of Hell are reputedly guarded by a ferocious judge wearing a huge bronze headdress in the shape of a bull, armed with a whip which strips away and absorbs programs upon contact. Any user lost to Hell is presumed lost forever.

Purgatory

A more common punishment meted by the Cyberpapacy is Purgatory. Souls consigned to Purgatory by *Net Damnation* remain there, balanced between Hell and salvation, until the cyberpriests judge them fit enough to be reborn as a "spirit chip" (see below), or until a cyberpriest removes the damnation. The personalities in spirit chips have told tales of a dismal, endless plain. A miasma drifts about the plain, transporting and separating users who have more than the most banal communications. Loneliness and isolation, breached by only infrequent contact, are features of Purgatory upon which all spirit chips agree. The only known distinctive landmark in Purgatory is the Church of the Abyss, the contact point for those in Purgatory and the cyberpriests.

If the church of Jean Malraux excommunicates a soul (before or while the soul is in Purgatory), the soul is immediately wired to Hell.

Cyberware and Equipment

The tech level of the Cyberpapacy is the highest currently available in the Possibility Wars, and all cyberware is of tech level 26. However, due to the freak nature of Jean Malraux's transformation into the Cyberpope, the tech level has not yet been fully exploited. The Cyberpope is concentrating heavily on the GodNet technology, and lets other cyberware lag behind. The French were more accepting of the changes, and the street-labs quickly found a market for their wares. New products are being developed each week, and a field test is usually the only time a piece of equipment is tested. The Inquisition has been the branch of the False Papacy most accepting of cyberware, if only because they must battle those who have it.

Implanting Cyberware

Adding cyberware to a body is a risky venture. It is a new technology for the Cyberpapacy, and accidents happen. The surgery is often dangerous, and the outcome uncertain. In the lists of equipment below there is a surgery difficulty and a surgery effect listed for each piece of gear. The difficulty is the total which must be generated on a *medicine* roll to successfully install the cyberware. The surgery effect is the wound level taken during surgery. A character may not spend Possibilities to avoid this injury. Healing from surgery is the same as healing from combat.

If the surgery is successful, the cyberware is implanted. If the surgery has a success level *of good* or better, the patient takes one less wound. If the surgery is a failure, the ware is either not connected, or it malfunctions. The character still takes the wound.

Cyberpsychosis

Advances in medical science have made the installation of cyberware possible, but they have been unable to effectively counter the effects on the human psyche. As more items of cyberware are added and bodily functions are performed by machinery, a character becomes progressively dehumanized.

Every item of cyberware is rated according to its dehumanizing effects. Each time a character has a new system implanted, the cyber rating of the system is noted on the character sheet in the cyberware box. The sum of a character's cyber ratings are added together to determine his cyber value; this is noted on the cyber value box on the character sheet.

Cyberpsychosis occurs whenever a character suffers a setback result, whether as the result of an opponent's action (maneuver, intimidate, etc.) or via a conflict line result. When this occurs, the gamemaster generates a cyber total (the afflicted character's cyber value plus a bonus) against the target's *Spirit.* The result points are read on the Cyberpsychosis Table.

A player may declare his character is resisting Cyberpsychosis. He must declare this before the gamemaster rolls the die for the Cyberpsychosis check. The character then generates a *Spirit* total, with a minimum bonus of +1. Resisting Cyberpsychosis is therefore a form of active defense, like an active *dodge.*

The effect of Cyberpsychosis varies greatly from situation to situation, from the gaining of inner strength and minor mental blocks on the mild end to catatonia and hysterical rage on the severe end.

Basic Wiring

Basic wiring links the central nervous system to the cyberware, allowing the user to activate it upon thought. The most popular is a synthetic nerve fiber called NeuraCal.

When first installed, NeuraCal has a cyber rating of +5.

Neural jacks can be embedded into the temples, neck, or other part of the body. If not wired to the neck or temples, a neural jack needs NeuraCal to be connected to the brain. The J-jack is the standard neural jack put out by the street labs. Reliability is not one of its strong points, but for about twice the price failure rates are much lower. Normal J-jacks fail on a roll of 1 whenever they are used. Reliable J-jacks never fail except under the most extreme operating conditions.

The EpiphaNeur is the most reliable neural jack developed. It is inexpensive. Its only drawback is that only the cyberpriest's techs can outfit a character with one, and sometimes they add unwanted extras to the person undergoing the surgery. However, tens of thousands of French citizens have undergone, or are scheduled to undergo, the surgery in order to connect to the GodNet.

Prosthetic limbs

The Cyberpapacy leans away from prosthetics, preferring experimental muscular implants and other subtler measure for most of their cyberpriests. However, the street labs have wholly adopted prosthetic limbs. Limbs are sold individually; the prices on the chart below are for one limb. Cyber arms and legs increase the *Strength* of those limbs, including damage done when striking. The amount of strength added is equal to the cyber rating of the limb.

Example: The BiV(Bi-Five) has a cyber rating of +5. It adds five points of *Strength* to the users arm.

Cyber legs increase the limit values for running and long jumping. For every three points of additional leg strength the limit values are increased by one. A pair of legs, each rated at *STR+5,* would increase the running and long jumping limit values by three.

Cyber arms increase the climbing and lifting limit values. For every three points of additional arm strength, the limit values are increased by one.

Apotheducts are surface patches onto which drugpacks may be hooked.

	Surgery Difficulty	Surgery Effect	Cyber Rating	Cost (Value)
NeuraCal	13	Mortal	+5	12,000 (17)
J-Jack	13	Mortal	+2	9,000 (16)
EpiphaNeur	10	Mortal	+2	1,000 (11)

A secondary capillary system fires the medicine (or whatever) through the body in a matter of seconds, far faster than can usually be absorbed through the bloodstream. Apotheducts can save lives, for example, when speeding coagulating agents through the body to rapidly stop bleeding.

Kreelar tendon-supplements are necessary to support cyberlimbs which increase *Strength* by three or more, and add one cyber value point per limb. The supplements absorb huge amounts of shock which would otherwise crack bone or rip the cyberlimb from its organic housing. Some street warriors have Kreelar installed even if they do not take cyberlimbs; Kreelar grants non-cyber users a +5 bonus when pushing speed or power, a potentially lifesaving edge.

Cyber hands are still experimental. The current production model, the Manofique, gives uses a +1 bonus when generating *prestidigitation* and *lockpicking* totals. They can also house miniature tools which grant a user +1 bonus on *science* totals (for assembling devices), but these prototypes are not yet for sale.

Sensors

The number of sensors which can be added to a human body is growing almost daily in the Cyberpapacy. Prototypes abound, but only the tested items below are common.

Eyes were first developed to correct astigmatism and other vision defects. Some labs, such as BelleVision, developed cosmetic eyes, changing the proportion of pupil to iris, altering color, shape, texture of lids; the limit is taste not technology. Currently, the favorite in Paris is TriEyes, eyes which appear normal until a user-signal causes the pupil and iris to flash the French tricolor as a sign to those who resist the Cyberpope.

Low-light eyes automatically amplify available light from five to 100,000 times. The eyes will not work in complete darkness.

EM eyes are built with extra receptors for mid-frequency electrical impulses, the kind most cyberware emits. The impulses appear as either neon blue or red sparks around the target's cyberware.

A rove-eye is eerie to see, for when tuned on, it constantly moves in a pseudo-random path, covering a wide arc of vision. The rove-eye has chips which recognize hundreds of weapons and use motions, programmed to alert the wearer and tag the suspicious images with a yellow overlay. Using a rove-eye gives a +3 *find* bonus when detecting ambushes, hidden weapons, or the like. The rove-eye software automatically screens the image from the user's mind, until locked on a target image (or images). Even so, a rove-eye can be disorienting to new users.

Skinscans are becoming more popular in the Cyberpapacy. Organic skin is replaced with NeuraSkin, which is embedded with an intricate array of sensors. The most popular model is the LeDos, which detects motions anywhere to the rear of the user. Le Dos grants a +3 bonus to *find* rolls for ambushes or physically hostile rear actions. Warning signals are strong sensations (as skin crawling).

Subdermal Weaponry and Armor

ShocKnucks are quick-charge capacitors inset into a Polydeb matrix, charged from batteries located and accessed through the user's forearm. ShocKnucks generate 25,000 volts, enough to increase any shock damage taken by an opponent by +3.

Slicers are short blades which extend from the ends of the fingers or toes upon command. Slicers have a damage value of STR+2 in *unarmed combat.*

Slashers are long blades which extend from the top of the wrist or the tarsal bone in the foot. Slashers have a damage value of STR+4 in *unarmed combat.*

Interdermal plating is armor constructed by surgically introducing hundreds of nanotech manufacturing complexes into the host body. These nanotech machines manufacture the armor from minerals naturally found (or supplemented) in the bloodstream. NeuraCal is necessary for all characters with interdermal plating to coordinate the nano-enhanced muscle fiber woven through the armor. Jaz (see below) is not enough, for should the armor ever fail, the character suffers a negative bonus modifier to all *Dexterity* and *Strength* based actions equal to the armor add. In addition, any time the character takes a fatigue result (from cards, *maneuver* result, or other reason), the character takes result points of damage equal to the a generated bonus plus the armor adds. Interdermal plate has an armor value of +6. Head and limb armor each increase the armor value by +1, each addition increasing the cyber value by +1.

Wrist guns have become popular accessories on the street, because "its awful tough to lose one before you lose the fight." Wrist guns are linked via NeuraCal to the user's brain, and smartgun links (weapons targeted through the eyes of the user) are just now entering the experimental stages. The two most common wrist guns are the FN Jammer by Fabrique Nationale and the Avro PR IIV by Avro Ltd. The Jammer is a fully automatic cluster gun, firing flechette clusters which explode into whirling clouds meters from the barrel. When firing the Jam-

	Damage Value	Ammo	Range Short	Range Med.	Range Long
FN Jammer	23	7	3-40	41-100	101-150
Avro PR II.V	19	20	3-10	11-60	—

	Surgery Difficulty	Surgery Effect	Cyber Rating	Cost (Value)
ShocKnucks	8	Wound	+2	6,000 (15)
Slashers	8	Wound	+1	10,000 (16)
Slicers	10	Wound	+1	2,000 (13)
IntDermal Plate	12	Mortal	+2	300,000 (29)
FN Jammer	10	Wound	+2	10,000 (16)
Avro PR II.V	10	Wound	+2	8,000 (16)

	Surgery Difficulty	Effect	Cyber Rating	Cost (Value)
Cyberarm				
Limb Libre	8	Wound	+2	20,000 (18)
BiV	8	Wound		60, 000 (20)
Cyberhand				
Manofique	8	Wound	+1	15, 000 (17)
Cyberleg				
PlazHop	10	Heavy	+3	40, 000 (19)
Adidas Master	10	Heavy	+5	100, 000 (21)
Other				
Apotheduct	8	Wound	+2	4,000 (14)
Kreelar Tendons	12	Heavy	+2	30, 000 (19)
Chipware				
ChipHolder 1	8	Wound	+1	10,000 (16)
ChipHolder 3	8	Wound	+2	20,000 (18)
Chip +1		na	0	5,000 (15)
Chip +2		na	0	15, 000 (17)
Spirit chip		na	+2	40,000 (19)
Sensors				
EM eye	8	Wound	+2	8, 000 (16)
Low-light eye	8	Wound	+2	5, 000 (15)
Rove eye	8	Wound	+3	10, 000 (16)
LeDos Skin	13	Heavy	+3	15,000 (17)

mer, the user has a +3 bonus to hit only, not to damage. This is above the usual automatic weapon bonus.

Armored targets receive an additional +3 to their armor value against the Jammer, which is lethal only against lightly-armored targets.

The PR II. V is a small caliber weapon which fires three-round bursts only. The high-velocity rounds carry significant punch.

Chipware

Chipware comes in three basic flavors. ActChips enhance a character's physical actions. MemChips enhance mental skills. Spirit chips are created from users the cyberpriests recover from Purgatory, and contain a complete personality.

To use chipware requires a chipholder. Chipholders can be installed in virtually any part of a person's body. They hold either one chip, or up to three chips. Installing and removing chips is a simple action.

ActChips and MemChips grant either a +1 or +2 bonus when the skill in the chip is used. If the user is unskilled in the skill the chip enhances, he gets the bonus but is still considered unskilled for the die roll.

ActChips are available for the following skills: *Dexterity* skills of acrobatics, beast riding, dodge, energy weapons, fire combat, heavy weapons, lockpicking, melee weapons, missile weapons, stealth, unarmed combat; *Strength* skills of climbing and lifting.

MemChips are available for the following skills: *Perception* skills of air vehicles, evidence analysis, first aid, land vehicles, language, scholar (by type), water vehicles; *Mind* skills of artist, medicine, survival, science (by type).

Spirit chips contain all the skills and the complete personality of the user who was chipped by the Cyberpapacy. They have the *Perception, Mind, Charisma* and *Spirit* values of the chipped character. The skills of the spirit chip may be accessed as they could for any other chip, making a spirit chip an extremely compact and useful source of skills and knowledge. While useful, the chips have personalities of their own, are capable of communicating with their hosts (as well as taunting, tricking, testing and intimidating their hosts), and often attempt to get their own way.

Jaz

Jaz is a drug which modifies organic neural fiber for use in connecting cyberware, making NeuraCal unnecessary. Jaz is used by cyberfans who are afraid of cyberpsychosis. While making the psychosis less likely, Jaz does have the drawback that it runs out, while NeuraCal is forever. Jaz comes in packs of 20 doses, each dose lasting half an hour. Each dose of Jaz requires a check for cyberpsychosis. It is connected through an Apotheduct. Jaz has a cyber rating of +1, and costs $ 3,000 (14) per pack.

Cygoyles

Whether they have stepped from their perches atop the great cathedrals, or if the Cyberpope himself constructed them with his unholy technology, the cygoyles are horrors to behold. These winged demons are equipped with all manner of cybernetic implants and weaponry, and no two are the same. Some work for the church, others serve only their own dark purposes.

Cygoyle: DEX 13, STR 15, TOU 15, PER 11, MIN 12, CHA 9, SPI 13.

Skills: dodge 15, flight 14, fire combat 14, energy weapons 15, unarmed combat 14, stealth 15, find 12, trick 13, test 14, taunt 12, intimidation 15, faith 14, willpower 14.

Natural Tools: claws (damage value 17), teeth (damage value 15), razor-tipped wings (damage value 17), speed value 13.

Equipment: GWI GodLight (damage value 24), plus smart-gun attachment. Cyberware: NeuraCal, EpiphaNeur, BelleScan, CSI Eyekill Mk. IV (if smartgun carried), DATAS Snooper, Fangs (increases bite value to 17), Slashers (enhances claw value to 19), interdermal plate (+6), and Trigon body plating (+2) for a total armor add of +8 (armor value 23); cyber value 19.

Possibility Potential: some (30).



Chapter Six

The Nile Empire Realm

"This world shall be mine!"
— *Pharaoh Mobius*

Mobius dangled the beaker of acid loosely between his thumb and forefinger as if it were a cheap cigar. Professor Tewkesbury began to perspire. "Come now, Professor" came the voice of the High Lord, thinned from behind a formless mask. "Don't look so dejected. This 'atomic energy' idea of yours shows great promise."

Mobius moved toward the nervous professor as he continued. "It is only your lackofvision which keeps you from achieving true genius. Why use this discovery of yours on such inconsequential endeavors as transportation and medicine when there are so many more intriguing *possibilities?" The Professor imagined that Mobius was smiling now, behind that shapeless mask.*

"After all, Professor, science is what you make of it."

Outside the laboratory, a dark silhouette was framed in the bevelled glass of the door. The two shocktroopers standing with their backs to the door showed no emotion. There was a sound of shattering glass, followed by a sharp hiss, a shrill cry, and the awful cackle of an amused High Lord.

Egypt of the Near Now

Robed priests offer sacrifices to gods long thought dead. Cryptic mathematicians, astronomers and engineers practice long lost magics. Bare-chested shocktroopers in full headdress march the streets of Luxor. Mighty pyramids rise resplendent over shifting desert sands, while ancient legends and untold horrors stir once more within the hidden tombs beneath the Valley of Kings. This is Egypt of the Near Now.

From his lavish palace in the reborn city of Thebes, the insidious Dr. Mobius, power-mad scientist, Pharaoh, and High Lord, surveys his mighty Empire. It stretches much farther than his eyes can see: north to Cyprus, east to the Arabian Peninsula, south into the Ethiopian jungles, and west into the forbidding wasteland of the Sahara. Everywhere his mighty Imperial armies fight to expand the borders of the New Empire of the Nile. Everywhere the stelae creep slowly outward.

Within the Empire the situation is not as grim as it may seem, however. The intrepid costumed heroes of Terra (Mobius' home cosm) have followed him to Core Earth, determined to put an end to his hideous schemes. Together with the powerful Storm Knights of Earth, they may yet accomplish their goal, and forever rid the cosmverse of the evil that is Mobius.

The New Empire of the Nile

The Nile Empire is a hybrid realm, combining the mysterious lore of majestic ancient Egypt with the two-fisted action of the "pulp" magazines and serials of the late 1930s.

This strange combination is almost entirely the doing of the realm's idiosyncratic High Lord, Dr. Mobius. Mobius hails from a cosm known as Terra, a duplicate Earth which resembles that of the pulp adventure stories of the 30s. On Terra, Mobius was a reborn Pharaoh from ancient

Egypt who became a power-mad scientist. His schemes were continually thwarted by that world's great masked heroes. Eventually, he discovered his Darkness Device. With it, he set out to conquer other cosms while leaving his home cosm relatively intact (for reasons all his own).

Like each of the other realms on Earth, the Nile Empire operates under the reality axioms of its High Lord's home cosm. At the instant these axioms were dropped over Egypt, the local geography underwent a stunning transformation, as did its very *history.*

The entire area began to assimilate Terra's pulp reality, while at the same time undergoing a mesmerizing transformation which revived the reality of ancient Egypt, restoring the once-great Nile basin to its former glory.

The cryptic religion and magic of ancient Egypt became a reality once more, while countless hidden tombs housing fantastic treasures and evil curses suddenly came into being. The residents of the area were also transformed, many of them twisted by the new axiom wash into evil servants of Mobius.

This amazing transformation was made relatively facile by the clever reasonings of Dr. Mobius. He chose to set up his realm in and around Earth's Egypt because he was originally a native of the ancient Egypt of Terra.

Once the new axioms had taken hold, it was simple for Mobius and his army of shocktroopers, wizards and priests to arrive on Earth and convince the Egyptian natives that the "glory of the Empire had returned," and that it was their "ultimate manifest destiny to return to greatness as well."

A wave of patriotism caught hold, and crowds of locals signed up to serve in Mobius' mighty army.

The Axioms of the Empire

The operative technological axioms within the Empire's stelae bounds are roughly the equivalent of late 1930s Earth, with a tech rating of 21. Early tanks, bi-planes, zeppelins, and autogyros are commonplace, while single-wing, twin engine aircraft and aircraft carriers are right on the cutting edge of Nile technology.

Socially, the Empire stands at an axiom rating of 20, similar to Core Earth, but with a few subtle differences. The Empire itself is a single, massive bureaucracy, run by a power-mad individual who wields ultimate power.

The spiritual axiom rating of the Empire is 17, due in large part to the revival of the religion of the ancient Egyptians. The Egyptian pantheon of gods may not literally exist, but because of the sheer number of "believers," there is a substantial amount of spiritual energy for Mobius' High Priests to tap into.

In addition to the many spiritual practitioners active within the Empire's boundaries, there are many potent spiritual artifacts which have sprung into existence as a result of Mobius' invasion of Earth. The reality overlay which brought the Empire's axioms into sway made literal truths of the legendary powers and abilities of many of the artifacts hidden in buried tombs, grottos and catacombs which litter the Egyptian desert.

The Empire's magical rating is a substantial 12. When the ancient Egyptian legends became literal truths due to the reality wash, magic became a reality. It is an ancient and mysterious magic, involving such age-old concepts as mummification, pyramid power and the magical circumvention of floods. The two chief schools of magic in the Empire are derived from the ancient Egyptian concepts of mathematics and engineering. Although each requires an intensive program of rigorous study, once mastered they are capable of an astounding array of enchantments.

Weird Science

Although most of the Empire is confined to the tech axiom level of 21, a few fantastic scientific wonders far beyond the scope of the Empire's normal tech levels do exist. This is because a totally different set of scientific laws and rules exists within the Empire, functioning side-by-side with its mundane scientific principles. This second set of scientific rules is called "weird science," and it allows for the creation of such fantastic gizmos as ray guns, invisibility belts and time machines. Weird science can only be practiced by those characters from the Empire who have the *weird science* skill. The skill allows a character to design and build scientific gizmos which operate at tech levels beyond the Nile's.

World Laws

In addition to the four basic axioms, the Nile Empire has several lesser "laws" which help define the reality within its stelae bounds.

The first is called the *Law of Morality.* This peculiar law demands that all living things within the Empire's boundaries take on an absolute morality. In other words, all creatures in the realm can be classified absolutely as "good" or "evil." There are no neutrals.

All Storm Knights who enter the realm will automatically acquire an inclination of good or evil, and those who are native to the Empire have their inclination listed on their character sheet. Acting against your inclination (in the judgment of the gamemaster) while within Empire boundaries costs a character one Possibility.

The second law is the *Law of Drama.* This rule represents the spirit of pulp action. It states simply that everything happening to a possibility-rated character within the axiom bounds should be infused with a sense of melodrama. The action should be fast and furious, with heroes confronting a seemingly endless string of obstacles in order to accomplish their goals.

The third law is the *Law of Action.* This law allows possibility-rated characters to accomplish physical and mental feats which are more difficult than those they could accomplish outside the Nile Empire.

In accordance with this law, a possibility-rated character **can spend two Possibilities** on any generated total made within the realm's axiom bounds instead of just one. The character is then allowed to roll twice and select the roll he would like to keep. The unused roll is ignored, and cannot be added to the total.

In addition, characters from the Terran cosm or from the Nile Empire realm can have a single attribute as high as 14, rather than the normal maximum of 13.

Powers

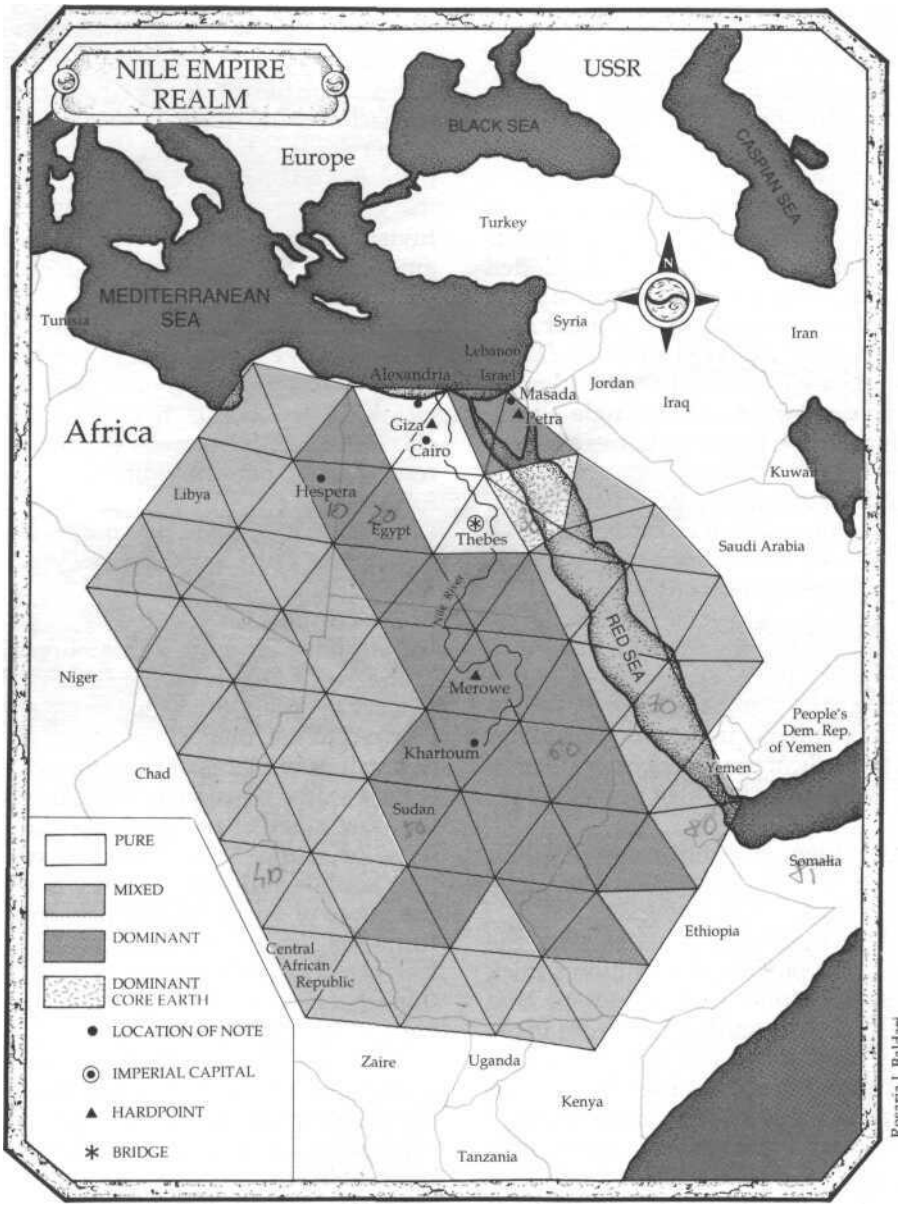
Many of the famous heroes of Terra, as well as the newly created heroes who face Mobius in the Nile Empire, possess strange and powerful abilities which separate them from mortal men. These are called "powers," and they form a new category of abilities separate from attributes and skills.

As opposed to skills, powers cannot be picked up and learned by anyone. Only a character with a specialized background can possess a power. (A hero who was exposed to dangerous radioactivity or cosmic rays or one who was raised in the wild by apes, for example.) Powers are a bizarre by-product of the weird science tech and magic axioms, and are therefore only available to natives of Terra or the Nile realm.

If you are designing your own templates for Terran or Nile-based characters, powers may be purchased during the character creation process just like skills. Each power costs the character one Possibility, reducing a character's starting Possibility total.

Each power has an *adventure cost. A* power's adventure cost is the **number of Possibilities a character must pay at the end of each adventure** in order to keep the power. If a player pays the cost for his character, he has the power for the next adventure. If he fails to pay the cost, his character loses the power. Unless you devise a storyline which allows the character to regain the power, the character loses the power forever.

Powers have an associated *value,* just like attributes and skills. A self-designed character or character template can spend attribute points to increase the action values of any powers he has purchased on a one-for-one basis (one attribute point purchases one additional point of power value). Note that powers are only available to possibility-rated characters.



Power Descriptions

Adventure cost is the number of Possibilities which must be spent per adventure to maintain the power.

The *value* lists the formula used to calculate the power's value. Remember that additional attribute points can be spent to increase these action values.

The *range* is the distance over which the user may project his power. Combat-oriented powers have a range rating similar to those given weapons, while others have a simple distance limit. A range of "vision" means as far as the character can see unaided.

The *tech rating* is a measure of how technologically sophisticated the gadgets and devices are that feature the power. This is important for gizmos which use the power. See *The Nile Empire Sourcebook* for details.

Dazzle: adventure cost 3; action value STR+2; range, 25 meters; tech rating 20.

Description: This is the ability to create a flash of light that will temporarily blind onlookers. The user generates a power total against the target's *Dexterity.* The success levels earned equal the number of combat rounds that the target is blinded. A blinded character has his or her *Dexterity* and the action values of all his or her *Dexterity*-based skills reduced by 3. *Dazzle* can be used to attempt to blind more than one target with a single attack, but multiple target penalties apply.

Flight: adventure cost 3; action value DEX; range, self; tech rating 24.

Description: Characters with this power can fly under their own power. The speed at which the power user can travel is equal to his action value as a speed value. A character with this power may purchase *the flight* skill to be more nimble in the air. A character with *the flight* power may attempt maneuvers using his *flight* power value.

Fog Screen: adventure cost 3; action value TOU+5; range, 10 meter globe around user; tech rating 21.

Description: Characters with the *fog screen* power can summon a thick gaseous cloud from nowhere that arises and obscures them from view. This cloud forms a 10-meter globe that surrounds the power user and lasts for approximately 10 combat rounds. Once *a fog screen* has been summoned, it stays where it is until dispersed.

The difficulty of all attacks aimed at targets within the cloud is automatically increased by 5, as is that of any ranged attack that has a line of sight passing through the field. The user's *fog screen* value functions as the Difficulty Number for the *Perception* roll needed to spot a character or item inside the cloud (though a successful *Perception* check will not cancel out the attack penalty). The power user is never penalized by his own fog screen.

Invisibility: adventure cost 4; action value MIN+10; range, self; tech rating 31.

Description: This power enables the user to render himself completely transparent to visible light, and therefore invisible to normal eyes. Invisible characters can still be seen by those creatures capable of looking into the infrared and ultraviolet spectrums. For characters with normal vision, the power value is the difficulty number of the *Perception* roll necessary to sense the character while he is invisible. Invisibility can be maintained for an amount of time value equal to the power user's *Mind.*

All characters aiming attacks at invisible targets must first generate a *Perception* total to spot their target. The attack has a -3 bonus modifier if this check succeeds. Otherwise, the attack receives a -10 bonus modifier.

Mega-Hearing: adventure cost 3; action value PER+5; range, self; tech rating 25.

Description: Characters with *mega-hearing* have an enhanced ability to hear sounds which would be barely audible to others. Such characters are allowed to use their *mega-hearing* action values in places of their raw *Perception* scores when generating totals to know whether or not they hear a noise or sound. Such characters can hear sounds at distances many times the range of normal human hearing, from 10x (for *mega-hearing* of 15 or less) to as a much as 100x normal range (for *mega-hearing* of 25 or more). The user can actively seek particular sounds, but cannot filter out other sounds audible in the same location as the chosen sound. A conversation in a generator room two miles away might be audible with *mega-hearing,* but the character would still have to sort through the generator noise.

Running: adventure cost 3; action value, DEX; range, self; tech rating 22.

Description: Characters with this power are capable of running at unbelievably extreme speeds. A character's *running* limit value is equal to the value of his *running* power. A character with this power may purchase the *running* skill to be more nimble while moving fast. A character with the *running* power may attempt maneuvers using his *running* power value.

Ultra-Sight: adventure cost 2; action value, PER; range, vision; tech rating 25.

Description: *Ultra-sight* gives its user the ability to see in the dark as well as he sees in the daylight. In combat, he suffers none of the penalties usually associated with darkness, nor does he suffer such penalties while making visual *Perception* checks.

X-Ray Eyes: adventure cost 3; action value STR+5; range, vision; tech rating 25.

Description: Characters with *x-ray eyes* can look through solid objects as though they were transparent. Once activated through character concentration (a simple action), the power will remain active until the user voluntarily switches it off, or a time value has passed equal to the power value.

The user's *x-ray eyes total* serves as the maximum *Toughness* he can penetrate; he cannot look through an object with a higher *Toughness. X-ray eyes* will never penetrate lead. Generating an *x-ray eyes* total greater than the base value is tiring; the character fatigues (two shock points of damage) for each total generated above the base value.

High Tech Gizmos

The arsenal of powerful high-tech gizmos and devices that Dr. Mobius and his minions have designed, built and collected over the years is among his most powerful assets. Such devices bolster his armies and help him to carry out plans others would doom to failure.

Technically, a gizmo can be as mundane as a toaster or an automobile, but gizmos can also have special powers built into them. For example, a high-tech automobile might have the *fog screen* and *flight* powers, allowing it to perform feats that normal cars cannot.

A player who wants to give his character special abilities without giving him powers of his own, might just equip the character with special gizmos (see the "Gadget Hero" template).

Dr. Mobius has personally constructed several extremely powerful gizmos for use within his new Empire. Among these are the hideous *Omegatron,* an awful torture device capable of consistently reviving vie-



Bob Dvorak

tims after they pass out. Mobius keeps this in the dungeons below his palace at Thebes. But the single most powerful gizmo in the cosmverse is the awesome artificial sun which Mobius constructed atop the ornate temple of Ra in the city of Luxor. The sun's most devastating feature is its ability to fire a powerful energy bolt capable of leveling entire towns from miles away.

Dr. Mobius and His Empire

The History of Mobius

Mobius was born on the Terran cosm nearly three thousand years ago, during the height of its ancient Egyptian civilization. He was then called Sutenhotep, and was raised by a powerful and evil Pharaoh. Sutenhotep studied astronomy, mathematics, medicine and history under the wise Kerkeremtis, and before long he developed into a brilliant scientist and academician.

With his skills fully developed, Sutenhotep began to scheme for the very throne of Egypt, despite his father's good health. His former mentor, Kerkeremtis, scorned his student for his schemings, but died before he could dissuade the ambitious youth. Sutenhotep vowed to prove himself superior to Kerkeremtis, the wisest man he had ever met, by conquering eternity itself.

Deceiving the Pharaoh Amat-Ra, Sutenhotep seized the throne of Egypt with a daring coup. With his dying gasps, Amat-Ra pronounced a terrible curse on his son. The curse took its toll immediately, as Sutenhotep's rule began to grow foul. Crops died, armies deserted, and his subjects became angered and outraged. Before long they turned upon their leader, deposed him, and slew him in anger.

Shortly after his death, Sutenhotep was mummified by his closest followers, and entombed in an underground vault on the remote island of Khem.

Centuries passed, and the world underwant sweeping changes; but almost three thousand years later, Sutenhotep's tomb remained isolated and untouched. In fact, the entire island of Khem remained isolated from the rest of the world, still steeped in its Egyptian tradition, its people continuing to worship the fallen Sutenhotep.

Eventually, after many centuries of waiting, the stars were aligned in the correct manner to bring about the resurrection of Sutenhotep. His followers still practiced the ancient rites, and they performed the ritual to revivify their master.

Shortly after his awakening, Sutenhotep left Khem to explore this strange new world all around him. He was, of course, most fascinated by the scientific wonders the world had seen since his death, and with his remarkable intellect, he went about the task of mastering these new sciences.

Soon, Sutenhotep's dreams of conquest returned, and he turned to crime in order to gather the riches necessary to build his way back to the top. Inspired by the many "pulp" villains which terrorized the world of Terra, Sutenhotep took on the guise of Dr. Mobius.

During his stint as an arch-villain, Mobius frequently pitted his skills against Terra's costumed heroes. They presented a constant threat to the doctor's plans, consistently foiling them with deeds of derring-do. It was during one of the many clashes with these intrepid heroes that Mobius came

across his Darkness Device. With it, he discovered the secrets of the cosmverse and maelstrom bridges, and before long had constructed the machinery necessary to build one.

Returning to Khem, the doctor rallied his followers into an army, promising them the glories of ancient Egypt once again. With that, Mobius and his army crossed the maelstrom bridge into another cosm.

This cosm was somewhat of a pushover for Mobius and his army, as its people were barely beyond the primitive stages of development. Mobius took control and dubbed it "New Khem: The First Empire."

Mobius and the Possibility Wars

From his new Egypt, Mobius launched attacks at various cosms, always careful to select worlds which could be easily conquered while providing ample possibility energy. The High Lord of the Nile became fairly well known in the cosmverse, and before long garnered the attention of a certain other High Lord: The Gaunt Man.

The Gaunt Man invited Mobius to take part in a grand invasion of a cosm unthinkably rich in possibility energy — Earth. Mobius agreed.

Mobius and His Plans

Dr. Mobius is a shrewd, calculating man with an unequalled intellect. He has it in mind to build as much personal power as possible, undermining the other Possibility Raiders and grabbing as much of Earth's possibility energy for himself as he can. To do this, he has ordered his generals to continue their attacks on all fronts, constantly expanding the Empire's stelae bounds.

Mobius has also placed a priority on acquiring an abundance of Earth's legendary artifacts (many of which litter the tombs and grottos of his own Empire), particularly those embued with possibility energy. Mobius uses the possibility energy inherent in his collected eternity shards to create a special element of his own devising called *Eternium.*

Eternium is the main ingredient in one of Mobius' more effective high tech gizmos, the dread *Reality Bombs.* These bombs provide the means for Mobius to expand his Empire. When dropped in an area of Core Earth reality just before an Imperial attack, the Reality Bombs create a temporary zone of Empire axioms. This renders the modern, high-tech weapons of Earth's armies useless, while Mobius' own forces roll over the defenseless area.

Lately, the Israeli army and other opposition forces have begun to collect antiquated World War II surplus tanks and equipment to oppose Mobius' armies.

As far as the other High Lords are concerned, Mobius is technically allied with none of them, although he does occasionally exchange information and other pleasantries with Baruk Kaah. The Cyberpope and the Nippon Kanawas are those he fears and distrusts most.

The Imperial Government

Earth's Nile Empire is the latest in a string of empires which Mobius and his followers have set up in various cosms. Each cosm is referred to by Mobius and his men in the chronological order it was conquered, hence Khem is the "First Empire," while Nile on Earth is the "Tenth Empire."

Mobius' "traveling empire" is a rigid dictatorship. Mobius himself acts as Pharaoh, and all of his followers refer to him as such. He has direct control over virtually everything, but pays particular attention to personally overseeing the Imperial treasury.

Most of Mobius' top officials were originally followers of his on Khem. They grew up worshiping Sutenhotep, and are still doing the same. He is seen as a divine being by most Khem cultists, and they both fear and revere him. They believe that Mobius plans to return Egypt to glory, and serve this cause gladly.

Mobius has five "Personal Advisors," each with a specific area of expertise. **Ahkemeses** is his High Priest, in charge of all religious matters within the Empire. He is also a very powerful miracle worker, who together with **Rama-tet**, the head of the College of Mathematicians, works very powerful magic for the Pharaoh.

The Royal Builder is **Muab**, a brilliant engineer who designs and builds the elaborate temples and palaces in each of the newly established empires. Muab built Mobius' palace in Thebes and the mighty temple of Ra which houses Mobius' artificial sun.

Teth-net is Mobius' military advisor and chief general, and wields perhaps the most power among all the advisors.

Overgovernors

To rule the many cosms which Mobius has conquered is certainly more than the High Lord can handle personally. To solve this problem, Mobius divided each of the empires into roughly 10 equal regions. These regions are directly ruled by "Overgovernors." Each has direct control over his territory, but still must answer to Mobius.

The Overgovernors of Earth's Nile Empire represent the most traditional "pulp" villains which the player characters will face. They never face heroes without their minions beside them. They are varied in personality and background, and each naturally desires more power than he already has. Politics between Overgovernors is strictly a cutthroat, back-stabbing affair.

The Overgovernors are generally less naive about Mobius' true intentions than his advisors, priests and armies are. Several of them worked with Mobius back on Terra during his arch-villain days, and can see through this "returning Egypt to its former glory" nonsense.

The following is some background and statistics for several of the more prominent Overgovernors:

Wu-Han: DEX 8, STR 7, TOU 7, PER 13, MIN 14, CHA 13, SPI 7.

Skills: unarmed combat 10, melee combat 10, charm 14, persuasion 14, reality 16, science 15, weird science 16, trick 15, scholar 15, willpower 18.

Inclination: evil.

Possibilites: 25.

Description: Wu-Han is an insidious oriental master criminal recruited by Mobius from his home cosm of Terra. He is a superb strategist and a brilliant scientist who enjoys enigmas and riddles. His underlings are a gang of martial-arts experts, Sumo wrestlers and oriental wise men whom he brought over from his Terran organization.

Natatiri: DEX 9, STR 7, TOU 9, PER 13, MIN 11, CHA 15, SPI 8.

Skills: charm 17, persuasion 17, taunt 16, trick 12, unarmed combat 10, stealth 10, reality 10, willpower 18.

Inclination: evil.

Possibilities: 30.

Decription: A former slave girl, Natatiri murdered her former master. Mobius was so impressed with her that he promoted her to the deceased Overgovernor's post. Natatiri is crafty and headstrong. She uses her powers of seduction to get what she wants, and has already gotten certain Overgovernor's to "fight" for her. Her domain is one of the most efficiently run in the entire Empire.

The Imperial Military

The strong arm of Mobius is his massive Imperial army. The workhorse of the army is the Imperial shocktrooper. To most, they are the most visible symbol of the Empire. Shocktroopers wear traditional white Egyptian skirts with sandals and a ceremonial Egyptian headdress. They are generally bare-chested with silver armclasps delineating rank.

Most shocktroopers are cosm natives who either willingly serve Mobius (because they believe in his cause), or they are slaves. The two shocktrooper ranks are "footsoldier" and "veteran."

The Imperial army uses World War II-style tanks as its main armored weapon, while '40s fighter and bomber planes provide effective air support. The armies are divided into massive "battlegroups," each under the control of a different Overgovernor. The largest of these is Super Battlegroup Mobius, under the command of the High Lord himself.

Mobius' armies move the stelae bounds continually outward, preparing a new area for attack by using the dread Reality Bombs. The stelae themselves appear as idols of the Egyptian god Horus sitting atop a huge stone obelisk.

Imperial Shocktrooper: DEX 9, STR 9 TOU 9, PER 7, MIN 7, CHA 7, SPI 9.

Skills: beast riding 10, fire combat 10, heavy weapons 10, unarmed combat 10, climbing 10, willpower 10.

Creatures of the Nile

Mummy

Mummies represent a variety of undead creatures. Some are ancient and very powerful, others are mindless constructs churned out by the High Priest's temples for use in battle. All require a dead body which has been prepared according to the ancient ritual, wrapped in treated bandages, and then entombed for at least three days,

Standard Mummy: DEX 6, STR 15, TOU 20 (8 against fire), PER 3, MIN 5, CHA 3, SPI 15.

Skills: intimidate 16, unarmed combat 11, fear 10, taunt (13), test (13), trick (13).

Crocodile

Crocodiles have become predominant all through the Nile Basin and other parts of the Empire. They are large tropical reptiles with armorlike skin and long, tapering jaws.

Crocodile: DEX 7, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 3, MIN 1, CHA 1, SPI 3.

Skills: bite 8, swimming 10, unarmed combat 8, find 10, tracking 8, trick (8), test (15), willpower (8).

Natural Tools: teeth, damage value 13; tail, damage value 8; hide, armor value +2.

Asp

Asps are deadly venomous snakes that have become more common in the rise of the Nile Empire. In fact, the new asp is larger and more deadly than its Core Earth counterpart.

Asp: DEX 11, STR 2, TOU 3, PER 1, MIN 1, CHA 1, SPI 3.

Skills: bite 13, find 12, trick (8), test (10), taunt (8), intimidate (8).

Natural Tools: fangs, damage STR +9; venom, damage value 9. Venom continues to cause damage once it is introduced into the bloodsteam. Once it causes a wound, the victim has six rounds to neutralize the poison before death occurs. Victim must make *Toughness* rolls against venom's damage value. If the victim achieves *superior* or better success, he neutralizes the venom.

Locations

Cairo

Cairo is unique within the Empire. Terra's pulp axioms had a strange effect on the city and its inhabitants. It became a center for criminal corruption and depression-era gang warfare, with an Arabic slant. The syndicates and mob bosses hold sway in the city, and Mobius maintains only a token Imperial military presence here.

Thebes

Thebes is the current Imperial capital. Pharaoh Mobius' opulent palace is here, as well as the headquarters of the College of Mathematicians and the Society of Engineers. Across the river is its twin city Luxor, which is mainly distinguished by the lavish temple of Ra, with its magnificent artificial sun.

Memphis

Memphis, which sits at the opposite end of the Nile from Khartoum, is the hub of the domain of Wu-Han. It is noted for its thriving "Chinatown."

Alexandria

Alexandria is the largest of Wu-Han's cities, and it is there that he holds his infamous gladiatorial-style tournaments.

Hespera

Hespera is a mysterious island which sits in the middle of a large lake that came into existence in Libya. According to ancient legends, this was the home of the Amazons. The axiom overlay saw to it that this legend came true.

The axiom wash killed off all of the male residents of Hespera, causing the native females to flee the island. A young archeologist named Hyppolyta Kosmos, a direct descendant from the queen of the Amazons, became "enlightened" by the new axiom wash.

Hyppolyta became obsessed with the idea of re-populating Hespera with a new tribe of Amazon women. She drew her recruits from the battered and mistreated women of the Empire, then returned to the island to form the new Amazon nation.

The new Amazons are strengthened by the mighty Flame of Power, another ancient legend brought to life by the invasion. While it burns, this mighty brazier sits in the fabulous palace of Hespera and grants the Amazons amazing physical prowess.

Hyppolyta Kosmos: DEX 14, STR 16, TOU 13, PER 12, MIN 11, CHA 16, SPI 12.

Skills: beast riding 15, unarmed combat 16, melee combat 17, charm 17, persuasion 17, faith 13, reality 16.

Possibilities: 20.

Inclination: good.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia, which before the invasion was a barren wasteland, has been transformed by the new reality into a lush, full-blown rain forest. Rumors of vast gold and diamond deposits buried beneath the jungle make this a priority target for Mobius' army.

The Land of the Dead

The Land of the Dead, also replete with gold deposits, was dramatically affected by the axiom wash. The ancient caves became an immense complex of networked passageways and catacombs which now honeycomb the entire eastern half of Egypt.

It is rumored that near the Land of the Dead, one of the underground tunnels expands to form a vast cave filled with thousands of bats. This supposedly empties into a huge subterranean tunnel world which leads far across the globe, coming out at the other end in the United States, in the realm known as the Living Land.

Core Earth Locations

The following locations are all currently under attack by the forces of the Empire.

Ethiopia

Ethiopia, or what's left of it, is being supported by Soviet and some token Western forces in its struggle against the Empire. Because of Mobius' concentration on this axiom-transformed jungle land, this support is beginning to unravel.

Israel

Israel is a consistant thorn in the side of the mighty Imperial War Machine. Mobius recognized that the military prowess of this small nation might become a threat, so he moved against it early in the invasion, seizing the western half of the country. The portion of the Israeli army still remaining is currently fighting a tenacious battle against Mobius' forces.

Fighting out of Jordan and Saudi Arabia, the Israeli army is Mobius' most dangerous foe. They constantly strike, in guerrilla fashion. Unknown to Mobius, a large contingent of Israeli troops has set up a secret base in the ruins of the ancient fortress of Masada, the sight of the Israelites' heroic stand against the Romans in 73 AD.

Most of the captured people of Israel are being used as slaves by Muab, the Royal Builder.

Libya

Libya was quickly invaded by Mobius due to its proximity, but full hostilities on that front have but recently ceased. It is thought that Mobius has made some sort of arrangement with Libyan leaders, but reports are unconfirmed.



Chapter Seven

The Nippon Tech Realm

"There are more effective weapons than armies and missiles, more subtle. And these are much more deadly."
— *Kanawa-Sama*

Nippon Tech is a realm of high technology, corporate power plays, and espionage. The High Lord is head of a massive conglomerate called the Kanawa Corporation.

Because of the way Kanawa brought his reality to Earth, few average Japanese citizens believe they have been invaded. In other countries, the invasion has been more profound and recognizable. In Japan, all of the changes, no matter how miraculous, were introduced subtley, without panic.

The reality of the Kanawa Corporation extends across the Japanese islands, and even touches a portion of South Korea (see the accompanying map).

Kanawa Corporation

The Kanawa Corporation does not own Japan — just all the portions it believes are necessary to gain control of the nation. Kanawa Corporation owns virtually everything worth owning in Marketplace, their home cosm, and their agents brought their techniques and wealth to Core Earth Japan. Just as Japanese fiscal and government authorities were beginning to become aware of and react to the stealthy intruders, the High Lord dropped his maelstrom bridge. Reality turned against the Japanese, and wave after wave of mergers and buyouts, concealed by clever electronic manipulation, led to a nearly bloodless conquest of Japan.

The bloodshed began after the conquest had been accomplished. Japan now has an eerie, harsh aspect; nerves are often frayed simply by living under Nippon Tech reality. Crime has increased. So has the peoples' resentment of crime. Core Earth's possibility energy created comparatively large numbers of Storm Knights to defend our reality. Kanawa Corporation, in response, has begun active elimination of Storm Knights. The result is an explosive increase in violence in Japan.

The Kanawa Corporation has also created a technological surge nearly as explosive. Artificial hearts, eyes, lungs and other organs are all reliable, compact, and far more affordable than Core Earth counterparts. Prosthetic limbs are almost as good as the real thing; in experimental laboratories which dot the island, rudimentary cybernetic experiments are being performed.

Automobiles have fully lived up to their names, many requiring only minimal human supervision to drive, although tricky maneuvering requires human skill. Nipponese cars reach speeds in excess of 150 mph. Satellite road navigation, collision sensor and avoidance control software, permaform seating which adjusts perfectly to passenger body contour — all are standard on most models.

Cellular phones are now standard on most cars, and a single cellular network covers most of Japan, with only the most remote northern regions having spotty coverage.

Computers are commonplace, with 94 percent of Japanese homes having at least one. Monitor, printer, and holoframe are the most common output

devices. Japanese homes have access to thousands of films and videos through computer networks, reducing cable television to a carrier of sporting events and live specials. Huge hypermedia databases compete for business; the largest and most successful so far is a collaboration between Tosida Electronics and the University of Kyoto. Games for the holographic frame output (framegames) are tremendously popular. A current favorite is *Lizard Hunt*, a real-time tactical wargame based on the US Army's war against the Edeinos.

The holographic technology is still new and the surrounding images can be extremely disorienting to some users. As a result, more traditional video games are still popular, with 32-bit machines now the industry standard. *Zelda V* has sold nine million copies in Japan.

Corporations prefer 64-bit supercomputers with several gigabytes of memory. Molecular information retrieval technology is now a very hot field, and the most common buzzwords are "genetic efficient", referring to a media and data packing algorithms which store information as efficiently and compactly as human DNA, with none of the annoying slowness of human biological processes. If the breakthrough is achieved, storage capacity for the average machine will expand more than ten-thousandfold.

Robots have advanced from tracked, specialized, assembly-line machines to self-moving, learning machines capable of a number of different (but usually similar) tasks. Robots with delicate manipulators and an array of visual, tactile and chemical sensors have become popular for cooking, cleaning and routine maintenance. The most popular model is the Home-Domo from NEC/Mitsubishi.

Corporations are turning with greater frequency to robots for security. While not yet fully intelligent, they can be fast, well armed and armored, and perhaps most important of all, immune to the Law of Intrigue (see below).

But these nearly miraculous technical advances are controlled by a few corporations, most of whom or directly or indirectly controlled by the Kanawa Corporation.

Nagara Security 44TS Robot: DEX 8, STR 14, TOU 15, PER 7, MIN 7, CHA 5, SPI 0.

Skills: fire combat 13, heavy weapons 12, jumping 10, running 10, unarmed combat 12, find 13, trick (12), test (20), taunt (20), intimidation (22).

Possibility Potential: none.

Natural Tools: armor +7 (armor value 22);

Equipment: pincers, damage value 19; belt-fed shotgun, damage value 20; Kanawa Sprite anti-vehicle missile, damage value 29 (carries two missiles; same range as LAW missile).

Number 3327

Most Storm Knights assume that the High Lord of Nippon Tech is a Mr. Kanawa, head of the Kanawa Corporation. They are partially correct. The High Lord is Number 3327, a member (or perhaps members) of a secretive cabal which has run Marketplace and its conquered cosms for centuries. The common name of Number 3327 is Mr. Kanawa, but it is not known whether the semi-public figure the media calls Mr. Kanawa is actually Number 3327. No one who is inside the ruling cabal refers to the High Lord as Mr. Kanawa, except when sending messages from outside the realm.

To Core Earther's and citizens of other realms, Kanawa Japan is an extremely eerie place. This eeriness is in part caused by the low magic axiom of the realm. Other realms have ambient magical energy which aids, sometimes even sustains, life. Nippon Tech, like the Living Land, has a magical axiom too low to generate that energy. Unlike the Living Land, Nippon Tech lacks the high spirituality to compensate. The result is a mystical malaise, akin to a slow, wasting disease, which produces the eerie feeling.

While the social axiom is higher than Core Earth's, the Kanawa Corporation has prevented Japan from reaching its potential. Conditions are now worse for the average Japanese citizen. The sudden rise in technology has left many workers without the necessary skills to compete, and under Nippon Tech reality corporations are far more cold-hearted toward workers than before. Unemployment is high, poverty is increasing, infant mortality is on the rise. Less is being spent on public education, as corporations increasingly fund private schools. If you want to give your children a good education, you have to let them be indoctrinated with the company line.

Nippon has become a land with intricate conspiracies and incredible coincidences. Foes seem to appear and disappear in the night mist. Some corporations and organizations wield great power with uncanny knowledge, which can appear to be supernatural to a Core Earther. But that is the way of things in Nippon.

The Law of Intrigue

The Law of Intrigue states that individuals and organizations are quite vulnerable to intrigue and deception. Trust is difficult to earn and betrayal common. Specific game effects include:

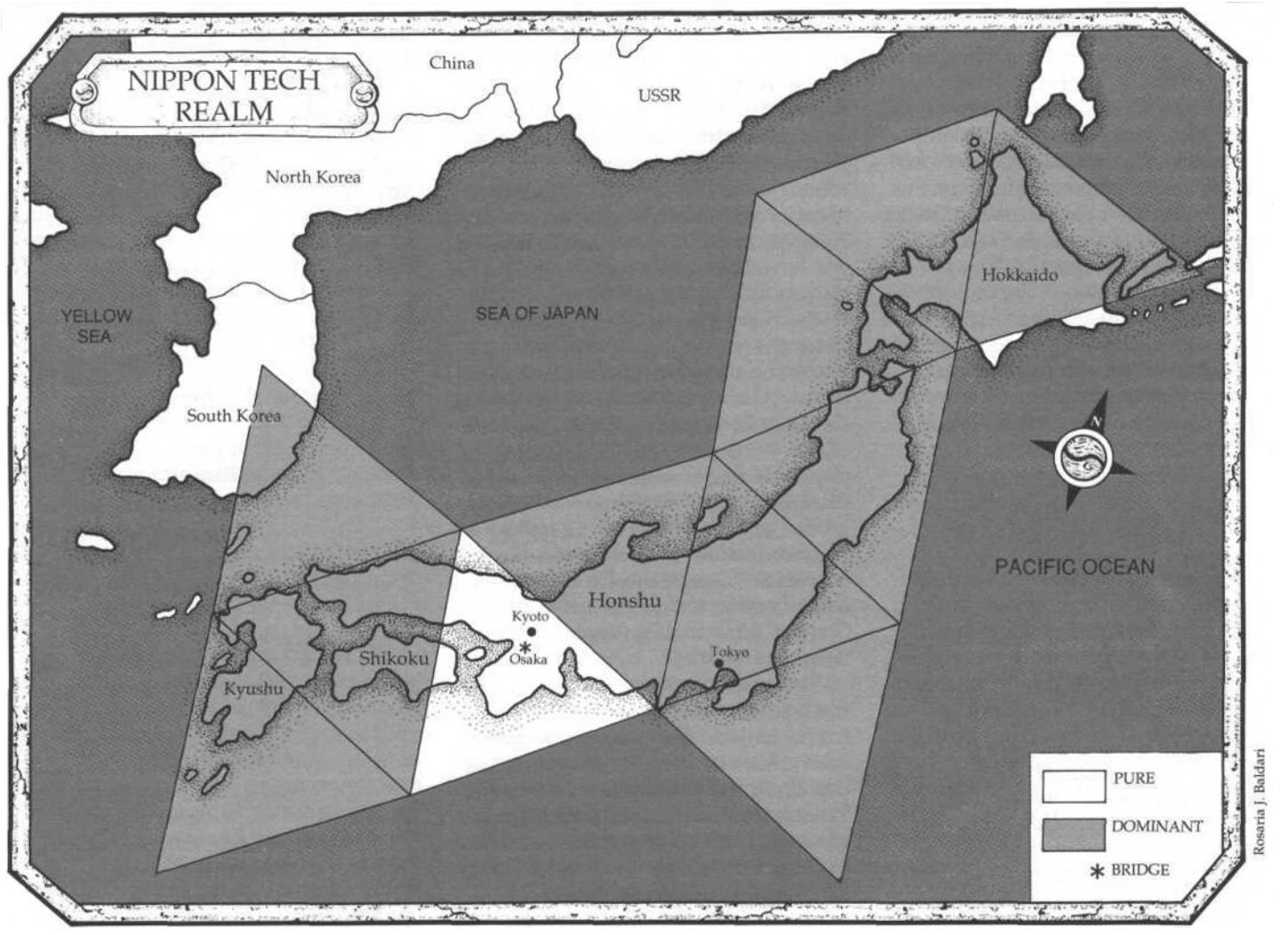
1. The *stealth* skill is easier to use in Nippon. The bonus of all *stealth* attempts is increased by three.

2. When using *charm*, increase the bonus by three if the charmer is using lies or deceit as the basis of the *charm* attempt. *Persuasion* attempts also have their bonus increased by three if the aim of the persuasion is to get the victim to believe a lie or fall for a deception. Possibility-rated characters gain a *+3* bonus for *trick* attempts.

3. Use of the *disguise* skill (see below) is easier in Nippon. A character trying to penetrate a disguise always receives one less success level for his *Perception* or *find* action. Minimal success becomes a failure.

4. Any group in Nippon with more than 100 members has a least one spy or traitor within its ranks. The traitor should belong to a rival organization or be working toward goals contrary to those of the group he is betraying. If the organization has 1,000 or more members, there is a subgroup with at least 10 members who have formed a conspiracy to seize control of the larger group. The conspiracy may be about seizing overt leadership, but more they are trying to build a shadowy, influential group which can manipulate the larger group to achieve their own ends.

Traitors in politically unimportant or innocent groups may be social



deviants or psychopaths if there are no larger, active goals to betray. There are traitors in Japanese government, and in every major company, social and political organization in the country; betrayal has now been woven into the fabric of Nippon society.

The Law of Profit

The Law of Profit penalizes the poor and benefits the wealthy. The literal truth of Nippon is that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer. The Law of Profit states that goods and services cost less when purchased by those of means than those without wealth. The dividing line for "those of means" is the median income of Nippon Tech (which is $25,000 or about 6,000,000 yen).

If a person makes more than 6,000,000 yen, then all prices will be 10 percent cheaper for him. If he makes more than 100,000,000 yen, he can find goods 25 percent cheaper. This does not mean that when a poor person buys a shirt from a department store for 6,000 yen, a rich person can then step up and pay 4,500. The lower prices are found in exclusive shops located in richer neighborhoods, or in locations which are available only to members, all of whom are corporate executives.

If a player character is wealthy and wishes to exercise this privilege, a play of a *Connection* card guarantees he can get the prices to which his station entitles him. Otherwise he has to role-play finding his sources (which are often on the move in Nippon Tech if they aren't part of a large corporation or situated in an exclusive neighborhood), or convincing the shopkeep he is entitled to the best price.

The Law of Vengeance

In Nippon Tech vengeance — the personal righting of a wrong done you — is an important concept. The cosm reality is aligned to aid those who exact an eye-for-an-eye justice. It is not known whether the Law of Vengeance is the cosm's way of compensating for the Law of Intrigue, but there seems to be some evidence of that.

In the game, a character who personally claims vengeance against a party who wronged him gains six Possibilities at the end of the act in which the vengeance was exacted. In

essence, the vengeance plot is the equivalent of a small adventure by itself. To qualify for the bonus, two conditions must be met:

1. The avenger must have been seriously wronged. A scuffle or a simple insult does not count as a serious wrong. The key to a serious wrong is a grievous loss; the loss of a loved one, a limb, personal fortune, or family honor.

2. The revenge must be delayed at least 48 hours between the victimization and revenge. Gamemasters can treat the quest for vengeance as a *Personal Stake* subplot for any adventures between the vitimization and the revenge, as long as the Storm Knight is actively seeking vengeance.

Organizations

The Kanawa Corporation is of nightmarish size. No one knows the full extent of its wealth, but it is suspected that its annual product exceeds the sum of pre-invasion United States and Japan combined. Its corporate structure is not public knowledge, and those who know more than they are supposed to quickly disappear. The media know of a Mr. Kanawa, who is the public figurehead of the corporation. Very few subordinate officers, other than public relations officers and vice-presidents, are ever seen in public. For all the wealth, influence, and power wielded by the company, almost nothing is known about it.

Japanese government has been shattered by the Law of Intrigue and Kanawa activity. The scandals of the past few years pale in comparison to the almost-weekly revelations coming out. The average Japanese has very little faith that the government can solve any of their problems. As the government is riddled with traitors and Kanawa puppets, the view is most likely correct.

The Rauru Block was founded by a coalition of Japanese businessmen who noticed the odd happenings in the financial markets. They banded together too late to prevent Kanawa from invading Japan, but they continue to be the primary source of resistance to the High Lord. The Rauru Block has begun to invest profits in a private secret service whose aim is to find, organize and give limited support to Storm Knights who can oppose the Kanawa Corporation.

The Block has patterned itself on the ancient Japanese feudal system. A whole body of modern samurai are being trained by the Block, and heads of corporations are referred to as Daimyos. The Block uses encoded surnames for all Daimyos, to hide their identity from Kanawa spies.

Japan and the surrounding territories have been home to powerful martial arts masters for centuries. The Sons of the Wind have spent centuries hidden in the remote portions of the Orient, practicing their arts and safeguarding their secrets from the unworthy. When the High Lord invaded Japan, the Sons of the Wind emerged from hiding to oppose him. Unfortunately, the Law of Intrigue caused schisms within the group, and the Kanawa Corporation has recruited many of the malcontents. Martial artists now meet in death duels on mist shrouded streets as the vicious cycle of betrayal and vengeance plays itself out.

The traditional Japanese gangsters, the Yakuza, have been heavily infiltrated by the Kanawa Corporation, who controls virtually every arm of the organization. Kanawa uses the Yakuza for muscle, then profit. Profits are increasing as the drug trade has quintupled in the short time since Kanawa invested in Japan.

Skills

Nippon Tech has some skills native to its cosm. With the exception of *martial arts,* the skills listed here may be learned by characters from other cosms. For complete details on all the Nippon Tech skills, *martial arts* in particular, see *The Nippon Tech Sourcebook.*

Disguise *(Perception-based)*

A character who is skilled in *disguise* can use makeup, costume, wigs and props to appear to be another person. Humans can only disguise themselves as other humans, or as beings who are very similar to humans in appearance. "Appearance" is the key phrase, as a disguise is visual only. The character's voice or gestures cannot be effectively changed through use of *disguise.* Changing voice and using appropriate gestures requires the *artist(actor)* skill.

Creating a disguise requires the appropriate makeup, costume and props. The character generates a skill total against a difficulty number of 8. Any success levels are temporarily recorded on the character's sheet, as the success level partially determines how difficult it is to penetrate the disguise. The following difficulty modifiers apply to disguise:

Modifier	Circumstance
+5	copying a specific individual
+3	opposite sex
+3	different race
+3	great age difference
+3	disguised as much larger build
+5	disguised as much smaller build

All modifiers are cumulative. By specific individual we mean a particular person, such as trying to disguise yourself as Quin Sebastian rather than as a generic soldier of fortune. A great age difference is 30 years, or about one third the average life span for races other than human. A great difference in build means the larger character is at least 120 percent as tall as the shorter, and/or the heavier character is at least 150 percent as heavy as the lighter character.

Seeing through a disguise requires a *Perception* check. The difficulty is 8, and the success required to penetrate the disguise is equal to the success level of the disguise. The first time a character sees a disguise, he instantly generates a *Perception* total to see if he sees through the ruse. After the initial attempt, he again generates a total whenever the disguised person says or does something which is out of character for the role.

Disguise can be used unskilled.

Meditation *(Mind-based)*

Meditation grants a character great control over his mind and body, with the ability to easily slip into a meditative trance. In most situations, no roll is needed to go into a trance, but it the

character *is* in a stressful situation (such as being in a room full of angry, shouting people) the character must generate a *meditation* total against a difficulty number of 8. If the character is in a violent situation, with a good chance that he may be a target of some of the violence, the difficulty number of slipping into a trance is 13. Slipping into a trance requires the user's complete concentration, taking about 15 minutes. The benefits of a meditative trance are:

1. He can substitute his *meditation* value for his *Perception* or *Mind* value when trying to solve a riddle or problem. The problem would have to be such that raw *Perception* or *Mind* is able to solve it. A problem which required *science* (which cannot be used unskilled) cannot be solved by entering *meditation.*

2. His healing is accelerated. Shock damage and knockout conditions may be eliminated at twice the normal rate. If a character meditates for at least three hours, he may eliminate an additional wound level if he succeeds at healing himself that same day.

3. He does not have to eat or drink while in a trance. At a maximum he may go for a number of days equal to his *meditation* total without ill effect, although he will be quite hungry and thirsty when he exits meditation. He also needs far less oxygen than normal. The *meditation* adds are added to the time value of the available oxygen for the time value the meditating character can survive.

Example: Chao is trapped in an airtight chamber, with just 20 minutes' worth of oxygen left. Chao has *meditation* adds of +2. The value of 20 minutes is 16. 16+2=18, the value of one hour. Chao can hold out for one hour in the chamber.

A character may never stay in *meditation* longer than his *meditation* total in days. At the end of that time he comes out of meditation, and must find adequate food and water before he can again enter meditation.

Meditation cannot be used unskilled.

Martial Arts

The *martial arts* are different from judo or karate. Judo, jujitsu and the other common Oriental fighting styles are covered by *unarmed combat.* The *martial arts* are something different.

The *martial arts* are combat strategies and maneuvers rooted in spiritual philosophy. The arts are far more effective than mere *unarmed combat.* They are effective because they draw upon the martial artist's inner strength, known as "ki." For almost one thousand years sages, soldiers and monks have practiced the martial arts. It wasn't until the Possibility Wars began that the ancient concept of ki was recognized as the same energy sought by the High Lords — possibility energy. Because the martial arts require the use and control of possibility energy, only possibility-rated characters may become martial artists.

Martial arts is a *Dexterity*-based skill. A character's *martial arts* value is used instead of his *unarmed combat* value when making an unarmed attack. The base damage value of a martial artist is his *Strength +2. Martial arts* may be used to defend against unarmed, melee, and missile combat. The *martial arts* skill may be be used to attack with weapons, although a martial artist is free to use weapons if she has other skills. Because it is so difficult to learn, the first *martial arts* add costs **three** of a characters initial skill points. Each add after that cost the usual one skill point. If a character buys *martial arts* during play, the cost is three times the normal Possibility cost for the first add. All other adds are purchased at the normal cost.

Martial arts cannot be used unskilled.

Styles

Martial arts are learned in particular styles, such as the Red Lotus, ancient Shao-Lin or ninjutsu styles. Each style has eight disciplines, five minor, two major, and one master. The disciplines are abilities granted as the result of skill and training. Styles can be learned in any order, but all maneuvers in a style must be mastered before a martial artist can study another.

Prior to the game, a character is allowed six "years" of training. During each of these years, she may attempt to become proficient at one of the maneuvers included in her style. In order to learn a maneuver, the Storm Knight must successfully complete its particular training exercise, a type of test. If the Knight passes that test, she learns that discipline. Prior to the start of play, failing a test means the Knight must attempt to learn the maneuver during the next available "year" (if any). Once play has begun, however, failing a test means the Knight cannot take another one until she gains an additional *martial arts* add.

Tests can be taken any time a Knight gains an add in martial arts. One possibility may be expended per test, but no cards may be played during testing that takes place prior to the start of play or between game sessions. If taking a test is part of an adventure, then one possibility and the martial artisfs cards only may be used in an attempt to pass.

Ninjutsu

Ninjutsu originated in Japan almost 500 years ago, and is the martial art of the ninja. Practitioners must have the stealth, lock picking and prestidigitation skills. The practitioner must also take a vow of secrecy — divulging the secrets of the style or revealing the true identity of another practitioner causes the erring master to forfeit all his *martial arts* skill adds and maneuvers.

As ninjutsu is essentially a corruption of the martial arts (used solely to inflict pain rather than to enhance the spirit), practitioners are penalized for its use by being unable to spend possibilities on uses of their *reality* skill, including reconnection attempts.

Note that the maneuver descriptions below include the base STR+2 bonus in their damage values.

A *block/strike* allows the practitioner to both block an opponent's blow and strike himself in around. In game terms, this means the martial artist can use his skill to deflect an *unarmed combat, martial arts, melee* or *missile attack,* and launch a *martial arts* attack in the same combat round. During *flurry* rounds, a character employing this maneuver blocks once and throws two blows.

To successfully perform a *block/strike,* two *martial arts* totals must be generated. The first would have a difficulty number of the attacker's combat skill (i.e., *unarmed combat* if he is throwing a punch), and success would allow the martial artist to block the blow. The second would concern the *strike,* and would have an opposing value of the opponent's relevant defensive skill.

Martial artists who have mastered *lightning fist* can make two *martial arts*

Ninjutsu Disciplines	Training
Block/Strike (Minor)	Board Break
Lightning Fist (Minor)	Rabbit Chase
Stunning Attack (Minor)	Bucket Walk
Missile Dodge (Minor)	Pebble Snatch
Felling to Oak (Minor)	Cherry Blossom
Invisibility (Major)	Immobility Test
Weapon Master (Major)	Break Brick
True Invisibility (Master)	Appreciate Sunrise

attacks in the same round, on the same or different targets. If performed against a single target, only one total need be generated (the same bonus can be applied to both strikes). If there are two separate targets, a total must be generated for each attack.

Lightning fist may not be used in consecutive rounds, and may never be used during *flurry* rounds.

Stunning attack gives the martial artist the skill to attack a target and cause *stun damage.* A martial artist attempting *a stunning attack* receives a +2 bonus to his *martial arts* value, but does not do as much damage as he would with another blow.

A successful *stunning attack* does shock and KO damage as a standard blow would, but when checking for the effects of the blow, ignore a *knockdown* result, treat a *wound* result as a *knockdown,* and any #Wnd result has the number reduced by one.

Missile dodge enhances a martial artist's ability to avoid arrows, spears, knives, and other muscle-powered missile weapons. *Missile dodge* can be used for either passive or active defense, and provides a DEX+2 bonus to efforts to sidestep an incoming attack.

Missile dodge can only be employed against *missile weapon* attacks.

A devastating blow, *felling the oak* involves chopping with both hands at the opponent's sides below the rib cage. Such an attack has a damage value of STR+4. This maneuver can also be used as a *vital blow* attack, as it can do damage to the kidneys and other internal organs if performed properly.

Masters of the *invisibility* discipline can sneak around unseen so successfully that many observers would swear the martial artists have the power to turn invisible. The secret to this miraculous feat involves emptying the mind of awareness of one's own existence, as a result of which others do not notice your presence. All styles that make use of this ability have *stealth* as a required skill.

Anyone mastering the art of *invisibility* gains a +4 bonus to her *stealth* value, but suffers a -2 penalty to all *Perception* and Mind-related skills.

Acquiring the *weapon master* discipline allows the *martial artist* to select a single melee or missile weapon and become an expert at its use. The weapon master receives a +2 bonus to his acting value *(martial arts)* when fighting with the weapon in question.

True invisibility is a more powerful form of the major discipline *invisibility.* The effect is produced in the same manner, with the difference that the user receives a +5 bonus to his *stealth* value, and does not suffer a penalty to his *Perception* or *Mind* skills. For every ten minutes during which he remains invisible, the martial artist must generate a new total. If he should fail a roll, he abruptly becomes visible to others again.

Each use of *true invisibility* costs two possibilities.

Tests

Board Break: to signal that he has learned the corresponding maneuver, the martial artist must break a wooden board in half with his fist or foot. To break the board, the student must generate a *martial arts* total of 9.

Rabbit Chase: this is another test of the student's quickness. A rabbit is unleashed at one end of a long field. To pass the test, the student must successfully run down the rabbit and pick it up overhead. This requires a successful *Dexterity* total of 10.

Bucket Walk: in this test, the martial artist runs up a steep hill carrying full containers of water at the end of her outstretched arms. The trainee begins with tiny cups and graduates to pitchers, pails, and buckets. To pass the final test, the martial artist must carry two large buckets in each hand without dropping her arms once for the duration of the run. This requires a *Strength* total of 9 to accomplish successfully.

Pebble Snatch: in this test, the pupil attempts to snatch a pebble from the hand of his master, and it is much more difficult than it sounds. The pebble snatch requires a *Dexterity* total of 10.

Cherry Blossom: to successfully complete this test, the martial artist must pluck a cherry blossom from the waters of a small pond without causing a disturbance in the liquid. This requires a *martial arts* total of 11.

Immobility Test: in this test, the student tenses all the muscles in his body and stands perfectly still. The master then strikes the student, first with his fist, then with his foot, and then with a board. To pass the test, the student must remain completely immobile through all three blows. Flinching even a fraction of an inch constitutes failure. This requires a *Toughness* total of 12.

Break Brick: to pass this test, the student must smash a brick with her hand, foot, or fist. To break the brick, the student must generate a *martial arts* total of 12.

Appreciate Sunrise: to complete this test, the master sits out and watches the sunrise every morning until she feels one with nature. This requires an ability to be at peace with one's self and the world around one, and a successful *Spirit* total of 13 to accomplish.

Equipment

Some Nippon Tech equipment is listed in the equipment list in the Rule Book. Most of what Nippon Tech makes will eventually be a profitable export. Nippon Tech has perfected techniques of manufacture which do not violate the tech axiom levels of the cosms to which they are trying to sell, selling items which are at the cutting edge of the local technology. The Law of Profit guarantees them an edge in almost every market; given dwarven smiths-for-hire, Kanawa could eventually produce swords more cheaply in Nippon Tech than dwarven smiths in Aysle could, selling them in Aysle for a profit. For details see the *Nippon Tech* Sourcebook.



TORG — Adventurous Scholar

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound Hvy Wound Mortal Dead	K O	7	21
Weight			Spiritual 9	Tech 23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Melee		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vechicles		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (primary field)	3	PER	15
Scholar (other field)		PER	
Scholar (other field)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Faith		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	12	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
.38 Revolver	14	20	3-10	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Barbarian Warrior

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Asyle	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound Hvy Wound Mortal Dead	K O	18	18
Weight			Spiritual 16	Tech 15

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Beast Riding		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Long Jumping		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons	3	DEX	13
Missle Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Find		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Willpower		MIN	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	10	Maneuver
Strength	12	
Toughness	11	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	7	Taunt
Spirit	9	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Ring Mail	14	12			
Weapons					
Broadsword	18	9			

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

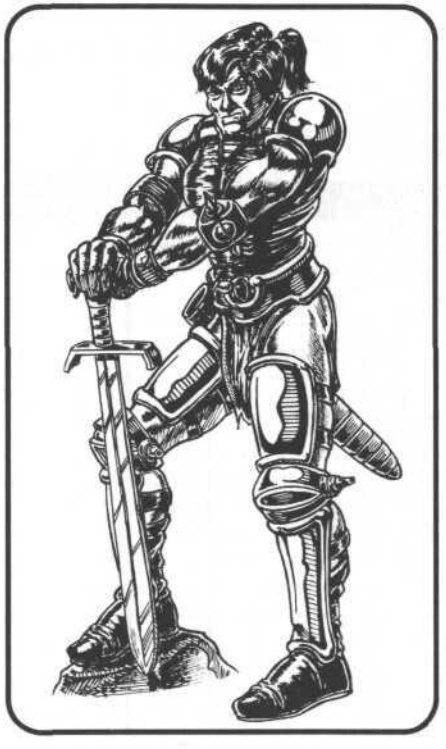
Barbarian Warrior

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Aysle.

Background: New lands have appeared, lands which have somehow caused a change in Aysle itself. You do not know how the changes came about, or how the pathways work. The dark oppression of the land has been partially eradicated, and it is rumored that even Pella Ardinay has had a change of heart. But there are others who still hold to the old dark ways. You have fought many of those in the past few days, fighting your way to one of the pathways to the new land. There you hope to aid those who struggle against the dark ways, for the glory of a battle well fought and to rekindle a sense of pride long ago crushed in Aysle. The new land has been stranger than you had ever expected, but the battle is evident nearly everywhere. Perhaps this time it can be won.

Personality: Aggressive, with a strong sense of personal honor and pride. Foes or companions who fight honorably deserve respect. Companions who act cowardly are disdained, foes who fight dishonorably are ruthlessly dispatched.



Equipment: ring mail (+3/armor value 14), broadsword (+6/damage value 18), scabbard, small peddlar's bag, tribal totem on neck thong, a Timex watch, 100 Ayslish Trades.

Quote: "These trucks, are they as powerful as trolls?"

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *melee weapons*.

Adventurous Scholar

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: You were trained in one of the world's finest universities, although you did not take full advantage of your training. Learning second hand, by word of mouth, or from well-worn books was a necessary evil. You began traveling while working on your doctoral thesis, which to the surprise of your adviser, you did finish. Since then you have done a number of one year stints at different universities, spending too much time in the field to play the important political games back on campus.

You find your work exhilirating, enjoying the challenges of the field. You learned to scavenge your own resources rather than rely on governmental or institutional support; the Possibility Wars have rewarded this skill. The savagery of the wars have not dimmed your enthusiasm for collecting the rare or discovering the unknown. You are one of the few sources of new knowledge available to Core Earth, and the chances for adventure have never been greater. The world of shifting realities is waiting to be discovered.

Personality: Confident, friendly, you are attracted to the unknown, and are willing to undergo considerable risks for an obscure, but important fact. You can operate alone, but you have learned that sharing knowledge can increase the total knowledge available to you; it's just that getting people to go where you want to go is sometimes difficult.



Equipment: backpack, camping gear,.38 revolver (damage value 14), spare ammunition, flashlight, notebook, sketchpad, $500.

Quote: "Tokari poison is not always painfully fatal, but I still recommend that you duck the darts."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *scholar;* choose a primary field of study. Other *scholar* skills are in other, not necessarily related fields.

Contract Ninja

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Nippon Tech	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		2	22
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	8	24

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Long Jumping		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Martial Arts	3	DEX	16
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Prestidigitation		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Water Vehicles		PER	
Willpower		MIN	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	13	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	10	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		Limit Values
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Shimsi Sword	13	15			
Throwing Stars	11	15	3-5	10	15

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	25	26	30	31	35	36	40	41	45	46	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10		-8		-5		-2		-1		0		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13		+1

Covert Operative

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Prestidigitation		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Air Vehicle		PER	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Language		PER	
Test		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion	3	CHA	14
Taunt		CHA	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	10	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	9	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	11	Taunt
Spirit	9	Intimidate
Movement Rates		Limit Values
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
9mm Beretta	15	22	3-10	25	40
Ankle Knife	11	8			

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	25	26	30	31	35	36	40	41	45	46	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10		-8		-5		-2		-1		0		1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8		9		10		11		12		13		+1

Covert Operative

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: You were in Africa when reality was torn to shreds by the invaders. While your organization was paralyzed for a few days, it recovered far faster than other branches of the government, and began to seek out the causes for this catastrophe, understand them, and eliminate them — if possible. Resources are scarce, the mission more difficult, and the enemy more baffling than ever, but that soon became part of the job.

For now reconnaissance is the name of the game; find out how strong the enemy is, harass them where practicable, and discover which portions of the population might be contacted to help bolster resistance to the Possibility Raiders. You are to keep yourself in play; do not take yourself out of the game by taking foolish risks unless directly ordered to do so.

Personality: You are efficient, and approach most people as a puzzle to be solved. You do appreciate people who share your views, and return loyalty with loyalty. You are extremely unpleasant when crossed.



Equipment: 9mm Beretta (damage value 15), ammunition, ankle knife (+3/damage value 11), false ID papers, miniature camera, miniature tape recorder, hand-held satellite transceiver (tech 23), $2,000 worth of gold coins.

Quote: "I wonder if you haven't got your priorities a little mixed up here."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *persuasion.*

Contract Ninja

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Nippon Tech.

Background: Need for your services grew rapidly during the Mitsuyana/Kanawa takeover wars. The only distress you felt was the rapid expansion of the ninja class, many of whom were glorified street fighters with no sense of tradition, whose training consisted of a few choreographed brawls. Your opinion is correct, but it is unpopular with some of those who employ you. Unfortunately, being unpopular has led to the request for your termination. Fortunately, your correct opinion meant that those who sought to kill you lack the necessary skill to do so. You are getting better. So are they. They have the numbers. So you have sought defensive ground outside the realm of Nippon Tech, ground which neutralizes the resources the corporations can grant your adversaries. In these areas you have found that employment opportunities are still available, and you have found others whose fight is similar to your own struggles. There are forces which seek to eliminate those who follow the correct path, forces which are growing stronger each day.

Personality: You pursue your art with diligence. While you are far from perfection, you know that to seek anything less is incorrect. You honor a contract, and consider an oath between friends or within family such a contract.



Equipment: Niyoki camouflage suit (+1 to stealth), shimsi sword (+5/damage value 13), throwing stars (+3 / damage value 11), Sorubu gloves (+2 to climbing), 100,000 yen account card.

Quote: "Conceding one's death before battle may prevent that death."

Skill Notes: Your skill tag is *martial arts.* You only have 11 skill points to assign, and must take *lockpicking, stealth,* and *prestidigitation.* You are unable to spend possibilities on *reality* skill rolls.

TORG — Curious Mage

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Aysle	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound Hvy Wound Mortal Dead	K O	18	18
Weight			Spiritual 16	Tech 15

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Melee Weapon		DEX	
Alteration Magic	3	PER	16
Divination Magic		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar		PER	
Trick		PER	
Apportation Magic		MIN	
Conjuration Magic		MIN	
Science		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Arcane Knowledge (fire)	2		



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	7	
Toughness	7	
Perception	13	Trick
Mind	11	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Dagger	10	7			

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Disgruntled Corporate

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Nippon Tech	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound Hvy Wound Mortal Dead	K O	2	22
Weight			Spiritual 8	Tech 24

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Land Vechicle		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (business)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Artist		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Charm	3	CHA	15
Persausion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	8	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	11	Trick
Mind	9	Test
Charisma	12	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
9mm Beretta	15	22	3-10	25	40

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Disgruntled Corporate

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Nippon Tech.

Background: You worked for one of the medium sized arbitrage houses which did work for Mitsuyana Industries. You acquired a reputation as a youthful miracle worker, finessing the finance net in time to prevent huge gains by Kanawa Corporation, even posting respectable gains for your own firm. But the fight became increasingly grim, fought on the street almost as often as across terminals. Clever financial action blurred into the unethical, then into the murderously criminal. They were doing it, so you would have to do it too.

You decided that you would not. The art of business had gone horribly wrong. It was time to move elsewhere. When you began to look around, you saw that more than business was starting to go wrong. As you regain control of your life, you see that others are diligently working to restrict self-determination in others.

Personality: Hard-working, you dive into any task in which you believe with a zeal others may find hard to understand. You enjoy working with others, but find idle time difficult; relaxation makes you restless for the next challenge.

Equipment: Panasonic currency emulator (manufactures copies of up to 1,000 units of any paper currency per cartridge), three cartridges, portable computer (in purse or attache) with telecom links (tech 24), convertible rain-poncho/mono-tent, infrared binoculars, first aid kit, 9mm Beretta



(damage value 15), ammunition, jimmied identity card, 5,000,000 yen account card.

Quote: "The bottom line is there is more than the bottom line."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *charm.*

TORG — Curious Mage

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Aysle.

Background: Since being amazed by the illusions of a merchant magician, you have devoted most of your life to the study of magic, much of that time hiding from Ardinay's minions. Luckily they thought your research annoying rather than a real threat, and you could deal with the minions the High Lord did bother to send. Your knowledge has grown slowly, painstakingly, but events have unfolded which may give you an opportunity to increase your knowledge manyfold!

The flow of magic was interrupted by when Ardinay ordered another invasion; and now the magic of Aysle is "spilling over" into someplace else. To travel these lands, to explore the "edges" of magic, and areas where magic works differently, would be a great help to your research.

Personality: Enthusiastic and curious about everything related to magic, you occasionally forget the practical side of life. Usually the result is a tad embarrassing, but nothing else. In the wild situations of the Possibility Wars, the flaw may be more serious, and you have promised yourself you will become more practical as soon as you finish designing your next spell.

Arcane Knowledges: Fire +2,

_____

_____

Spells:

_____

_____



Equipment: robes, equipment belt, belt pouches, spell components, dagger (+3/damage value 10), empty food pouch, and you could swear you had brought a healing draught, right next the the pouch with all your money... well maybe you left that one at home.

Quote: "While not having quite the effect intended, the spell was a success. Don't you think so?"

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is alteration magic. You have 10 points to distribute in other arcane knowledges and spells, in addition to the 13 to spend on skills.

TORG — Doubting Cleric

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Evidence Analysis	3	PER	15
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar		PER	
Artist		MIN	
Medicine		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persausion		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Focus		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	12	Test
Charisma	8	Taunt
Spirit	12	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Club	11	6			

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Fast Hero

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Nile Empire	9

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		12	20
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	17	21

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Flight		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Flight Power		DEX	15



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	12	Maneuver
Strength	9	
Toughness	8	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	9	Test
Charisma	11	Taunt
Spirit	8	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Fast Hero

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Nile Empire.

Background: You spent your youth reading the stories in *Weird Tales,* imagining yourself as a hero. Heck, you could probably go them one better if you had the chance — certainly you would give yourself snappier dialogue. When you read the small advertisement from Elhai University, the one about "enhancement research", you figured this was your chance. The boys in white had it mostly figured out, but there were some setbacks and a lot of hard work before the payoff. And then things got weird. The Pharaoh moved his palace somewhere else, another planet; you were expected to help the Pharaoh crush the natives. That isn't what you had become a hero for, and your weren't going to let a few dozen shocktroopers dissuade you. Okay, maybe the shocktroopers could convince you to leave, but they couldn't dissuade you from being a hero.

Personality: Brash, energetic, you are ready to tackle the world. You have abilities beyond most mortal men, just as you have always wanted. There is the occasional drawback, but heck, that's always been part of the hero biz. This is the life you have always wanted to lead.



Equipment: costume, street clothes, Nile identity papers, 50 Nile Royals.

Quote: "This time Dr. Mobius has gone too far!"

Skill Notes: You start with only 9 Possibilities and no tag skill. You have *flight* power 15. Your power has an adventure cost of 3; you must spend 3 possibilities an adventure to keep *flight.*

Doubting Cleric

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: You have always wondered about many things, particularly about the hard questions, the tough questions of existence and meaning. Combined with a desire to help others answer their own questions, you entered the clergy. You sought answers in formal religious training; instead your questions loomed larger once you finished. Travel did not ease your soul, and you eventually returned home to assume the traditional role of the cleric. Then armageddon struck.

Now the questions of good, evil and free will, of what man's role is, of what constitutes reality, are being brutally posed by the Possibility Raiders. The answers cannot be found in meditation. You must find them in action, helping others to find those answers in time to save themselves from the Raiders.

Personality: Earnest, seeking the truth, you have developed a keen sense of humor and a sarcastic wit to protect you from the disappointments of your search so far. The news of miracles has given you hope, while news of the Possibility Wars threatens to crush it.



Equipment: holy symbol, holy book, first aid kit, envelopes, postage, paper and pen, club (+3/damage value 11), $250.

Quote: "Not all mysteries are meant to be solved, but you can't tell which is which without trying to solve them."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is evidence analysis 3/15.

Gadget Hero

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Nile Empire	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound		12	20
Weight	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		17	21
	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Flight		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Long Jumping		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
Scholar (science)	3	PER	15
Trick		PER	
Science		MIN	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	10	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	9	
Perception	12	Trick
Mind	9	Test
Charisma	8	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
.38 Revolver	14	20	3-10	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die		3	5	7	9		11	13							21	26	31	36	41	46	
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

GodNet Raider

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Cyberpapacy	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound		10	18
Weight	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		14	26
	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Cyberdeck Op.	3	PER	15
Fire		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (computer science)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Artist		MIN	
Science		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Faith		CHA	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	12	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Uzi	17	22	3-15	40	100

Bonus Chart

Die		3	5	7	9		11	13							21	26	31	36	41	46	
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

GodNet Raider

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Cyberpapacy.

Background: Things became a mother-circuit mess in a hurry. You were working for IRCOM, working on electronic composition, when the machines started to wack out. Yours were one of the first to go, and then nothing would work for you, even your electric guitar. Then the beeps came back, and you could work things again. When his Holiness Jean Malraux arrived, something snapped. First it snapped in France, then you; when you heard of the GodNet, it sounded like a dream. You jacked in with altered IRCOM equipment and discovered the truth. The GodNet was wrong, like a great piece of music being butchered by a backup band. Whoever set it up didn't have a clue — or worse, they knew exactly what they were doing, and wanted it this way. You found things out, but people didn't want to hear them.

Things are hot right now, so you have taken a vacation elsewhere. But someday you are going back to the GodNet. Someday you are going to help get it right.

Personality: Energetic, committed to music and meaning, you believe that harmony is a key principle in life. The Possibilty Raiders increase discord and destroy harmony, although some of the tools they have introduced will be useful in the right hands — such as yours. You intend to use them.



Equipment: J-Jack, cyberdeck Delicious and spare parts, Uzi (damage value 17), ammunition, IRCOM pass, portable holo CD, portable keyboard, 10,000 Franc account card.

Programs: attack +1, defense +2, stealth +2, charm +1.

Quote: "You gotta learn to listen before you learn to play."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *cyberdeck operation.* You have *cyber value 2.*

Gadget Hero

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Nile Empire.

Background: As a boy, you were fascinated by your grandfather's watch, and your mother let you conduct simple experiments in the lab, under her strict supervision. As you grew older, you exploited the lapses in her superivion (and the really keen articles in *Journal for the Advancement of the Sciences* and *Popular Mechanics)* to build a few widgets of your own. Bolstered by simple successes you conceived a far more complicated device, one which would give you an ability you had always wanted. It just never came together.

Then the Pharaoh gathered all his scientists and moved them across the maelstrom bridge. It had happened before, but this time something happened to you. You gained a clearer vision of what was happening around you, and what was happening was wrong. At the same time, your technical understanding made a leap, and you completed your device. Minutes later the lab was attacked by creatures seeking you, and you fled. You have been battling crime and evil ever since.

Personality: Shy, you tried to overcome your shyness by devloping technical marvels to impress people. As your social skills improved, you found you could interact with people on your own, but you retained your love of gadgets.



Equipment: costume, gadget belt (value 17 for one of the following powers: dazzle, flight, invisibility, fog screen, mega-hearing, ultra-sight, x-ray eyes), .38 revolver (damage value 14), ammunition, tool kit, oscilloscope parts, 400 Nile Royals.

Quote: "This isn't anything a little ingenuity can't get us out of."

Skill Notes: Your skill tag is *scholar (science).* Pick a science.

Gypsy Soothsayer

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Orrorsh	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		15	20
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	17	19

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Beast Riding		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Prestidigitation		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Alteration Magic		PER	
Divination Magic	3	PER	15
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Apportation Magic		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Willpower		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Faith		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	8	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	9	
Perception	12	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Boot Knife	11	7	3-5	10	15
Colt Peacemaker	15	19	3-5	15	40

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1						

Human Tribal Shaman

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Prestidigitation		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Alteration Magic		PER	
Divination Magic		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (mythic lore)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Apportation Magic		MIN	
Conjuration Magic	3	MIN	14
Medicine		MIN	
Survival		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	8	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	10	
Perception	11	Trick
Mind	11	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	9	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Leather +2	12	5			
Weapons					
War Boomerang	12	7	3-5	25	40

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1						

Human Tribal Shaman

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: The spirits whispered to you when you were a young child. Oh, you ignored them first, as did all the others who had forgotten, but the spirits were patient. In a few years, you were ready to listen, to learn the wisdom they could teach, and walk the paths they set before you. You saw what the white man could no longer see, heard what he no longer was able to hear. At first the vision was beautiful, liberating. It soon changed. The spirits foretold of the ripping of the souls of the people at the hands of invaders, of the struggle to preserve the very link between Earth and her people, a link already weak. You began your travels, guided by the knowledge of your visions, and seeking others who would join you in your quest to heal the lands.

Personality: Patient with purpose, you wait for the emotions of others to crest before speaking. Your calm strength carries you, and others with you, through severe circumstances.

Equipment: street clothes, tribal clothes, war boomerang +4/12, leather coat/armor +2/12.

Arcane Knowledges:

_____

_____

Spells:

_____

_____



Quote: "To hear the answers given you, you must listen to the quiet in between the words, for much is spoken there."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *conjuration magic.* You have 12 points of arcane knowledges and spells

Gypsy Soothsayer

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Orrorsh.

Background: You have always had more empathy for the natives than the colonists. The Victorians were too stuffy, to stolid in their day to day lives. You believe they understand less about the night dangers than they think they do; such pride in Orrorsh is a deadly extravagance. But coins rarely walk up to you without being invited, and the invitations are so easily extended to the Victorians. Their coins do not walk to you, they run. Not one to spit at such benefits, you have traveled with the colonists, and share their desire to defeat the horror which permeates the land. Your methods may just be a little different.

Personality: Showman, con artist, magician: you are a little of each and relish each role as it is appropriate. Confident, you know never to show doubt, certainly never to a client.

Equipment: Silver jewelery, gold bandana pin, boot knife (+3/damage value 11), Colt Peacemaker (damage value 15), ammunition including nine silver bullets, incense, combustible powders for colored flame, the Grolisch Tome of Ancient Lore (not really, but an impressive enough forgery), 100 Victorian Sterlings.

Arcane Knowledges: Folk +1,

_____

_____

Spells:

_____

_____



Quote: "You are wise to seek me out, for I have read the lore of Grolisch herself, and I myself have seen the eyes which fill the pale night."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is divination magic. You have 11 points to distribute in other arcane knowledges and spells, in addition to the 13 to spend on skills.

Intrepid Reporter

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Water Vehicles		PER	
Artist		MIN	
Science		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion	3	CHA	15
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	9	
Toughness	8	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	9	Test
Charisma	12	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		Limit Values
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
.38 Revolver	14	20	3-10	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1						

Jaz Fighter

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Cyberpapacy	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		10	18
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	14	26

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Enery Weapons		DEX	
Fire Combat	3	DEX	15
Long Jumping		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Find		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Language		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Faith		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	12	Maneuver
Strength	10	
Toughness	11	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	9	Test
Charisma	8	Taunt
Spirit	7	Intimidate
Movement Rates		Limit Values
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
IriMesh Jacket	14	24			
Weapons					
Wrist Gun	19	26	3-40	100	150

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1						

TORG Jaz Fighter

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Cyberpapacy.

Background: The street was iced when the hood-and-frocks started to wipe everything down. It was eerie the way they found punks; blink and they would be there. The street wasn't safe for anybody but pedestrians. Then things began to change. Sharps could pick up parts, from chopshops that had nothing to do with cars. And the parts kept getting better. When the frocks showed again, you decided you needed something to even the odds. So you went on the jaz, and got a little wire-and-polish done. The frocks went ape when they first saw you, and you made sure those frocks weren't going to get a second look. The street's interesting again. Like it should be.

Personality: Rough, you like those wo handle rough and dish it too. Your patience has decreased since the jaz, but you will listen to folk who are talking sense. As long as you don't have to sit around too long to hear them.



Equipment: Avro PR II.V wrist gun (damage value 19), ammunition, Kreelar tendon-supplements, apotheduct, rove-eye, two jaz packs, IriMesh jacket (+3/armor value 14), Paris Liberte pass.

Quote: "Moving targets are more fun."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *fire combat.* You have *cyber value 10.*

TORG Intrepid Reporter

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: Indonesia disappeared from the electronic eyes of the world. Then New York collapsed almost overnight, and people everywhere wanted to know why. Why Paris? Why London? The whole planet was besieged by uncertainty in the wake of the invasion of the Possibility Raiders. You read the incoming reports, then decided to enter the war zones to look for answers. When you find answers you disseminate them however possible, through the networks if the machinery works, by local couriers if nothing else. The job is dangerous, for the invaders have a strong interest in keeping the people of Earth ignorant as long as possible. But the people have a right to know! You have lost most of your reporter's objectivity they taught you in journalism school, for everyone is on the front lines of the Possibility Wars in some way or another, and the people on the other side want you dead.

Personality: Brusque when you need answers, and a skilled verbal duelist, you have developed an ability to relate to people off the record. You are often the only source of information people have, and you have met the challege head on.



Equipment: News van, camcorder, dozens of yellow pads, pens, Macintosh portable computer, Samsonite luggage,.38 revolver (damage value 14), $700.

Quote: "The pen isn't always mightier than the sword, but it can help someone else decide where to swing."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *persuasion.*

Obsessed Prodigy

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Cyberpapacy	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		10	18
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	14	26

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Enery Weapons		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Evidence Analysis		PER	
Find		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar		PER	
Trick		PER	
Artist		MIN	
Medicine		MIN	
Science	3	MIN	16
Test		MIN	
Willpower		MIN	
Persuasion		CHA	
Faith		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	13	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
SC Kyogo T11	21	24	3-40	150	400

Bonus Chart

Die		3	5	7	9		11	13							21	26	31	36	41	46	
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

National Hero

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality	3	SPI	14
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Heavy Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Language		PER	
Space Vehicles		PER	
Willpower		MIN	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	10	Maneuver
Strength	9	
Toughness	8	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	11	Taunt
Spirit	11	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Kevlar Coat	13	22			
Weapons					
Mac 10	18	22	3-15	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die		3	5	7	9		11	13							21	26	31	36	41	46	
Roll	1	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

National Hero

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: You rose to prominence through the feats of your youth, a hero / celebrity for much of the nation. As your fame began to fade, opportunists decided it was time for you to move into politics, to act as speaker for a coalition, to coax the public into accepting their agenda. You were elected, and applied yourself to the new job as you had to everything else; you were determined to be the best you could possibly be. Your "advisors" tried to contain you in your role as mouthpiece, but your ideas, your agenda, began to be heard. You survived your opponent's smear campaign, and some of your ideas even came to fruition. Then the Possibility Raiders tore everything apart.

Now you hope to rally the people, to help them regain hope and control of their destiny. You travel in other countries as well, as an ambassador-at-large, reminding the world that your nation still exists.

Personality: Determined, optimistic, you believe the ideals of your nation are meant as a blueprint for action, not musty ideas to be relegated to history discussions. You constantly take calculated risks, and are used to winning. You are going to win this one also.



Equipment: business suit with kevlar lined coat (+5/armor value 13), casual clothes, passport, Mac 10 (damage value 18), ammunition, 10 one-ounce gold bars, pen and government stationery.

Quote: "Times which need heroes usually get the heroes they need, but probably not the ones they want."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *reality.*

Obsessed Prodigy

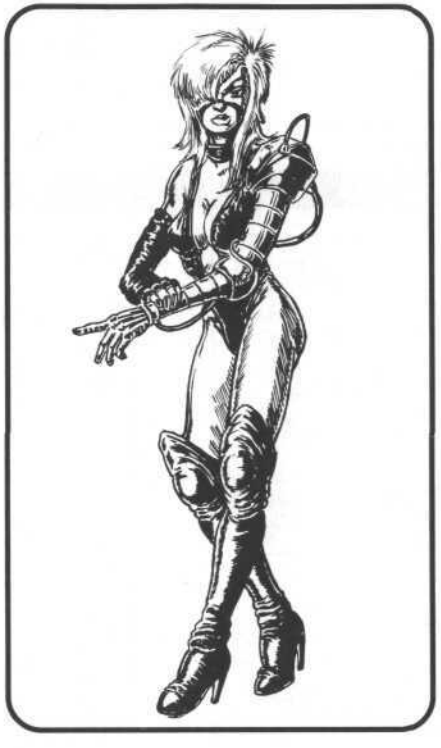
Player Name: _____

Cosm: Cyberpapacy.

Background: You have always excelled, often to the point where there was no meaning to the phrase, "your peers." You have been alone for nearly as long as you have achieved, at least in the sense of true friendship. The one or two people to whom you grew close have been almost clinically removed by the others around you. There have been plenty of people eager to latch onto your work, to share the credit, and others equally eager to discredit you to save their own egos. You have tread the path between the two types carefully.

You thrive in your work, as your work never deserts you and is still important. But the Possibility Wars have given a new dimension to your life, creating a problem so large, events so vast, that they dwarf any of the work you have done. Somehow, this must be your life's work. Somehow the Wars are a key to yourself.

Personality: Quick, smart, and occasionally guilty at how smart you are. You take things literally, and are just beginning to develop a sense of humor and a way of dealing with people other than through your work.



Equipment: SC Kyogo T11 (damage value 21), two extra clips, Valle chipware (3 skills/+1 add each), chipholder 1, climbing cable, infrared goggles. Cyber value 1. 125,000 franc account card.

Quote: "Cosm catastrophe folds were just a theory, until someone else used them to start kicking our butt."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *science.*

Paladin

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Aysle	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound		18	18
Weight	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		16	15
	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Beast Riding		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		PER	
Lifting		PER	
Find		STR	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (philosophy)		PER	
Trick		PER	
Charm		CHA	
Persuasion		CHA	
Faith	3	SPI	14
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	11	Maneuver
Strength	9	
Toughness	9	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	11	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Plate	15	15			
Weapons					
Broadsword	15	9			

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Realm Runner

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
Height	Wound		7	21
Weight	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		9	23
	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles	3	PER	14
Language		PER	
Scholar (mechanical eng.)		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Water Vehicles		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Charm		CHA	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	10	
Toughness	9	
Perception	11	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	10	Taunt
Spirit	9	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Savage 77E	18	22	3-15	40	60

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG Realm Runner

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: You have been called a grease monkey since you were 12, and have been fascinated by cars, trucks, planes and boats since you were three. You are good with vehicles, although you have your favorites, and made a decent living along the smaller racing circuits. Then the muck really hit the fan; buggies stopped working, tractors stopped working, even can openers stopped working. You noticed that things worked fine when you used them, and you could even get them going again when they stopped on you, a talent too few people have.

As you are one of the few people who can keep a vehicle going, regardless of where it is, you have entered a new line of work. You have become a realm runner, the person who gets goods into areas which need them, or who takes things out of an area when someone else needs them. The first few times were pretty straight hauls, but lately things have gotten pretty weird. But hey, the world's pretty weird, too. You figure you are doing good by doing what you do best. That's about all you can ask out of life.

Personality: Jovial, easy going in a crisis, you are often taken less seriously than you ought to be. Not that it bothers you, and being underestimated can be an advantage sometimes. You allow other people their pride, and you get the results.



Equipment: battered vehicle (choice of land, water, or air), spare parts, tool kit, welding mask, acetylene torch, extra battery, old calendar, Savage 77E (damage value 18), $100 and spare change.

Quote: "Stop looking so nervous, this buggy has always held it together at this speed... Uh-oh."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *land vehicles* (or *air vehicles* or *water vehicles*, your choice).

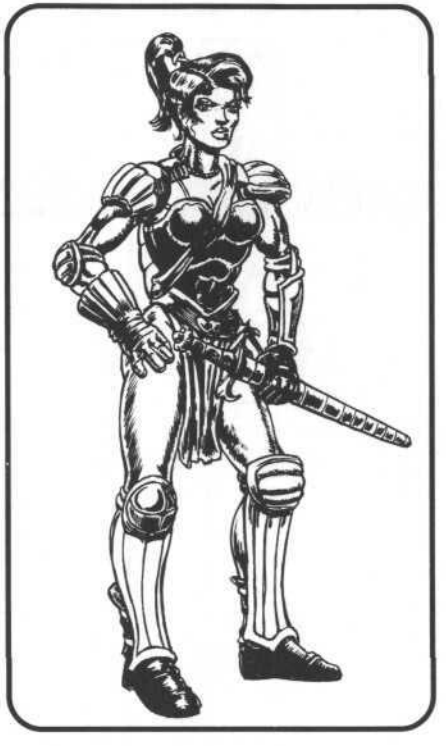
TORG Paladin

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Aysle.

Background: You were a defender of a lord of Aysle, one of the privileged elite. When Uthorian's forces overwhelmed Aysle, you fought well, but were defeated. You vaguely remember your last moments, and were sure that you were going to be killed. But you have recently awakened in another world, not sure how you had gotten there, or where "there" is. Soon you came to realize that others like Uthorian were invading this world, that the gods have given you a chance to fight once more. As you began exploring further you discovered that Aysle itself had taken part in this invasion, but that dramatic events had changed things in your home land. Someday it may be possible for you to return home, and help your own people as you now help those of this Earth.

Personality: Commanding, self-assured in battle, you are less assured when you put your sword down. You are often grim, but you can be warm when in the company of people whom you trust.



Equipment: broadsword(+6/damage value 15), plate armor (+6/armor value 15), holy symbol, food pouches, worn copy of *The Dark Knight.*

Quote: "Faith in our mission must never waiver, or we have lost the first battle with our enemy."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill *is faith.*

Renegade Edeinos

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Living Land	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		0	7
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	24	7

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Acrobatics		DEX	
Beast Riding		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Long Jumping		DEX	
Melee Weapons	3	DEX	12
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Swimming		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Faith		SPI	
Forus		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	9	
Toughness	14	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	7	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Hrockt Spear	13	9*	3-5	25	40
Club	12	6			
Claws	13				
Tail	10				

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Soldier of Fortune

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Core Earth	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		7	21
Height	Hvy Wound			
	Mortal		Spiritual	Tech
Weight	Dead	K O	9	23

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat	3	DEX	14
Heavy Weapons		DEX	
Maneuver		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Air Vehicles		PER	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Persuasion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	11	Maneuver
Strength	10	
Toughness	11	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	8	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	8	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Leather +2	13	5			
Weapons					
Uzi	17	22	15	40	100
.357 Desert Eagle	16	22	10	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

Soldier of Fortune

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Core Earth.

Background: A short time ago you only concerned yourself with shifting the odds in another African struggle between democracy and despotism. Your ethics were dutifully subordinate to your mission, but your honesty shone through at inappropriate times, causing problems with your employers. Your employment abruptly terminated, you drifted north toward rumors of war in Egypt.

You found yourself in the strangest revolution you had ever seen — the return of the Pharaoh to rule Egypt, a reversion to four millenia old religion and 50 year old technology. But the totalitarian ring of the retoric was timeless. You fought against the revolutionaries; you lost. The Nile Empire only forgives dead enemies, and you decided you would pass on that sort of forgiveness. Since then you have drifted from one front of the Possibility Wars to another, hoping to win enough small victories to make a difference in the big picture.

Personality: You survive, and you have built your personality to enhance your chances of keeping your skin. You trust few people, and are always on guard when entering a new situation. While courageous, you fiercely resist being sucked into fighting for what looks like a completely lost cause.



Equipment: Uzi (damage value 17),.357 Desert Eagle (damage value 16), ammunition, stolen maps of Nile fortifications, fatigues and camo gear, sunglasses, hip pouches and canteen, $700.

Quote: "Forget the song; dirty deeds cost big bucks."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *fire combat.*

Renegade Edeinos

Player Name: _____

Cosm: The Living Land.

Background: The gotak had told you it was time for the tribe to move once again, and you led a party of warriors ahead to scout. What you saw confused you. Other Edeinos, under direct orders from Baruk Kaah, were starving out the huge camps of the natives by intercepting food, rather than doing battle with the natives. The gotak who told you that the soft-skinned beings of this world were already dead instructed you to use the weapons of the walking dead. They wanted you to use the captured "rifles" rather than throw your spear for the glory of Lanala. They were telling you to become like the walking dead. Troubled, you went to talk to your optant; she seemed to understand, but then she called for the Ravagons to deal with you. You evaded them by crossing into the land of the dead, where some of their optants gave you sanctuary. Since then you have wandered in and out of the Living Land, sometimes as a guide for those who call themselves Americans, sometimes to regrow spiritually. You know Baruk Kaah is doing something bad to your people. You pray to Lanala that your people do not become as vapid as these Earthers.

Personality: You accept much of what life gives you, choosing to amplify the experience, good or bad, rather than avoid it. You find Core Earthers too restrained, but you have found a few new, delightful experiences outside of the Living Land.



Equipment: hrockt spear (+4/ damage value 13), loincloth, musical greeting card, club (+3 / damage value 12), TMNT tee-shirt.

Natural Tools: claws, damage value 13; tail, damage value 10.

Quote: "Why do so many of you watch the fighting on that box, rather than become warriors yourselves?"

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *melee weapons.* Hrock spear needs a spiritual level of nine to function.

TORG — Story Teller

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Living Land	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		0	7
Height	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		24	7
Weight	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Beast Riding		DEX	
Dodge		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Missile Weapons		DEX	
Prestidigitation		DEX	
Running		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (mythic lore)		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Survival		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Charm	3	CHA	14
Persuasion		CHA	
Taunt		CHA	
Faith		SPI	
Intimidation		SPI	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	9	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	9	
Perception	9	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	11	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Short Bow	13	8	3-10	40	100
Spear	12	7	3-5	25	40

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	25	26	30	31	35	36	40	41	45	46	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1												

TORG — Tough Hero

Player Name:

Character Name	Home Cosm	Possibilities
	Nile Empire	10

Age	Wound Level	Shock Damage	Magic	Social
	Wound		12	20
Height	Hvy Wound		Spiritual	Tech
	Mortal		17	21
Weight	Dead	K O		

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fire Combat		DEX	
Lock Picking		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat	3	DEX	13
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Test		MIN	
Willpower		MIN	



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	10	Maneuver
Strength	11	
Toughness	14	
Perception	8	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	8	Taunt
Spirit	8	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Brass Knuckles	13	9			
.38 Revolver	14	20	3-10	25	50

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	25	26	30	31	35	36	40	41	45	46	50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1												

Tough Hero

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Nile Empire.

Background: Scum is scum, and no matter who is in charge, the scum sticks around the alleys and the gutters. Crime has gotten worse since the sun-loving Pharaoh took power, and all those extra shocktroopers don't do a wooden nickel's worth for the Joe on the street. The scum prey on the Joes. You wipe off the scum. At least some of them. Then they seem to grow back, and the cycle starts again. You can't seem to win. But if you stopped, the scum would win. And even a stinking hole-in-the-sand city like this one deserves better than that. So you go out, ask some question, knock a few heads together, and things get better — until tomorrow night.

Personality: Cynical, tough, you are rumored to have a heart of gold. But as a former secretary said, it might be there, but it certainly isn't getting any larger.



Equipment: Brass knuckles (+2/ damage value 13),.38 revolver (damage value 14) which you sometimes even load, half a ham sandwich, opera glasses, Dentley's cinnamon gum, a checking acount with a minimum balance (50 Nile Royals) and pocket change.

Quote: "Sorry punk, but you've got such a pretty face that my fist just had to meet it."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *unarmed combat.* You have only 10 skill points to distribute. You have a super-attribute, with two points added to *Toughness* and one to *Strength.* Adventure cost: 3.

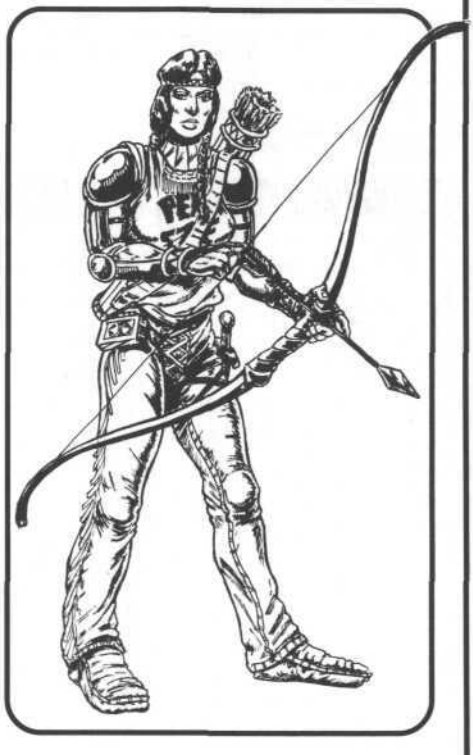
Story Teller

Player Name: _____

Cosm: The Living Land.

Background: You were not good at stories as a child. You did not even particularly enjoy listening to the shaman tell his stories. Then one day you heard the wind, and a few weeks later the water. They began to tell you their stories. You listened enraptured as the wind and the water told you that it was your destiny to tell stories, to gather them from all over the lands, and plant them in the imaginations of others. This work is important, for people could find their ideals, their worlds, through the greater truth in stories. The wind murmured of the approaching storm, the water stood silent. When the Possibility Wars began, you knew that this was the storm you were warned of, and that you had to gather the stories of the world, and reseed hope in those who had lost it.

Personality: An eloquent, emotional speaker, you have learned how to entertain and how to inform through your stories. You believe that all good stories contain important truth, no matter how outrageous the story. You enjoy your travels and the people you get to know, but the Possibility Wars are never out of sight.



Equipment: spear (+4/12), short bow (+5/damage value 13) from Core Earth survivor, clothes, papers, pens and tape recorder from the "dead lands", blanket, copy of *Winnie the Pooh.*

Quote: "Time was different then than it is now… this is a story of that time."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *charm.*

TORG — Vampyre Hunter

Player Name: _____

Character Name		Home Cosm	Orrorsh	Possibilities
Age	Wound Level: Wound / Hvy Wound / Mortal / Dead	Shock Damage: K O	Magic 15 / Social 20	10
Height			Spiritual 17 / Tech 19	
Weight				

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		SPI	
Dodge		DEX	
Fir Combat		DEX	
Melee Weapons		DEX	
Stealth		DEX	
Unarmed Combat		DEX	
Climbing		STR	
Lifting		STR	
Alternation Magic		PER	
Divination Magic		PER	
Evidence Analysis	3	PER	16
Find		PER	
First Aid		PER	
Land Vehicles		PER	
Language		PER	
Scholar (mythic lore)		PER	
Tracking		PER	
Trick		PER	
Science		MIN	
Test		MIN	
Faith		SPI	

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
.44 Revolver	15	19	3-5	15	40



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	8	Maneuver
Strength	8	
Toughness	8	
Perception	13	Trick
Mind	10	Test
Charisma	9	Taunt
Spirit	10	Intimidate
Movement Ra10tes		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Werewolf

Player Name: _____

Character Name		Home Cosm	Orrorsh	Possibilities
Age	Wound Level: Wound / Hvy Wound / Mortal / Dead	Shock Damage: K O	Magic 15 / Social 20	10
Height			Spiritual 17 / Tech 19	
Weight				

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality	/	SPI	
Dodge	/	DEX	
Fire Combat	/-	DEX	
Long Jumping	/-	DEX	
Maneuver	/	DEX	
Melee Weapons	/-	DEX	
Running	-/	DEX	
Stealth	/	DEX	
Swimming	/-	DEX	
Unarmed Combat	/	DEX	
Climbing	/-	STR	
Lifting	/-	STR	
Find	/	PER	
Tracking	/	PER	
Survival	/-	MIN	
Willpower	/-	MIN	
Persuasion	/-	CHA	
Taunt	/-	CHA	
Faith	/	SPI	
Intimidation	/	SPI	
Shape Shift	3/3	SPI	14/14

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					
Claws	-/16				
Teeth	-/17				
.44 Revolver	15/-	19	3-5	15	40



Attributes		Approved Actions
Dexterity	8/9	Maneuver
Strength	10/14	
Toughness	10/15	
Perception	10	Trick
Mind	8/2	Test
Charisma	9/5	Taunt
Spirit	11	Intimidate
Movement Rates		**Limit Values**
Running		
Swimming		
Jumping		
Climbing		
Lifting		

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

TORG — Werewolf

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Orrorsh.

Background: You had served in Rhodeland as a Gallic Legionaire, battling the "squigglies", the horrific creatures which threatened the few vital colonies on the forsaken continent. Your patrol was ambushed by a shape shifter one night. It killed two and wounded five others, including yourself, before being driven off by silver-coated Enfield rounds. The dead were destroyed, and four of the wounded were later executed when the company chaplain pronounced them beyond hope. He said that you had avoided the fate of a beast, and so were spared. The chaplain was wrong.

A month later you first manifested an ability to shift shape; luckily you were alone at the time. But in a society well attuned to tracking and eliminating horrors, you knew your time in civilized lands to be limited. The new colony on Earth provided you an opportunity for as fresh a start as possible.

Personality: Honorable, you still conduct yourself in accordance with the code of the Gallic Legion — you have great physical and moral courage. But the wolf is far less civilized, and his behavior is beginning, ever so slightly, to blend with the man's.

Equipment: .44 revolver (damage value 15, akin to Colt Peacemaker), ammunition, including 12 silvered rounds, spare clothes, medal from the Battle of Vender's Bog, 30 Sterlings (the remains of your last pay from the Gallic Legion).



Quote: "Sir, savagery is a subject I better understand than you could ever know."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *shape shift.* All values are presented as human/werewolf. So, claws —/16 means that the human form cannot use the claws, but the werewolf has a value of 16. Each form receives 13 skill points. Faith adds must be the same for each form.

TORG — Vampyre Hunter

Player Name: _____

Cosm: Orrorsh.

Background: The undead claimed an older sibling when you were quite young. The pain, loss, and shame experienced by your family profoundly affected you. Fear, curiosity, and a desire for justice led you to delve into every available source of mythic lore. While you were primarily interested in the lore of the undead, your systematic, analytical mind arrayed every fact you discovered into a useful whole.

You attended Holgromb's College at Oxford, a college with an emphasis on science. Your classmates thought you odd, a perfectly valid conclusion given their rather pedestrian point of view. Your career as a stalker of the undead began when you found, and destroyed, the ghoul who had killed a university Don.

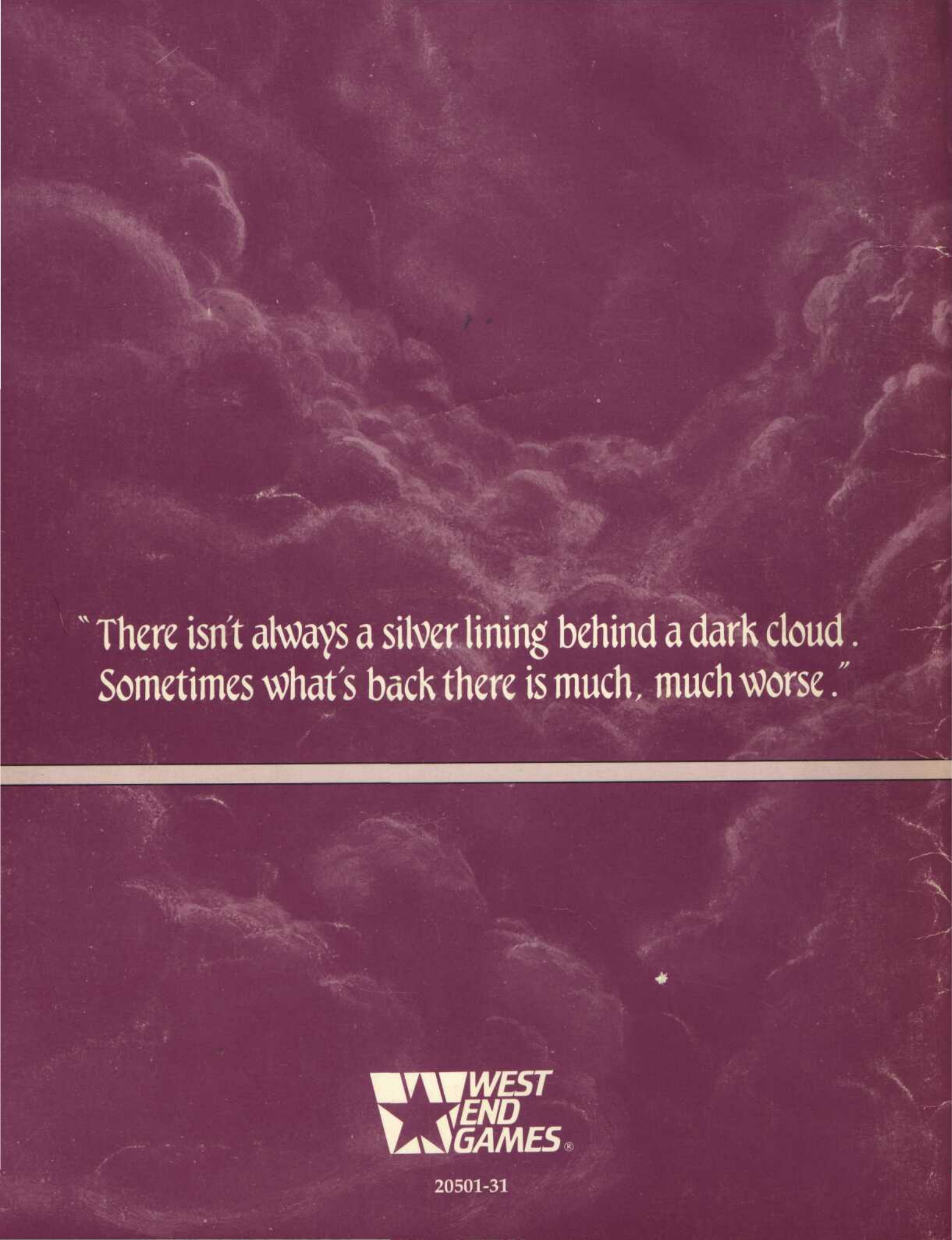
Personality: A brilliant, keen thinker, you are often brusque to those who waste your time with groundless speculation or mindless distortion of the facts. You are somewhat frightened of the possibility of someday, somewhere, encountering your vampiric sibling.



Equipment: holy symbol, wooden stake, .44 revolver (damage value 15, like the Colt Peacemaker), fingerprint powder of your own invention, pen and notebook, 500 Victorian Sterlings.

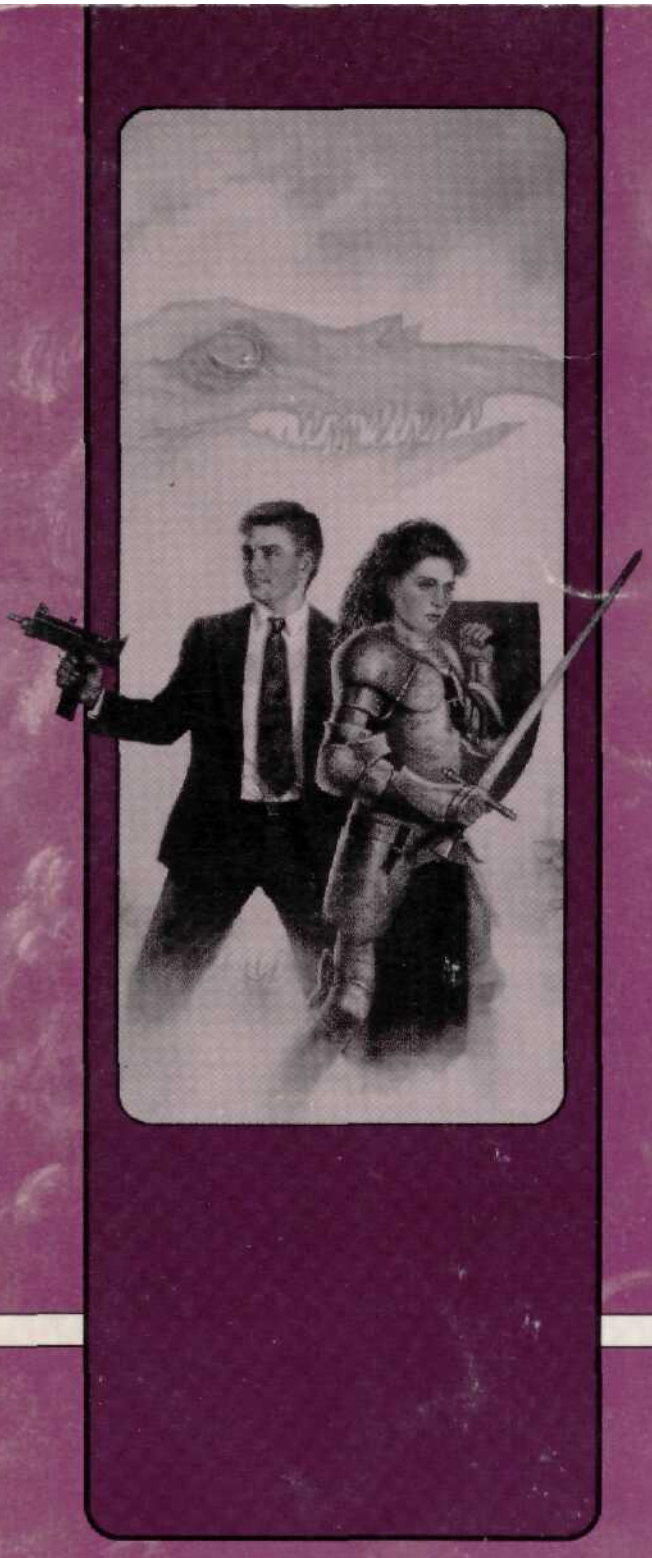
Quote: "A conclusion is like a portrait; it should be drawn so as to be accurate in every detail."

Skill Notes: Your tag skill is *evidence analysis.*



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TORG

ADVENTURE BOOK

Introduction

The group waited in dark silence, feeling the walls of the small cabin pressing in. Outside, they could hear the frightening howl of a tresir on the prowl. They hoped the savage beast wouldn't find their hiding place as it trekked through the new-grown jungle.

"If he doesn't show up soon, I say we give him up for lost," the Yellow Crab muttered, his muffled voice loud in the silence. "Let's face it, the scales probably got him and are enjoying a good meal while we sit here ..."

"That's enough," commanded Crowfire. All humor fled from the Crab's manner. "We'll give Quin another hour and then ..."

"And then what?" The cabin door swung open, stirring the stale air.

Crowfire, the Yellow Crab and Sabrina looked up to see Quin Sebastian standing in the open doorway. He was dirty and ragged, but he was alive — and there was fire in his eyes. The Crab shifted nervously. He'd seen that fire before.

"I've got the information we needed," Quin stated as he shut the door. "And it's all bad. The Edeinos are going to storm Philly. They're just waiting for the newest crop of gospog to bloom -- a couple of hundred third-generation gospogs, due in two days, max. There's no way the Army will be able to stop them. They need time to regroup and resupply."

The Yellow Crab turned pale beneath his mask. "You're not suggesting —

"That's exactly what I'm suggesting," Quin said flatly. "We have to destroy the gospog fields before the harvest. Otherwise the city will be overrun."

Quin looked at each of them in turn; Crowfire, the Yellow Crab, Sabrina, Vancen. Each one, reluctantly perhaps, nodded in assent.

The soldier of fortune smiled grimly. "Then what are we waiting for? Let's move out!"



Bob Dvorak

Important: This book is for gamemasters only. Players should not read it — or at least they should delay reading it until after their gamemaster has run the adventure and hooks within.

The Adventure Book contains information on how to run *Torg* adventures and how to design adventures of your own. It also contains a complete adventure to introduce gamemasters and players to the world of *Torg*, as well as adventure hooks to give you ideas of the types of adventures that can take place in the Near Now.

The Adventure Book builds on information provided in the Rule Book and World Book. The gamemaster should read the Rule Book first, then at least skim the World Book before reading this one.

What's in this Book

The first chapter of this book introduces you to the gamemaster and explains just what this important person does. The second chapter talks about "Running Adventures." It examines the methods and techniques of gamemastering a role playing game session — especially a session of *Torg*. The third takes an in-depth look at card play, a critical part of the *Torg* game. The fourth takes you through the steps of creating adventures, from story concept to the ready-to-play, fully-realized version. Next is the first adventure for *Torg*, called "Before the Dawn." Finally, we present a series of adventure hooks. These are brief plot synopses that serve as starting points for building your own adventures.

In addition, on the center eight pages we have gathered together the most important charts and tables needed to run the game as well as handouts for the adventure. These can be removed for easy reference; we suggest that you photocopy them and keep a backup set well away from the gaming table (which is usually covered with glasses of soda just waiting to be knocked over in the heat of battle).



Chapter One

Introduction to Gamemastering

The essential difference between roleplaying games and other adventure games is the referee, or gamemaster. While other games are designed so that players interact with situations defined by the game rules, roleplayers interact with situations created by a gamemaster, who uses the rules *as* a guide. The rules are not meant to limit or constrain a gamemaster: they are meant to give him direction.

A good gamemaster is more than a rules lawyer. Gamemastering requires quick wit, dramatic flair, a sense of timing, and a level of fairness and impartiality not found in other types of games. Remember, the gamemaster is not playing against the players - there are no winners as the term is defined in traditional games. Everyone, players and gamemaster alike, wins if a roleplaying session is fun, exciting, and extends a sense of accomplishment (or acceptable loss) to all involved.

The gamemaster, then, is a judge, a referee, and a storyteller all in one.

There are plenty of tricks and simple principles that can improve your gamemastering style, and we'll go over a few of them here. But the best way to become better, more dramatic, and more creative as a gamemaster is to gamemaster.

The Role of the Gamemaster

The gamemaster's primary task is to create and present adventure stories for his players to participate in. The players' characters are the heroes of the stories, blessed with extraordinary abilities and destined (or cursed) to play a central role in the Possibility Wars.

The players cannot be heroes without you. You devise the fiendish plots of the villains. You play the roles of the bad guys, their henchmen and minions, the threatened innocents, and the cast of thousands. Yours are the huge fortresses filled with evil mist, the mighty war machines of the new Empire of the Nile, and the creatures that rule the night. You combine these elements into a story, a story with a goal, obstacles, opposing characters, interesting encounters, and a satisfying climax.

Gamemastering is more difficult than playing. A player controls his character — one piece of the story. If he plays his role well, he's doing all he's supposed to. The player does not even have to know the rules very well — the gamemaster can be counted on to correct any missteps. The gamemaster is responsible for the rest of the world.

Isn't This a Lot to Do?

In a word, yes. But it's well worth the effort. Every bit of energy you put into the game will result in a better session. A session in which the players are enjoying themselves is quite a payoff — when they become excited by the story, their enthusiasm is infectious. They win, you win, and everybody has a good time. Despite the appearance of the gamemaster as the one running all the bad guys and doing his best to thwart the heroes, one of the most enjoyable aspects of roleplaying games is when you and your players really work together to create an exciting story.

There is another benefit for all the work you do — you are the only one who really knows where the story is going. We find that gamemastering is the most exciting form of authoring a story, with your ideas played out right in front of you.

The gamemaster's job can be broken down into six tasks: refereeing, roleplaying gamemaster characters, describing the scene, setting the tone, sustaining suspension of disbelief, and responding to players' wishes.

Refereeing

Refereeing means interpreting the rules, making sure that the players abide by them, and resolving disputes in an impartial and reasonable way. To do this, you of course need to have a good understanding of the rules (and it is important to know them at least as well as your most knowledgeable player does). When the rules do not cover a situation, you have to improvise a solution. If a dispute arises, *your decision is final.*

As the players describe the actions of their characters, you decide whether or not they can do what they describe, or how difficult the action is. You interpret the card play and dice rolls according to the rules, and then tell the players what happens. You also decide what the gamemaster characters are doing, roll the dice, and determine the results of their actions as well.

We find it useful to think of roleplaying games as a *language* for telling interactive stories. The roleplaying language has many rules, akin to grammar, which control what sort of things you may and may not do in the context of the game. If a friend said to you, "Roses quickly very bullfrog alien gazebo," she has spoken a sentence which makes no sense. To communicate her idea, she would have to rephrase it according to the rules of English.

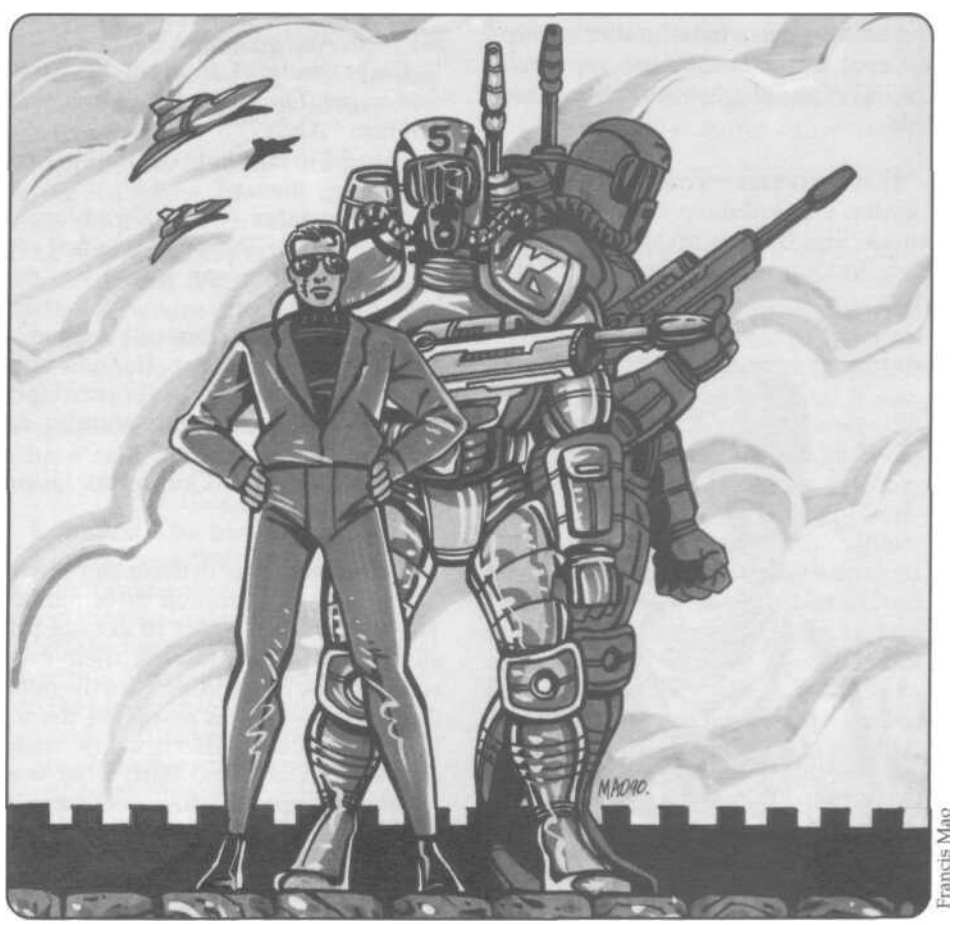
The same holds true for the language of the game. If your friend tries to have a character do something which makes no sense according to the rules, you have to tell her that the character's action cannot be done. Your job is not to guard the "purity" of the rules by adhering to every line of every paragraph, but to make sure that what is being done in the story makes sense in the language of the rules.

Roleplaying Gamemaster Characters

The players are the heroes of the stories you create together. But adventure stories also need dozens of characters besides the heroes, including villains, allies, and bit players. You are expected to bring these *gamemaster characters* to life when they appear in the story, giving them unique personalities, perhaps with individual quirks and beliefs.

If a particular gamemaster character is going to be prominent in a story, it is worth lavishing some time and effort to flesh out his personality. What does he look like? Where does he come from? Does he have any unusual mannerisms or speech patterns? The more detail you put into characterizing important characters, the better. And if the player characters are likely to interact with the character through the game system — that is, they are likely to fight, bargain with, spy on, ensorcel, or be ensorcelled by him — you had better give some thought to his attributes, skills, spells, equipment, and so forth.

But some characters are just spear carriers, minor functionaries who help the story along and then disappear. Don't bother working up much detail on them—doing so is actually counterproductive. If every character is described in a wealth of detail, they will all blur together after a while. A single detail will often suffice to distinguish a character who plays a supporting role: a policeman may have a very rotund face, a clerk at the night desk may have a squeaky voice. Only the very important gamemaster characters need complete backgrounds, turns of phrase, and game values.



Francis Mao

Describing the Scene

You are the senses of your player characters. You describe what they see, what they hear, touch, taste and smell. Descriptions with sensory depth help suspend disbelief, and make players believe their characters really are in the scene. Props can help, but props cannot integrate a character into a scene as well as a good description.

Remember that most of the time your descriptions to the players will be from their characters' point of view. For the most part you should limit the information they receive to what their characters can sense. Sometimes, for story purposes, the point of view can change, as it does in movies; this technique is described in the next chapter.

Example: The player characters visit Dr. Leyden, an acquaintance in Cairo. The gamemaster knows that two Nile shocktroopers are holding the doctor in an upstairs bedroom, having forced Leyden to write a hurried note excusing his absence when the shocktroopers spotted the heroes' car approaching. The game goes something like this ...

Gamemaster: The door to Dr. Leyden's townhouse is locked. You knock, and there is no answer. A second, louder knock brings no better response.



Bob Dvorak

Barb: Fortunately he gave Sabrina the key (rotates wrist to mimic opening the door). I open the door.

Paul: Hold on here. What if he's just in the kitchen making some warm milk, and we sneak in ...

Doug: Who said anything about sneaking? (cups his hands) "Doctor Leyden, it's us!"

Paul: ... Of course, if it is a trap, we just let everybody know we're here.

Barb: Fine time to bring that up. What do I see?

Gamemaster: The foyer is a mess, with lots of dust and papers piled on the endtables. The coat closet is open, the hat rack is piled with weathered pith helmets. Smells as though dinner tonight was roast beef.

Doug: I'm checking the kitchen.

Gamemaster: Dishes are piled in the sink. The kitchen is filled with the smell of cooked beef. Vancen (Doug's character) notices heat from the oven and a note on the kitchen table.

Paul: Quin is going upstairs.

Doug: What does the note say?

Gamemaster: It says "Dear Fellows. I have been called away on a bit of urgent business. Back by Friday. All my best, Andy Leyden."

Barb: Andy? I thought he hated that name. Didn't he tell us never to call him "Andy?"

Doug: I'm checking out the kitchen. Anything unusual?

Gamemaster (while scribbling a note for Paul): The oven was left on, and the roasting pan inside has not been cleaned.

Barb: But the pan hasn't burned?

Gamemaster: Nope. (Hands note to Paul which reads): "A shocktrooper motions for silence while pointing an automatic pistol at you."

Doug: Uh-oh. "Quin, you found anything up there?"

The gamemaster in the example was giving out very limited information. The players had to act to get the full story, and were drawing their own conclusions. By handing Paul the note, the gamemaster has restricted the information even further; though, without telling Doug and Barb what was happening upstairs, he clued them in to the fact that *something* was up.

While limited, most of the description provided was pertinent -- the smell of dinner led to the kitchen, for instance. Not wishing to make it too obvious, the gamemaster also threw in a few other details to muddy the water; the players could have chosen to ignore the smell of dinner, instead deciding to, say, search the closet or examine the dusty correspondence in the hallway. But basically, the gamemaster limited his description to information important to the story.

Setting the Tone

The gamemaster sets the tone of each play session by the way he describes the scene, the characters, and the available information. Each of the realms has a different feel to it, and a similar encounter taking place in two different realms might have two very different tones. When playing a gamemaster character, remember that they are living examples of their home realm.

Example: *In the Nile Empire ...*

Player (as character): Excuse me, do you know where the offices of Menhotep Excavations are?

Gamemaster (as gamemaster character, rustling a newspaper): Say, would you take a gander at this! Soon they'll be sending rocket ships to the moon! All the science wizzes need is a mineral some big ape lord is trying to keep for himself — the silly sap! Ain't he learned yet that what the Pharaoh wants, the Pharaoh gets?

Player: Fascinating. But about Menhotep Excavations?

Gamemaster: It's two blocks, over on El Asimat, past the new pyramid; can't miss it. You know, pal, going to the moon might be easier than getting in there — it's tighter than a gambler's smile. See? This rag's got pictures: shocktroops, burp-guns, half-tracks. Say. Why do you want to get in there, anyway?

Example: *In Orrorsh ...*

Player (as character): Excuse me, but do you know how to get to the governor general's office?

Gamemaster (as gamemaster character, rustling a newspaper): Who knows anything these days? Look at the nonsense they print in this ... this

yellow rag! "Shredded Bodies Found After Climbing Mishap: Fall Blamed." Ten experienced climbers *all* fell to their deaths? And how did they get "shredded" - perhaps the bloody mountain goats did it. Preposterous — absolute rubbish! Can't anyone see what is going on around us?

Player: I can see I may not get to the governor general's office.

Gamemaster: Well excuse me all to bloody hell for wasting your valuable time, your lordships! The governor general can be found in the ornate mansion beside the cemetery.

You can do the same thing with descriptions of scenery, or the tone of you voice. Think of books and movies which have the tone you want, and draw on them for inspiration.

Suspension of Disbelief

Roleplaying sessions are works of imagination. Playing the game requires you and your players to suspend your disbelief while playing — otherwise it is just like a novel or movie where you cannot believe the character can or would do the things he does. Disbelief destroys a story. Keeping disbelief at bay requires the cooperation of the players, but you are the key.

Be consistent. Be consistent in your interpretation of the rules. If you decide that a skill can be used in a way not mentioned in the rules, make sure the skill works that way for all characters from then on. Be consistent in your descriptions. If a dining room has mahogany furniture, it should not have oak furniture, or no furniture, the next time the characters see it, unless there is a good reason. Keep notes to jog your memory.

Another important way to keep your players believing in your story is to make sure that gamemaster characters act according to their personality, motivations, and the knowledge that they — *not you* — have. As gamemaster, you have knowledge of your player character's plans and actions which the villains of the story would not. Your villains should be as clever, or incompetent, as their skills and personality allow—and they should only have information they could obtain through actions they have taken, not information gained from your omniscient viewpoint as gamemaster.

For example, if the characters are plotting an escape from prison in a dark corner of their cell, you can hear the players discuss their plan ... but the guards cannot. So don't have them act as if they could.

Respond to Your Players' Wishes

Respond to your players' wishes. Get feedback about the sort of stories they want to see. Do they like mysteries and puzzles? Lots of fast action? Confrontations with many repercussions across the realms? Personal gain? When playing, do they want more or less descriptions? Fewer fights, more character interaction? If players have questions, try to answer them (as long as you don't divulge any critical plot twists). If they are confused by your stories, try to discover where the confusion lies and clear it up. By responding to the wishes of the players you can better cooperate to build an exciting story.

Respond to the players' wishes during the game, as well. Improvise when the player characters do something slightly unexpected; "wing it" as best you can. A strictly linear, rigid plotline — where the characters *must* go where you tell them, *must* do exactly what you have planned for them to do — severely inhibits the players' imagination. But when you wing it, wing it with the rest of the story in mind.

Example: The heroes are looking for a lost diamond mine, recently found by the Tankhanic Corporation. You expect them to find an old map hidden in the false bottom of a chest they have inherited, hire guides and march off into the jungle to look for the mine. To that end, you have created a number of jungle-type encounters and a climactic battle in the mineshaft itself.

However, the players don't even look for the map; instead, they decide to infiltrate Tankhanic Corporation posing as rich entrepreneurs looking to invest their money in the New Empire's growing mining industry.

Thinking quickly, you let them set up a meeting with an unctuous underling and attempt to con him. If successful, they earn an appointment with the villain herself, who puts them through a pretty rigorous grilling, threatening to unravel their cover altogether. If they can con the villain, they can bid for rights to the mine and thus obtain its secret location. Once they've got it, they hire guides and set off into the jungle - - and the adventure's back on track.

All of the improvisations have led the players back into your original plotline. You could have had them get caught in a stockholders struggle for control of the corporation, but you didn't: that would not advance the plot at hand.

Tricks of the Trade: Maintaining Secrecy

Discourage your players from reading much beyond the players' section of the Rule Book. Part of the fun of *Torg* is in discovering the secrets of the realms as play proceeds. Also, as long as they don't know what's in the rest of these books, they'll always wonder what you know that they don't know. It doesn't matter if you have secret information or not. If your players *think* that you do, you'll be able to maintain a sense of mystery and uncertainty.

Let this carry through in the way you run adventures. Never give away any information that your player characters cannot know through normal senses, and never give away secrets that they haven't worked to uncover. Remember, secrets keep them striving for answers, and provide you with a powerful controlling tool — curiosity.



Chapter Two

Running Adventures

A roleplaying game adventure is a story told by a group of people as they play a roleplaying game. In other words, the people take on the roles of characters, and these characters interact with the game system, and with situations and events set up by another person, the gamemaster.

These elements are expressed dramatically within a definite structure. All adventures have a beginning, a middle, and an end. The characters may go on to experience other adventures — which may be linked together in a campaign — but each individual adventure follows the basic story format.

Adventures are stories created for players — stories that their characters can experience, complete with supporting cast, an interesting plot, and rewards for success. What's more, players help the stories grow to a satisfying conclusion by the things they bring to an adventuring session - their own ideas, the way they have their characters behave, and the way they interact with the other players.

When you play a *Torg* adventure, you create your own Torg "movie." The "movie" stars the player characters, and the gamemaster acts as director, writer, and supporting cast.

Preparing for a Session

By now, you've read the rules and have a basic understanding of the *Torg* game. Now what do you do to begin to play?

Read the Adventure

Well, if you're using a packaged adventure, the first thing you should do is read it. We suggest you run the adventure that comes with this book, "Before the Dawn," as your first adventure. It was designed to introduce you and your players to the world and game of *Torg.*

Make sure you read through the adventure at least once so that you can identify the main events of the story and have an idea of the characters you'll be called upon to portray. You don't need to memorize it word for word, but you do need to know where you can find things later. If you absorb the essential elements, you'll be able to improvise or look up specific details as you need them.

Stock Up

It's good to be prepared, so stock up on all the props and accessories you're going to need for a night of play. A photocopy machine will make your job infinitely easier. Photocopying character templates, important maps, or other props makes the game run more smoothly and gives the players something to hold on to and examine (players love hand-outs). Having lots of copies of important charts can make your life easier, as well.

You'll also need plenty of pens and pencils, paper to write and draw on, as many 20-sided dice as you can find (or have your players each bring their own), and something to eat and drink. Gaming is meant to be a fun social activity, and munchies make for a fun time. But be fair; have everyone contribute to the refreshment pool.

Gather Your Friends

Finally, after you have done all of your preparation, invite your friends over to play. We find that the most manageable-sized group for a role-playing session ranges from three to six players.

Session Length

A session of play should last as long as you are comfortable running, the players are comfortable playing, and the game remains fun. While this can vary from group to group, we've found that most gaming sessions last from three to five hours.

If an adventure runs over one session of play, we suggest that you end the sessions with the old cliff hanger gimmick. Leave the player characters in some perilous situation — in the middle of a firefight, on a raft heading straight for the falls, or, indeed, dangling over a 1000-meter cliff. This way, you leave the players wanting more. They'll go home thinking about their situation and trying to figure out what to do next.

Running a Typical Adventure

What goes into a typical adventure session? Let's examine one and see ...

Introducing Characters

At the beginning of a session, have each player introduce his character to the rest of the group. Introductions should be short and to the point so that play can begin quickly. The players should announce their characters' name and template type and describe their appearance, including distinctive garments, armor and visible weapons. It helps build mood if the players introduce themselves "in character," speaking as they think their character would.

Getting the Adventure Rolling

Next, you have to get these characters into the story you have devised. This involves providing background information that the characters would know because they live in the game universe, as well as getting them interested and emotionally involved.

You could accomplish this with a long monologue, but there are better ways available. Setting up short scripts for the players to read to each other in character can begin an adventure with a bang. You can give them quite a bit of information through the dialog, and no one is bored because everyone participates.

Another method for getting things rolling is to begin *in media res.* That's Latin for "in the middle of things." Starting an adventure *in media res* is a technique that plunges player characters right into the action. The game session begins with something interesting, instead of spending a lot of time getting to where the action is.

For example, in "Before the Dawn," the adventure opens with the heroes fighting a group of Edeinos. They don't learn the adventure's objectives until after the battle is over.

Maintaining a Lively Pace

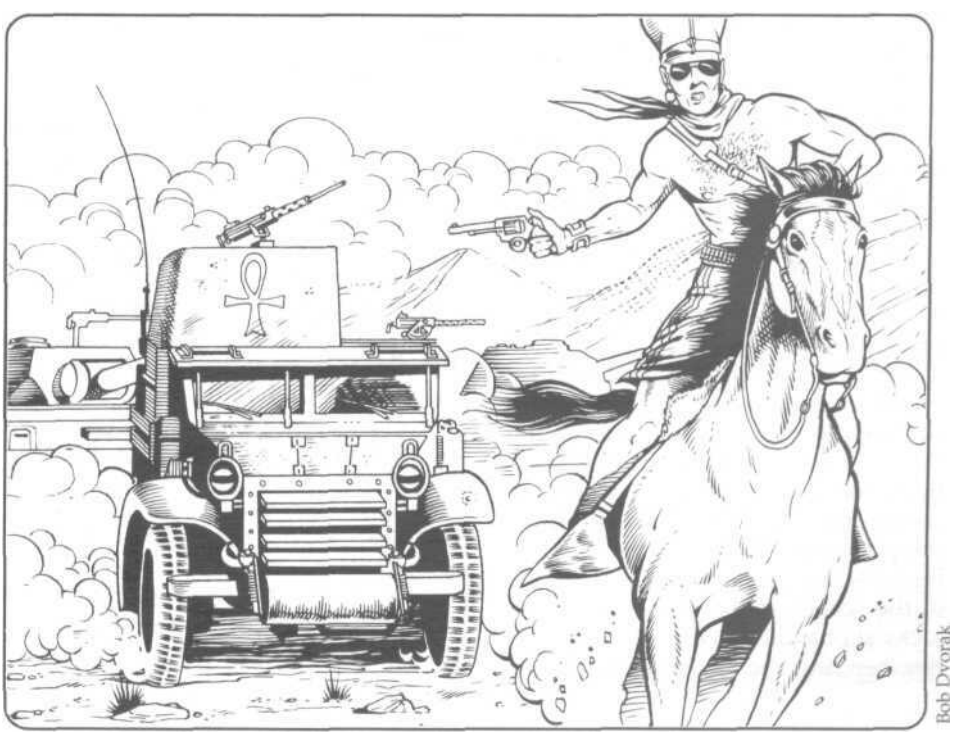
Players may take a little while to get going. They may get stuck on what to do next, or they may not be able to solve a problem you've placed before them. They may bicker over some little thing, not know what they are to do next, or they may simply be too cautious. If it seems that a particular scene is taking too long, or the session is getting dull, then it is up to you to the story moving again. Here are some suggestions:

Villains

There are a lot of bad guys in *Torg.* You can always have Nile shocktroops or Nippon ninjas or Aysle dragons show up in a scene. Nothing focuses a player's attention like the appearance of a vile villain.

Information

If the players are at a dead end or torn between too many options, feed them new information: a new clue, a cooperative or venal gamemaster character, a bit of overheard conversation; any of these can be used to point the group in the right direction.



Bob Dvorak

Time

Time passes, even in a game world. Time in the adventure must always move forward, or the illusion of story and world are lost. If the characters are dithering, that doesn't mean that the villains are simply waiting patiently for them to resume their actions. Set time limits as to how long before a patrol comes along, or the invading army arrives, or an important contact tires of waiting for the player characters to show up.

Also, you can skip over the "boring parts" of a story by using a combination of cinematic techniques. If the player characters are jetting over to Australia and you have nothing scheduled to occur on the plane ride, simply wipe to (or fade to, or cut to) Sidney Airport instead of roleplaying out the uneventful trip.

Avoiding Anticlimax

Heroes should not die in the first reel of a movie, or the first chapter of a book. Death and failure — while real possibilities — should not be common experiences for heroes. On the other hand, they shouldn't defeat the main villain 10 minutes into the story, either. The purpose of a roleplaying game such as *Torg* is to tell an *epic* story. The heroes may win or they may lose, but only in true heroic style.

The rules allow you to decide if actions succeed or fail; sometimes, as we've mentioned before, the rules get in the way of the story. This usually occurs during those scenes when, for dramatic reasons, the heroes must succeed or fail in order to tell a satisfying story.

For example, say your adventure opens *in media res*, with the heroes chasing the evil Dr. Mobius down the Pacific Coastal Highway. The object of the scene is to get everybody's blood racing and to give the heroes a clue (a scrap of paper the Pharoah leaves in his car when he abandons it at the end of the scene). If the heroes get off a lucky shot and blow out Dr. Mobius's tire, sending the car and the doctor plummeting 75 meters straight down into the Pacific Ocean, the story isn't exactly satisfying to you or your players. Similarly, if Dr. Mobius sends the heroes to a watery grave with a single, well-placed shot of his disinto-ray, ending the adventure before the opening credits have finished rolling, nobody is going to be happy.

At these times, you must use your power as gamemaster to come to the rescue of the adventure. How? You have a couple of alternatives.

Alter Reality

What the players don't know won't annoy them. You have control over the environment and reality; you can easily change either out of the players' sight.

In our example above, when the heroes got off the lucky shot, sending Dr. Mobius's car off the cliff, you had assumed that the good Doctor was driving a standard automobile. However, to salvage the adventure, you quickly decide that the car was a special pulp-style auto, full of weird science gadgets and gizmos. As the car plummets, explosive charges blow the roof off and the car seat ejects the Doctor into the air. Mobius activates his rocket boots and, as the heroes watch helplessly, flies serenely out into the Pacific Ocean (to be picked up later by a Nile submarine). The battered car lies in a crumpled heap at the foot of the cliff, waiting for the player characters to climb down and investigate it.

Don't do this lightly: if the players suspect that you are capriciously changing reality on them, they will soon become frustrated. If you are forced to alter reality because the heroes have been too successful, you should reward them with an extra Possibility each at the end of the act.

Fudge Dice-Rolls

This is even easier than the above method. If you make rolls for the gamemaster characters in secret (or without revealing the characters' values), you can lower or raise the result points as necessary.

Again, in the example above, when Dr. Mobius fires his disinto-ray at the heroes' vehicle, he rolls incredibly well, getting, say, 15 result points on the car, totalling it and sending it in an uncontrolled crash through the guard-rails. You decide that this is an inappropriate way to end the adventure (and probably the heroes' lives).

If you rolled for the Doctor in secret, you could simply lie about your roll, and tell the players that Mobius got only, say, four points, enough to puncture the radiator and knock the heroes out of the chase. They have to stop and repair it; they limp into the nearest town several hours later, where they find the Doctor's abandoned car sitting on the beach (Mobius radioed his submarine to send a boat to pick him up there).

Remember, this is "cheating" in favor of a satisfying game, not to victimize players or benefit one over the other.

Dramatic failure is always acceptable, but random, senseless failure is not. However, never let your players know this. To keep the dramatic tension, they must believe that their characters can fail. Otherwise, why play? Use your gamemaster prerogative sparingly.

The Reality Skill

According to the rules, characters must make a reality check for disconnection every time they begin a scene in a cosm whose axioms are lower than necessary to maintain the passive equipment they carry. Additionally, any time "they actively use a piece of equipment and roll badly — from a straight 1 to a 1-4, depending upon the cosm and the circumstances — they may disconnect. These rules are important to maintain the flavor and balance of *Torg*.

Remember that disconnection affects more than just equipment. A character who disconnects in the Living Land must live under *all* of the Living Land's axioms, not just the technological axiom. As the Living Land's social axiom is remarkably low, he will lose his ability to understand esoteric concepts such as "nations,"

"money," and "health insurance." As the Living Land's magic axiom is zero, the character will not be able to use *any* magic until he reconnects. In many ways, these effects are as devastating as losing the ability to understand how to pull a trigger.

Disconnection means more than just loss of high-tech or spiritual or magical goodies. A character who disconnects becomes part of the realm in which he disconnects. Until he reconnects, he should roleplay his character as if he were a native of the realm. In the Living Land, he might wonder what all of that funny green paper he is carrying around is for and use it to start fires. In the Nile Empire, he might start wearing strange costumes and speaking only in exclamation points.

Encounter Balance

Are five elves with crossbows equal to two soldiers with M-l6s? How many magicians does it take to kill a dinosaur? Can a cyber-priest take on a ninja-werewolf? As you can see, with so many possible mixes, Torg can be an extremely difficult game to balance.

The player characters are heroes, and, with heroes, you naturally expect them to face overwhelming odds — and, hopefully, emerge victorious. So what kind of odds are overwhelming, but beatable?

The 10-Point Advantage

To get a rough handle on various characters' relative abilities, add together each character's relevant attack skill, defense skill, damage value of the weapon they are using, and armor points. If one has a total 10 points higher than the other, he's got a decisive advantage and, all else being equal, will win 99 percent of the time.

A character who is that much better than his opponents can take on three or four of them without raising much of a sweat. This holds true no matter what they are fighting with: spells, chainsaws, blunderbusses, miracles, or any combination thereof.

Naturally, if the difference is less than 10 points, the odds begin to even out, though the higher character still has a bit of an edge even if he betters his opponent by only a couple of points.

Remember that this is only a rough estimate of combat potential. It can easily be crocked by environmental conditions, or if one of the combatants has an unusually high or low value in one of the categories. Note also that it is easier to defeat three characters who have a 10-point disadvantage than it is to defeat one who has an equal number of points.

Home-Cosm Advantage

The odds change if one of the characters is fighting in his home cosm and the other is an intruder, shifting by a significant amount in the home character's advantage as the intruder risks disconnection with every action. The shift is smaller if the invading character is Possibility-rated, but he is still at a disadvantage.

Possibility-Rated Characters

A Possibility-rated hero can whip an Ord who is his equal or better under almost any circumstances — if he has the points and is willing to spend them. A hero can even overcome Ords with 10-point or greater advantages, though she may go through an exorbitant number of Possibility points to do so. More on this below.

Standard Encounters

In standard encounters, the deck is weighted in the heroes' favor. They receive the initiative more often than not; the villains are often stymied, fatigued, or otherwise hindered. In all liklihood, the heroes are facing Ords (a battle against Possibility-rated opponents is, almost by definition, dramatic).

Under these circumstances, the heroes should wipe the floor with their opponents no matter who they are. They can easily face twice their number in soldiers, or a couple of decent magicians, or a medium to large monster without much trouble.

The combat is quick, and the heroes are expected to win in a short time. They should not have to spend more than one Possibility point each; if they have had to spend much more than that, the encounter was probably somewhat unbalanced against them. (See "Adventure Balance," page 11.)

Dramatic Encounters

In dramatic encounters, the heroes are expected to work for their victory. The villains are tougher, more powerful, and, quite possibly, Possibility-rated. The cards are stacked against them: the villains often receive the initiative and other advantages; the heroes are sometimes stymied, confused, or otherwise hindered.

The best way to balance a dramatic encounter is to use Possibility-rated villains in the battle. They should be as tough or tougher than the player characters, (though probably fewer in number), and backed up by a couple of Ords.

In general, the villains' side should receive around two Possibility points per player character they face; i.e., if three cyber-ninjas face six player characters in a dramatic encounter, they should have 12 Possibilities between them, split up as you like.

On average, the heroes should expend two Possibilities in a dramatic encounter. If they are always spending a lot more or less than that, your dramatic encounters are probably too difficult or easy.

Approved Actions

As said before, the purpose of approved actions is to introduce a new dimension to combat, i.e., to keep player characters from merely bashing on their opposition until they have pounded them into the ground.

We picked "Maneuver," "Trick," "Test of Wills," "Taunt," and "Intimidate" because they occur most frequently in the action movies and seri-



als we like to watch; these are generalizations of a whole gamut of tactics used by adventure heroes throughout history to dismay or outwit their opponents.

What exactly do these represent?

• **Maneuver**. Using your speed and *Dexterity* to confuse, outflank, or tire out your opponent. Rolling between the giant's legs as he swings at you is a good example, as is leaping onto the back of the triceratops or faking left and then dodging right.

It would be basically impossible to out maneuver an opponent who does not move, for example a stone statue who attacks strictly through magic.

• **Trick**. Essentially, this is an attempt to outwit your opponent, to do something completely unexpected. Throwing sand in his face, for instance, or reaching down and jerking out the rug he is standing on, or attempting to convince him someone is right behind him.

It is difficult to *trick* someone who is really smart; it is also difficult to *trick* someone who is really, really stupid (like a dinosaur).

• **Test of Wills**. An attempt to pit your willpower and determination against your opponent, to stare him down, to make him doubt himself. Gunslingers do this before pulling their guns. A modern variant would be playing "chicken."

It is difficult to stare down a skeleton or a robot. It is, however, possible to stare down a bear or a lion.

• **Taunt**. Any attempt to mock your opponent, to infuriate him into making a mistake. Telling someone his mother smelled of elderberries, making a rude noise or gesture, laughing at him, would all count as taunts.

Again, not having egos, skeletons and robots are remarkably resistant to *taunting. A* lion probably couldn't be *taunted,* while a dog or great ape could. Vampires and pulp villains, being egomaniacs by nature, might be easy to *taunt.*

• **Intimidation**. This is quite similar to *Test,* except that you are pitting your indominable human spirit against your opponent, not the force of your mind. *Intimidation* involves an element of fear; if there seems to be no reason to fear a character, he cannot *intimidate.* Standing up and roaring at the black bear who is about to attack is an example of *intimidation* in action, as is a man walking directly toward his opponents and calmly telling them to surrender or they will surely be killed by the three dozen soldiers hiding in the surrounding woods.

Animals can be *intimidated;* once again, skeletons and robots probably cannot (unless the robots are as sophisticated as, say, the ones in *Star Wars).* It is very tough to *intimidate* a vampire or a blue whale.

Defensive Skills

Though a pulp robot may be resistant to *intimidation,* it is unlikely that the robot will attempt to *intimidate* someone else; unless very sophisticated indeed, it is much more likely to simply try to shoot its opponent with its mega-death ray.

Creatures or beings with a high resistance to a combat skill but who are unable or highly unlikely to use that skill against an opponent are given values in the skill, but they are parenthesized to show that they cannot use the skill offensively. Some creatures might be given two values, one parenthesized and one not, the parenthesized value used defensively, the unparenthesized one offensively.

Rewarding Characters

There are two types of awards to be given to player characters. These are *Act Awards* and *Adventure Awards.*

Act Awards

Adventures are broken down into segments called *acts* (see the next chapter). At the conclusion of each act, you must award Possibilities to the player characters. We recommend from one to three Possibilities for each character after each act, with two being the standard. You are encouraged to award Possibilities according to the play of each individual character. Guidelines for this follow.

Adventure Awards

After the final act in an adventure, rather than give out act awards, you must distribute the big payoff — adventure awards.

At the conclusion of an adventure, give each player character from six to 12 Possibilities, with nine being the standard. In addition, for each successfully played *Glory* card, award every player character three Possibilities. And, for every *Drama* card retained in a player's hand, award that player's character three additional Possibilities. See the Rule Book, Gamemaster Section Chapter Four, for more details on the play of these cards.

Award Guidelines

You should vary the actual Possibility awards depending on:

• **How Well the Players Did Overall**. If the players solved all the puzzles, came up with ingenius solutions, and out-fought and out-thought the oppenents, give them each an extra Possibility or two. If they failed, award zero or one.

• **How Well Each Player Did Individually**. If a player really contributed to a session — coming up with good ideas, refereeing group disputes, acting intelligently — give that player an extra Possibility or two. If a player did nothing, give him no extra Possibilities. If a player actively obstructed the other players, remove a Possibility or two from his award total.

• **Whether the Players Cooperated or Argued**. If the players worked together and mediated disputes, reward them appropriately. If they argued among themselves and threw tantrums, penalize them.

• **Whether They Amused You and Each Other**. If you and everyone else had a good time, that's worth a Possibility all around.

• **Whether They Played in Character**. If a player had his character try something risky or lose something valuable — because that's how the character would act — reward that player. In a *role*playing game, someone willing to play his role well should always be rewarded. On the other hand, if a player constantly acts contrary to his character's nature, or fails to develop a character's personality just to "win" the adventure, he should be penalized.

Adventure Balance

In *Torg,* Possibilities are the coin of the realm. They are used to dramatically enhance a character's chance of survival, perform great feats, and improve his skills between adventures. Characters receive more Possibilities when they are doing well, less when they are not. You can judge the way an adventure is going by the characters' expenditure of Possibility points. Here's how it works.

At the start of the adventure, write down each character's starting number of Possibility points. As the adventure progresses, keep track of points they spend and new points awarded them between acts. This will give you a good idea of how they are doing.

In general, if her player is wise, a character will spend at most one or two Possibilities per act in non-dramatic situations — interaction, skill use, standard conflict, and the like. She will probably spend two possibilities during each dramatic conflict scene. So, if your adventure has one dramatic conflict per act, she will be spending around three or four Possibilities each act.

If you follow the guidelines above, you will be giving her around two Possibility points back at the end of each act. So, she will be running a deficit of one or two points each act. This is just what should be going on.

If your adventure is properly balanced, a character will be down four to six Possibilities by its conclusion. If the character's play was competent, you will award her around nine to 12 bonus Possibilities at the adventure's end; this will mean a net gain of around five or six Possibilities per adventure.

This *does not* include *Glory* or *Drama* card bonuses; those are special bonuses the player earns by herself and should not be included in your calculations.



Chapter Three

Tips on Card Play

Chapter Four of the Gamemaster Section discusses drama card play in *Torg* in detail. This chapter provides additional tips and suggestions to help you use the cards more effectively.

Gamemaster Fiat

You are able to invoke gamemaster fiat up to three times during each dramatic encounter. You take the top four cards off of the drama deck, discard three, and place one on the action stack. When do you do this and which card do you pick? Well, there are basically two reasons to invoke gamemaster fiat: the players are doing too well or the players are doing too poorly.

According to our play tests, an average dramatic encounter runs about 12 to 14 rounds. It doesn't seem to matter much how tough the opposition is: by that time, the player characters have won or have been defeated. If, in your dramatic encounter, the player characters have virtually wiped out the opposition by the third or fourth round, you might wish to invoke gamemaster fiat and search for a card to slow them down. If, on the other hand, it's the seventh or eighth round and the heroes haven't really yet made a dent or built up good pools, you might invoke gamemaster fiat to find a helpful card.

Note: It's important to remember that you can use gamemaster fiat to help the players; this kind of option is not usually open in other roleplaying games and is all too easily forgotten.

Dead Time

In the heat of battle, as it approaches the climax and everybody has a big pool in front of him, you are likely to find yourself spending a lot of time waiting while the players wrestle with their cards. They will be feverishly attempting to figure out the optimum way to play the ones they have; they may be trading cards with each other, playing *Leadership Cards,* and doing anything else they can think of to enhance somebody's upcoming Big Attack.

One of our gamemasters has clocked the time spent setting up a single player's Big Attack as just over four minutes of extended card-trading! During this time, he had nothing to do except sit there and watch the players argue.

What should you do to speed the players up?

Nothing.

This is *fun.* The players are cooperating on a critical portion of the story, using one of their most important advantages — the cards — to whup the opposition. Unless it goes on interminably, say five minutes without sign of conclusion, let the players go.

You should spend that dead time embellishing later scenes in your adventure or scarfing up the nacho chips.

Which Cards to Play

Villain Inspiration is about the nastiest card there is. *Villain Up* and *Hero Setback* are almost as bad. Less vicious but still unpleasant are *Hero Stymied* and *Villain Flurry.* The most beneficial cards are *Hero Flurry, Hero Up,* and *Hero Inspiration.* Failing any of these, you should look for a card which fatigues the side you wish to penalize, or gives the other side the initiative, or both.

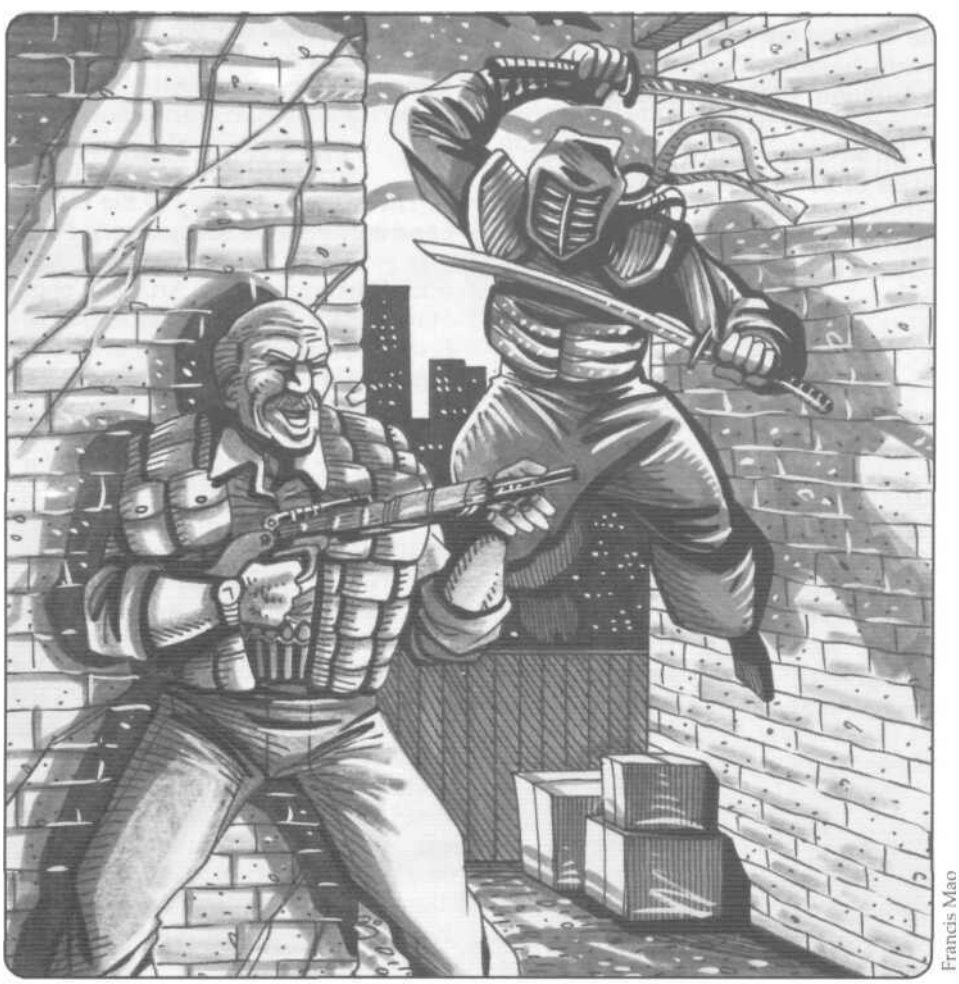
Glory Cards

Glory Cards are extremely difficult to get into play. There aren't many of them, and it isn't often a player character manages to roll 60 or better under any circumstances. In short, a *Glory Card* is a really big deal.

Glory Cards represent a great deed worthy of the telling, filling everyone who hears of it with hope and possibility energy. Therefore, when one is played, the characters have done something spectacular, and people know about it.

In addition to the three Possibility points you award the player characters at the end of the adventure, you should award them some glory, too. Maybe they get a ticker-tape parade in Philadelphia. Perhaps they are approached by representatives of Pella Ardinay and asked to join her Knights Templar, or the Delphi Council decides that they are a force to be reckoned with, and makes high-tech weaponry and vehicles available to them at little or no cost.

By the same token, the villains will also begin to take note of the heroes. Perhaps the player characters will shortly find themselves the targets of a ninja hit squad, or Dr. Mobius will attempt to capture them to place them in his eternity machine. With increased glory comes increased danger — but that comes with the territory.



Francis Mao

Note: It is very bad form to take a *Glory Card* out of a player's pool after you have *Intimidated* or *Taunted* his character successfully.

Subplots

Subplots are fun, and add an extra dimension to the game, as your players get directly involved in determining the course of the adventure. Encourage all of the players to get their characters involved in them.

If Quin is romantically involved with the slave girl from Queen Erika's court, it would be fitting (and amusing) for the Yellow Crab to declare himself also smitten with the slave girl and do his best to woo her away from Sebastian. This adds a neat complication to an already difficult situation, and provides much-needed comic relief too. Give every player character who advances the story of a subplot a possibility point award, not just the player character who played the card.

It's important, however, not to let a subplot overshadow the adventure itself - - they must always remain secondary to the main plot. Whether or not Quin Sebastian is in fact the Lost Dauphin, it does not change the fact that he and his friends have to destroy the gospog fields before the Edeinos trash Philly. If a subplot begins to get in the way, use your power as gamemaster to write it out of the story.

Connection Cards

These cards can be quite useful at getting the characters out of a jam; they can also mess up a story something fierce. Remember that, to play a connection, there has to be at least a marginally plausible connection. If you can't think one up, and your player cannot either, the card cannot be played. At your option, you can give the player a Possibility and have him discard the card, or allow him to return it to his hand for possible later use.



Chapter Four

Designing Adventures

When you roleplay, you are engaged in group story telling. But how do you tell these stories? And what kind of stories do you tell? Does it all happen spontaneously?

To answer the last question first, no, it doesn't. Every good roleplaying session began with an *adventure* for the gamemaster to follow. An adventure is a guide to a story, complete with plot, setup, confrontations, and possible resolutions. When you add players, their characters work within the framework of the adventure to create the story. Every adventure tells a different story depending on the players who run through it.

An adventure must be more than a series of battles. You must come up with a storyline, complete with a beginning, middle and end, a goal for the player characters, and a full cast of gamemaster characters to help or hinder the player characters.

Types of Stories

What types of stories can you tell with *Torg?* The game is built upon the premise that alternate realities have attacked Earth, bringing their laws of nature with them. We designed these realities to correspond with certain *genres* of fiction—a particular kind of story that is easily recognizable. The easiest stories to tell in *Torg* are stories which conform to those genres, or stories which mix those genres.

The Living Land is our "Lost World" genre, complete with dinosaurs and primitive people. The Nile Empire is our pulp adventure genre. Aysle is our fantasy setting; Orrorsh is our horror genre. The Cyberpapacy pays tribute to cybertech, but with a dash of religious fanaticism thrown in for spice. And Nippon Tech allows you to run high-tech science fiction and espionage adventures. Because each can be combined, you can design crossover stories that jump from one genre to another, or create a whole new setting by mixing the genre elements in new ways.

Genres

These are the major reality genres that invade Earth in *Torg: The Possibility Wars.* Please see the World Book and separate sourcebooks for more information.

The Living Land

The primitive reality of the Living Land is designed to tell action/adventure stories in the tradition of Edgar Rice Burroughs and Arthur Conan Doyle, stories about lost worlds, prehistoric creatures, and the arrival of modern-day explorers. Except, the lost world in *Torg* is in your own back yard, a United States that has been mutated by Baruk Kaah and his Edeinos followers.

This genre is often filled with straightforward action stories. Characters are presented with tasks (finding the hidden city, exploring the primitive settlement, capturing the strange beast), then confronted by obstacles they must overcome to complete the task (natural disasters like earthquakes, natural obstacles like water-falls and mountains, wild creatures, evil enemies). Exploration, tracking and survival are central to these stories, and opportunities abound for characters to use their combat skills here.

The Empire of the Nile

The pulp adventure reality of the Empire of the Nile is designed to showcase stories similar to those from 1930's and 40's movie serials, old pulp magazines, and early comic books. These are also action/adventure stories like those told in the Living Land, but with implausible science, flashy magic, and strange religions added. Here, the weird science of E. E. "Doc" Smith and A. E. Van Vogt governs technology, the soldiers of a conquest-crazed dictator march in the streets, stalwart heroes battle crime, perfidious villains plan schemes, and the dark gods of ancient Eygpt brood in their hidden temples.

This genre deals with the same type of straightforward plots prevalent in all action/adventure stories, with a few added conventions. These tales are of good versus evil, with highly motivated heroes and villains, lots of high-speed action, and a touch of humor and melodrama.

Tasks here range from recovering lost artifacts, to stopping dangerous cults, to thwarting the plots of archvillains and their minions. Obstacles include dastardly traps, ancient curses, jackbooted Nile shocktroopers, and awful supernatural creatures.

Aysle

The reality of Aysle follows the conventions of the fantasy genre. It is a realm of dreams; a place of noble warriors, of beautiful princesses, of evil dragons. It is a fantastic world of unmapped regions and powerful creatures, of magic swords and skillful sorcery. But, as a flipside to the realm of dreams, we have built a region of nightmare. Here is dark fantasy coexisting beside the light, making life more interesting — and more dangerous.

All kinds of stories are possible here, as long as they follow a few guidelines. Monsters and fantastic beings abound, as do unknown lands and dark dungeons. Magic items and treasure exist for the taking, if one knows where to look. Political intrigue is a way of life since the changes wrought by High Lord Pella Ardinay's transformation. And epic battles are commonplace; indeed, everything in this genre should have an epic or grand feel to it.

The Cyberpapacy

Here is a genre melded from two seemingly opposite concepts. Because of this, we think it is one of the more interesting places to set adventures. Take all of the conventions of the dark, brutally cynical cyberpunk genre, combine it with a warped theocracy, and you get the Cyberpapacy. This bleak realm is ruled by a dark-ages philosophy that slaughters heretics, wages holy wars, and practices inquisitions. Here grim, fanatical priests, armed with high-technology devices and the might of a vengeful god, do battle with drug-addicted, bionically-enhanced street punks.

The tone is oppressive and grim. Stories can be action oriented, but many will be stealthy, mysterious, and horrific in nature. Some will concentrate solely on either the cyber or fanatical religion elements, others will combine the two in nasty, brutal ways.

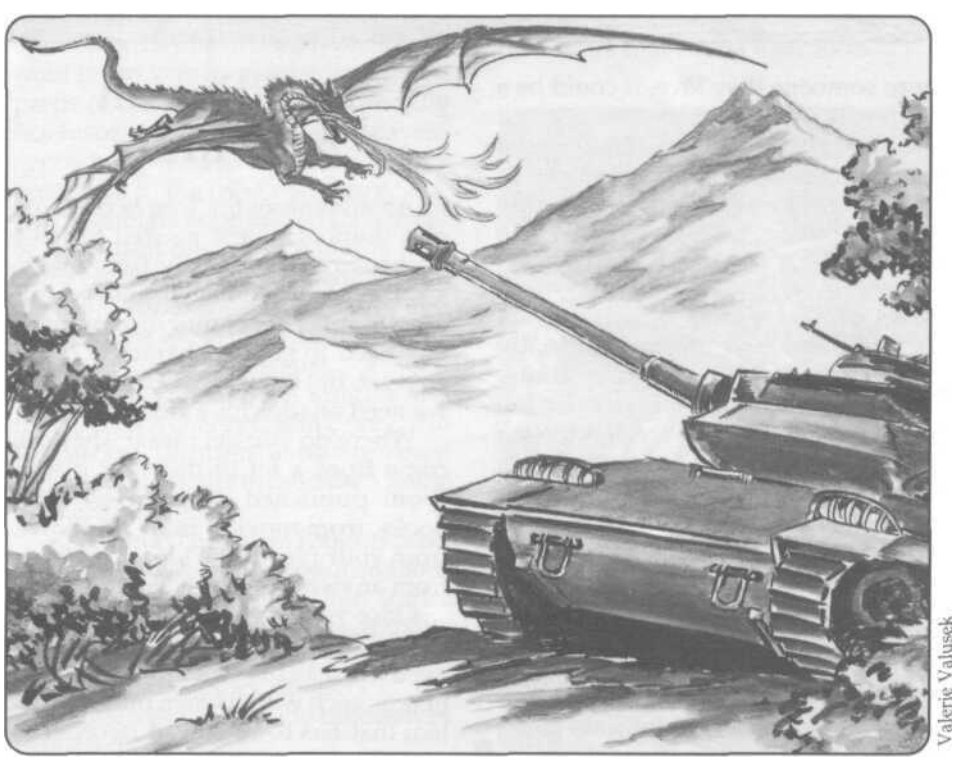
Tasks include rescuing "heretics," escaping inquisitors, breaching the GodNet computer, helping the orthodox church, and gaining powerful cyber weapons. Obstacles include evil cyberpriests, inquisitors, the GodNet and its defenses, cygoyles, and cyber knights.

Nippon Tech

Nippon Tech is science fiction of the near future. The technology is better than ours, but not so much that we cannot understand it. Again, however, we have added a twist, adding the popular mythos of Japan to the sf. Nippon Tech is a realm of great corporations, of espionage, of spys and ninjas with high-tech gear.

Mostly, the scenarios of Nippon Tech are active and grim. They involve cloak-and-dagger deeds like spying, sabotage and assassination. Tasks require intricate and clever plans to succeed; stealth is more useful than bloodshed. Grim, efficient enemies lurk behind every corner, and betrayal is commonplace.

Big business intrigue and Japanese stereotypes abound. Nippon Tech is filled with corporate power brokers, high-tech samurai, martial artists, giant robots and radioactive monsters, all battling to take control of the world's economy.



Valerie Valusek

Orrorsh

The horror reality of Orrorsh follows all the conventions of classic and modern horror stories. Tales set here are tales of terror, designed to scare both the characters and players. As the realm is based upon a world view similar to the Victorian Era, there is a host of opportunities for using gothic trappings. However, shambling monsters and run-down houses are not enough to make it a horror genre - the shambling monster must first frighten before it attacks, the house must induce fear before its skeletons appear.

Monsters lurk in these stories, hiding just out of sight. Around the next corner, perhaps. Or out in the jungle, or lying, cold and clammy in their coffins with preternatural patience, waiting for night. And whatever you do, *don't go down in the basement!*

Old, dark settings, deep shadows, the supernatural invading the natural, things lurking just beyond one's vision, terrified gamemaster characters, inexplicable monsters, strange weather — these are characteristics of the horror story. Keep the players off guard — and scare the pants off of them, if you can.



Alan Jude Summa

Common Adventure Themes

Besides telling the traditional stories associated with our genres, you can tell other kinds of stories, as well.

Mystery

The mystery presents player characters with a puzzle to solve. Often, this puzzle takes the form of a murder or some other crime. This is a thinking adventure, not usually a combat-oriented one, requiring lots of interaction with gamemaster characters and plenty of roleplaying. A good one to set in Orrorsh, the Cyperpapacy, or Nippon Tech.

Revenge

Revenge is a grim adventure theme characterized by violence and strong emotions. Someone has done something terrible to the player characters or to someone they love. It could be a dastardly crime (murder of a loved one), a grave insult, or a blood fued that inspires the course of the story. A good theme for an adventure set in the Nile Empire, or possibly Aysle.

Comedy

While the tone of *Torg* is usually grim — or at least serious — sometimes a humorous story is just the ticket for a change of pace. It is fun for fun's sake, light entertainment with little true danger. We do not suggest using this theme constantly in *Torg*, but once in a great while you should lighten things up a bit.

Comedy is characterized by plans that go completely astray, witty dialogue, weird encounters, strange gamemaster characters, amusing villains, bumbling henchmen, and peculiar goals.

Building an Adventure

An adventure for Torg is made up of a number of *acts* needed to tell a particular story, usually from one to six. Each act is divided into *scenes*, the exact number depending on how many you need to get the characters to the next act. But before we can go further, we need an idea for a story.

Where do you get ideas? They can come from a lot of different places. From published adventures, from books, from movies, from TV shows, from your players — ideas can come from anywhere.

Once you have the idea, you have to build a plot around it. Then you need to break the plot into a sequence of acts, each with its own minor problem that has to be solved in order to

advance the plot toward the story's climax. Finally, you have to translate the problems you present into game terms so that you can resolve them as they occur during a gaming session.

Outline

Okay. You've got an idea for an adventure and you've worked out a plot. You have to break the plot into several acts, saving the resolution of the major problem until the climax. For example:

• **Adventure Idea**. A group of Storm Knights is hired to protect a news crew on a journey through the Living Land.

• **Background**. The news crew is actually an elaborate cover for a group of big game hunters hired by the Delphi Council to wipe out a tribe of humans who have gone native and apparently learned to communicate with a special breed of dinosaurs.

Though the humans have in fact gone native and made friends with an especially intelligent breed of dinosaur, they are diametrically opposed to Baruk Kah, and have rescued many a traveler from his forces' clutches and other perils. They are a definite force for good in the Living Land, and deserve to survive.

The hunters, while quite willing and able to deal with the humans and dinosaurs they have been hired to kill, want protection from other incidental perils of the trip. They are especially fearful of a band of Core Earth scavengers who operate along the route they must take to the tribe's territory.

The hunters hope to keep their cover at least until the Storm Knights help them reach the tribe's grounds. Then they will show their true nature and exterminate the "traitorous" humans and their special dinosaurs.

The trail will take the Knights and their devious charges from Core Earth Kentucky, through a transformed Indiana, and finally to the tribe's home in primitive Ohio.

• **Act One**. The Storm Knights meet with the news crew's producer about employment as guards. Then comes the first leg of the journey. The Knights must get the crew past carnivorous dinosaurs and other dangers of the primitive realm. They find themselves being followed.

• **Act Two**. The caravan is attacked by a Core Earth scavenger team. The scavengers are intent on robbing the travelers as they make their way across the mutated Indiana landscape. A chase ensues, followed by a pitched battle as the scavenger team corners the caravan.

After the battle, the group is attacked by a herd of terrible thunder lizards. They fight the herd, but there are too many of them. The Knights are about to be overwhelmed, when, suddenly, a weird, high-pitched cry is heard in the distance. The thunder lizards flee at the sound, and whatever made the cry gives chase. The journey continues.

• **Act Three**. The Storm Knights finally get the news crew safely to Ohio. Here they find a tribe of humans who have flipped over to the primitive reality of the Living Land and allied themselves with a herd of medium-sized dinosaurs, gifted with a docile disposition and superior intelligence. The tribe is peaceful, and, the heroes learn, were the ones who saved them from the thunder lizards.

The big game hunters don't care: they draw their weapons and begin gunning down the helpless humans and dinosaurs.

• **Conclusion**. The Knights battle the hunters to save themselves, the converted humans, and the gentle dinosaurs that saved their lives.

Acts

Each act should be interesting in its own right, including all the same ingredients that make the entire story exciting. Each act is a block of dramatic action that has its own beginning, middle and end. An individual act should also have its own tone, based upon which of the different realities it is set in.

Act One is the *setup.* It presents the player characters with a situation, defines the major problem that faces them, and gets them started toward the climax. Near the conclusion of the act, a *plot point* is presented. A plot point is an incident or event that the act builds toward. It gives the act its payoff and leads to the next act.

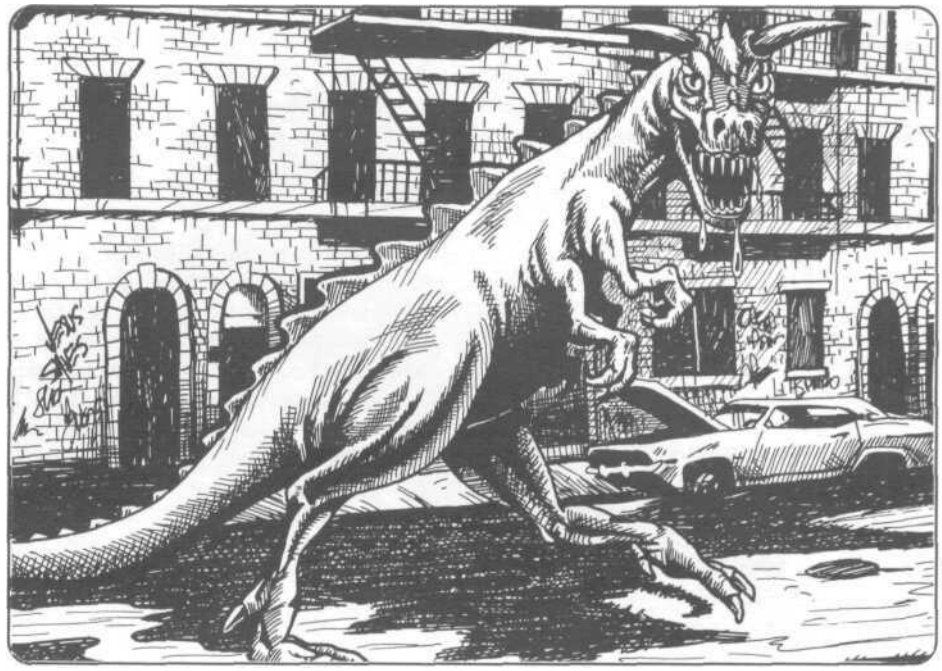
Example: In the outline above, the setup presents the Storm Knights with a simple job — accompany and protect a news crew through the Living Land while the crew films a documentary for a Core Earth television station. Shortly after the journey begins, the dangers of the primitive reality start to manifest themselves. The plot point here is an event that reveals that the danger that has been stalking them is not Edeinos, but something that uses "dead" tools and weapons.



Alan Jude Summa

Act Two (and subsequent acts other than the last act) contains one or more *confrontations.* The basis of all drama is conflict, and this act is filled with incidental conflicts leading toward the major conflict. Another plot point should be planned to give the act payoff and send the characters onto the rest of the adventure.

Example: Using our outline again, the confrontation in Act Two takes the form of a major obstacle between the characters and their goal. This obstacle is the scavenger team, and they are trying to waylay the heroes and prevent them from getting the news crew to their destination (the supposed goal of the entire adventure at this point). The plot point that leads to the climax is the attack of the thunder lizards and the timely rescue by the humans and the dinosaurs.



Alan Jude Summa

Act Three (or the final act) is the *climax and resolution.Here,* all the major threads of the story come together for the ultimate climax. And it comes together in a strong ending that anchors your strong story.

Example: Back to our outline, the final scenes are set in and around the camp of a tribe of humans who have succumbed to the primitive axioms. A plot twist is thrown in here, revealing that the Storm Knights have been duped. The news crew is really a gang of big game hunters out to wipe out a tribe of humans and their tame dinosaurs. They needed the Knights to help them past the scavengers. The Knights must step aside, or be blown away along with their targets. Now comes the climax, where the story is resolved. Great acts of heroism are performed, important decisions are made, lots of Possibilities are used up, and the heroes win or lose in a Big Finish.

To Recap: An adventure is a dramatic structure defined as a linear arrangement of related events leading to a dramatic conclusion. It is divided into a number of acts, each having its own beginning, middle and end. It has direction determined by plot points, the place in each act you want the characters to get to. And it has interesting gamemaster characters who serve as enemies, allies, and neutrals for the player characters to interact with.

Most importantly, as you plot each act, think about your players' characters. Keep in mind all of their strong points and weaknesses, and try to picture what each will be able to do in a scene. In this way, you'll be able to plan scenes where each character has a chance to shine and show off. The players will feel that they were involved in the story — and that's the purpose and attraction of roleplaying.

Using the Drama Deck

The drama deck helps the flow of the story as your adventure unfolds. Be aware that you may need to plan for certain card play during the course of an adventure.

Specifically, you may want to determine how the following special villain actions work during dramatic encounters: *Taunt, Trick, Intimidation, Test of Wills, Maneuver, Attack,* and *Defend.* These have standard default meanings, which certainly can be employed, but, if you have the time, you might find if enhances play to have a few special results up your sleeve.

For example, in the adventure outlined above, a *Villain Intimidation* comes up in the final, climactic battle. The head villain calls to a Core Earth Knight during a lull in the battle, telling him that the Delphi Council knows where his family is, and threatens them with retribution if he does not come over to their side now. This is certainly an *Intimidation,* and a potent one, at that!

Also, be prepared with a few villain and hero setbacks, and throw in a Dramatic Skill Resolution or two during the course of an adventure.

See the previous chapter and Gamemaster Chapter Four of the Rule Book for more information on using the drama deck.

Scenes

Scenes are discrete units of action within each act. The purpose of every scene is to move the act forward. Each scene is made up of a setting, gamemaster characters, and goal. Scenes can be used to provide information, or to set an action sequence -- be it combat, a chase, interaction, or problem-solving. Use as many scenes as necessary to move the act to its conclusion.

Within each scene, you need to decide what the action will be and what events you want to occur.

Example: In Act One, the first scene is a meeting between the head of the "news crew" and the Storm Knights. It is set in a dimly-lit bar in Core Earth Kentucky. The major gamemaster character is Alexander Becker, who claims to be the producer for the *"LA* Action" TV news magazine. The Storm Knights' goal is to find out what the producer wants and to come to terms if they want the job.

The Action

The action in a scene tells us what the player characters will be doing. Not in a specific sense, mind you, but in general. In the above example, the action is a meeting between the Storm Knights and a gamemaster character. The action, in general terms, involves discussion and negotiation. How the players decide to have their characters handle the action is up to them. When the action is finished, they should have done a good deal of roleplaying, a fair amount of dice rolling, and perhaps some note-taking. You have gotten them into the adventure and given them a good idea about what's going on.

The essence of roleplaying is action. In some scenes, the player characters act, and gamemaster characters react to their actions. In other scenes, the player characters react to actions happening to them. You need a fair mix of both kinds of scenes to make a satisfying adventure.

Each scene should involve only one primary action. If there is another action, it should probably be split into another scene.

Torg divides scenes into two types — *standard* and *dramatic.* A dramatic scene is one which is pivotal to the resolution of the act. In general, there should only be one of these in an act. All other scenes are standard — they keep the action moving, but rarely mean life and death for the characters or the adventure. Put more time into developing the dramatic scenes, and the standard scenes will take care of themselves.

Beginnings

Always try to start with some sort of action. This can be accomplished by dropping the player characters into a combat scene *in media res,* by presenting them with a problem to solve, or by forcing them to interact with other characters. No matter how you do it, if you can start things off with a bang, then the rest of the adventure will follow the lead.

Settings

Settings work along with tone and genre to place an adventure firmly in front of the players. Ideally, each act should have its own unusual and distinct setting. Stories can be pretty much the same from genre to genre, tales of desire, greed, foolishness, love, honor and valor. But what makes a *Torg* story truly horrific or fantastic or mysterious is the setting. A Victorian mansion sequestered in a dark, Indonesian jungle; an enchanted circle of standing stones on an English moor; a shadowy, rain-slicked street, bathed in the glow of neon and fluorescent lights. Each of these settings is simply a background, but each makes its presence felt and makes the story seem complete. Pay attention to one or two details, and the setting becomes real.

Events

An *event* is an interactive situation which depends upon timing and setting. It is an occurrence or incident of significance within a particular scene. Events can occur whenever a gamemaster wants to use one within a scene.

In the scene example above, the Storm Knights are meeting with the news crew producer. The event scheduled for this scene is an encounter with a storytelling drunk. He overhears the ongoing conversation and decides to put in his own two cents. He tells a story about the time he went into the Living Land and was stalked by a carnivorous monster. The only thing that saved him was the intervention of a group of primitive humans riding dinosaurs. If the player characters try to send the drunk away, they lose a valuable piece of intelligence — though they may not recognize it as such at the time.

Variables

Variables are sections that plan for alternate directions in the storyline. They are not designed to cover every possibility -- indeed, no adventure could—but they are set up to give you some guidelines if the players decide to stray.

In our famous first scene, the Storm Knights decide not to accept the producer's offer. This is a probable variable and one that should be planned for. What do you do if they take this course? You could have the producer offer more incentives, but you never want to give too much up front. Or you could have the drunk inform them that the producer is actually a big game hunter recently seen in



Plot Twists

Even in the most straightforward adventure, it pays to throw in a surprise or two. A plot twist grabs the story as it runs along its track and hurls it in a new direction.

Adventures must begin by giving players enough information for them to determine their characters' actions intelligently. But an adventure will become a lot more interesting if you keep some information secret until later. In the outline above, the major plot twist is revealed when the news crew turns out to be something other than it seemed. Twists surprise players and keep them alert.

In general, plot twists depend on the players having incomplete information. If you give the players just enough information to make them think in the direction you want them to, you can easily hit them with twists. The unexpected happens -- or the expected fails to happen. You'll create an adventure that will keep the players guessing — and excited to see what happens.

Bits

Bits, like stacks, are events that are not part of the central storyline. But, like stacks, they can be inserted into the adventure to provide running gags, comic relief, red herrings, or to just spice up a stretch that has turned out to be duller than the way you planned it.

Bits should be short bursts of action that are not set in any specific locale. They should be free floating, available for you to use as you see fit.

For example, you could design an attack by a large flying dinosaur, who swoops down out of the mist and attempts to carry off the smallest character. This could occur virtually anywhere in the Living Land or nearby Core Earth; it could be inserted virtually any time things begin to drag.

Stacks

Stacks are scenes that exist separate and apart from individual acts. But they are designed to tie into the storyline smoothly if the need arises.

Stacks work with the subplot cards in the drama deck to add new elements to the overall plot. You should plan for these subplots in very general ways, because you may not be called upon to drop a stack into an adventure. But if a player decides to play a subplot card, you will need a general idea on how to integrate that particular subplot into the story.

The subplot cards are:

Martyr, Mistaken Identity, Nemesis, Personal Stake, Romance (there are two of these cards), Suspicion, True Identity, and Campaign.

In addition, there is a special Connection card that you will need to plan for as well.

You will find detailed explanations of these cards and their specific uses in the Rule Book, Gamemaster Section, Chapter Four.

the company of agents for the Delphi Council. This might convince the player characters to play along with him, to find out what he is up to.

Plan for two or three variables that are most likely to arise during play. If something you weren't expecting occurs, you'll have to rework your variable scenes to account for it, but at least you'll have a place to begin.

Flags

Flags are conditional events that are activated by the player characters' actions, and not necessarily connected to a specific setting. In fact, a flag may not even occur, depending on what the player characters wind up doing during the adventure.

Design flags that add new twists, new menaces, or new information to the adventure when they are activated.

Here are two examples of flags in action.

Flag One: If the Storm Knights decide not to take the job offer in Act One, a flag is activated. It presents an event to get the characters back into the storyline. A delegation from the Common Ground Association asks the Storm Knights to lead them into the Living Land to meet with a primitive tribe in Ohio. If they accept, it will be easy enough to retrofit the rest of the adventure to this new plot; most of the intermediate acts can be used virtually as is. And if the player characters reach the tribe at the same time as the hunters, the climax will remain almost exactly the same, as well.

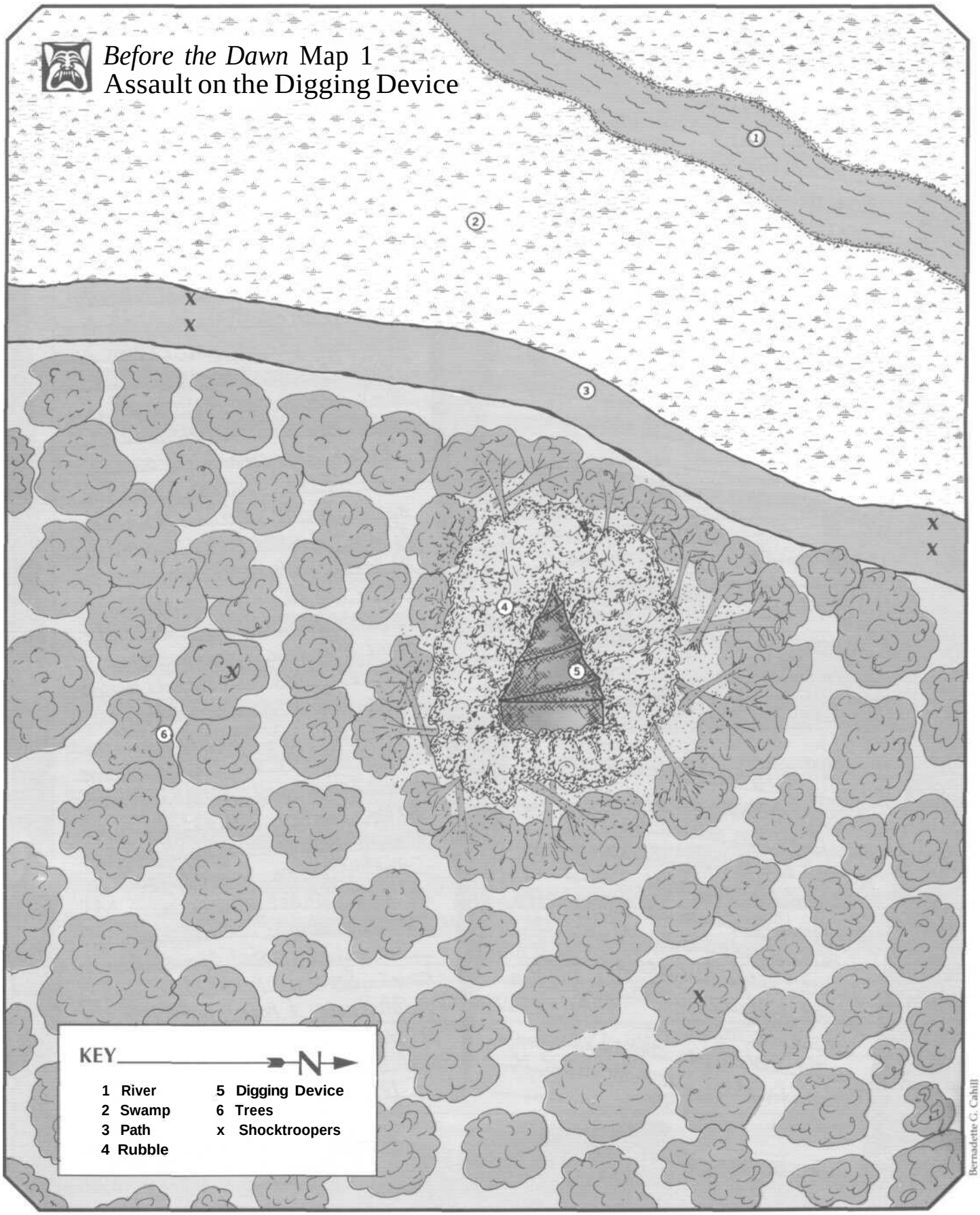
Flag Two: In Act Two, if the Knights are having too easy a time, a menace flag is activated. This triggers an event that introduces a tribe of Edeinos warriors roaming the area, searching for human prey.

Awards

At the end of each act and at the end of the adventure, you must award characters for their efforts. See the previous chapter for award guidelines.

Cut To...

The final section of an act is the lead-in to the next one. It is brief, giving simple directions on how to shift from the current act to the next one. This will always be included in our published adventures, but you can certainly do it on the fly or skip it altogether in your home-grown adventures.


Before the Dawn Map 1
Assault on the Digging Device
1
2
3
4
5
6
X
KEY
N
1 River
2 Swamp
3 Path
4 Rubble
5 Digging Device
6 Trees
x Shocktroopers
Bernadette G. Cahill



Excerpts from Professor Shariff's Diary

~May

Pharoah has given me a very important assignment. I am to arrange for a transport plane to fly him to Indonesia in a week's time. It has something to do with the world slowing down, I think.

Work proceeds on the digging device. With his daughter in my care, Professor Marlene has been very co-operative.

~May

The digging device is completed. Pharoah is pleased.

~June

The preparations have been completed. The aeroplane is ready, the pilot has the co-ordinates and worked out his flight plan. He says that he cannot carry enough fuel for a round-trip voyage; I have ordered a vessel to leave immediately, to meet the aeroplane half-way to its destination for refueling.

The world has slowed down even further. I wonder what it means.

~June

New orders. I am to take Professor Marlen's digging device to the Living Land. Once there, I am to pick up an egg from the lizards, in exchange for several crates of weapons. The lizards will give these weapons to their gospog for the assault on Philadelphia.

An egg for weapons! It sounds insane. I asked Pharoah what the egg is for; he said it was a key. To what, I asked him. He said, as he laughed, to every thing. The egg is the key to unlocking the power of the world's energy! With the Gaunt Man gone, someone must seize all that wonderful, wonderful energy gained by stopping the world; why not me, he said.

And what if the lizards change their minds and do not give **you** the egg, I asked. He laughed again. Than you shall be punished. And I shall still be Torg. If you have no key, cannot a door still be battered down?

The night lasted almost 20 hours. Several of our slaves died of the cold. I hope Pharoah's sun project is operational soon, or we will all die.

I leave Immediately.

Bernadette G. Cahill

INTERACTION RESULTS TABLE

Result Points	Intimidate Test	Taunt Trick	Interrogate	Charm Persuade	Maneuver
S	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Loyal	Unskilled
1	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Friendly	Unskilled
2	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Friendly	Unskilled
3	Unskilled	Unskilled	Hostile	Neutral	Unskilled
4	Unskilled	Unskilled	Hostile	Neutral	Unskilled
5	Stymied	Stymied	Hostile	Neutral	Fatigued
6	Stymied	Stymied	Hostile	Neutral	Fatigued
7	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
8	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
9	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
10	Setback	Setback	Neutral	Hostile	Stymied/ Fatigued
11	Setback	Setback	Neutral	Hostile	Stymied/ Fatigued
12	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy	Stymied/ Fatigued
13	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy	Stymied/ Fatigued
14	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy +1	Stymied/ Fatigued
15	Break	Up/ Setback	Loyal	Enemy +1	Setback/ Fatigued
+2	Player's Call	Player's Call	Loyal	Enemy +1	Player's Call

COMBATRESULTSTABLE

	Ords	Possibility-rated
S	1	1
1	O1	1
2	K1	O1
3	O2	K1
4	O3	2
5	K3	O2
6	Knockdown K/O 4	Knockdown O 2
7	Knockdown K/O 5	Knockdown K 2
8	Wnd K/O 7	Knockdown K 2
9	Wnd K/O 9	WndK3
10	Wnd K/O 10	WndK4
11	2WndK/O 11	WndO4
12	2Wnd KO 12	WndK5
13	3WndKO13	2Wnd O 4
14	3Wnd KO 14	2Wnd KO 5
15	4Wnd KO 15	3Wnd KO 5
+2	+lWnd	+lWnd

GENERAL AND PUSH RESULTS TABLE

	Success	Speed	Power	Storm
S	Minimal	0	+1(3)	-1
1	Average	+1(4)	+1(2)	-1
2	Average	+1(3)	+1(1)	-2
3	Good	+1(2)	+2(6)	-2
4	Good	+1(1)	+2(3)	-2 Storm x2
5	Good	+2(10)	+2(1)	-3 Storm x2
6	Good	+2(9)	+3(10)	-3 Storm x5
7	Superior	+2(8)	+3(8)	-4 Storm x2
8	Superior	+2(7)	+3(6)	-4 Storm x5
9	Superior	+2(6)	+4(10)	-5 Maelstrom
10	Superior	+2(5)	+4(8)	-6 Maelstrom
11	Superior	+2(4)	+4(6)	-7 Maelstrom
12	Spectac.	+2(3)	+5(10)	-8 Maelstrom
13	Spectac.	+2(2)	+5(8)	Transform (5)
14	Spectac.	+2(1)	+5(6)	Transform (5)
15	Spectac.	+2(0)	+6(10)	Transform (5)
+2			+0(-2)	

LINK DIFFICULTY CHART

Character is from:	Character is in:						
	Core Earth	Living Land	Aysle	Nippon Tech	Cyberpapacy	Orrorsh	Nile Empire
Core Earth	0	18	11	8	6	8	6
Living Land	16	0	10	16	12	9	9
Aysle	14	20	0	17	11	6	8
Nippon Tech	5	19	11	0	7	8	7
Cyberpapacy	9	21	12	12	0	9	8
Orrorsh	11	17	8	15	8	0	6
Nile Empire	11	16	10	12	8	5	0

BONUS CHART

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

ACTION SUMMARY

Tactic	Attribute
Intimidate	Spirit
Taunt	Charisma
Test	Mind
Trick	Perception

COMBAT OPTIONS CHART

	Action Value	Damage Value
RANGE MOD		
Point Blank	M1	0
Short	0	0
Medium	-3	-3
Long	-5	-5
FIRE OPTIONS		
Burst fire as single	0	-3
Full Auto	+3	+3
Single fire as multi	0	+3
ATTACK OPTIONS		
Aim	+3	0(a)
Vital Blow	-8	+4
All-out Attack	+3	+1 (b)
Sweep Attack	+5	-5
Opportunity Attack	-3	-3 (c)
Location Attack	0	0 (d)
DEFENSE OPTIONS		
Active Defense	Ml	na
Aggressive Defense	-4	0 (e)
CONCEALMENT		
Partial	-3	**
Medium	-5	**
High	-10	**
SITUATION		
Blindside Attack	+3	+3
Complete Surprise		(f)
Normal Surprise		(g)

KEY

Ml = Minimum bonus of one; ** = Use Cover Value chart for damage modifiers; na = not applicable; (a) = Takes one round; (b) = Attacks against are +3/+3; (c) = Holds action; (d) = Holds for location; (e) = Defense total decreased by 2; (f) = Two rounds of cardplay; (g) = One round of cardplay

SKILL CHARTS

ANALYSIS CHART

Physical Evidence	Difficulty
Familiar objects, expected use	8
Familiarobjects, uncommon use or unfamiliar objects, common use	10
Uncommon objects, uncommon effect	12
Criminal tried to conceal evidence	+2
Master criminal concealed evidence	+5

LANGUAGE CHART

Situation	Difficulty
Different dialect of own language	3
Language is derived from common language (e.g. Spanish and French)	8
Completely foreign language (e.g. Chinese)	12
Alien language, language from another Cosm	22

ARTIST CHART

Success	Work Quality
Minimal	Good beginner's effort (no mini- mum time)
Average	Journeyman effort (minimumonehour)
Good	Professional effort {one day)
Superior	Expert craftsmanship (one week)
Spectacular	Masterpiece (one month)

FALLING CHART

Distance Fallen	Difficulty #
1 story (15 feet)	3
2 stories (16-30 feet)	8
5 stories (31-100 feet)	12
Over 5 stories	15

LOCKPICKING CHART

Sample Locks	Difficulty
Typical Interior Door	3
Padlock	8
Wall Safe/ Deadbolt	12
Bank Vault	15

STEALTH CHART

Condition Modifier	Difficulty
Rain, sleet, etc.	-1
Dawn or dusk, fog, trees, walls, crowd, etc.	-2
Night	-3
Dozing guards	-3
Dense concealment (jungle, crowd in costume)	-5
Very close scrutiny	+1
Open terrain	+2
Broad daylight	+3

VAULTING/SPRINGING CHART

Obstacle	Difficulty #
Hopping a Fence	3
Grabbing an overhang and swinging over a pit	8
Vaulting or swinging over a tricky obstacle	12
Bouncing off an awning during a free fall to reach a specific destination	15

SURVIVAL CHART

Wilderness Type	Difficulty #
Woods	3
High Mountains	8
Desert	12
Polar Regions	15

CLIMBING CHART

Climb	Difficulty
Ladder	-3
Tree	5
Wall w/handholds, natural rock	8
Smooth stone, metal	15
Darkness	+2
Rain	+5
Ice-covered	+5

TRACKING CHART

Situation	Modifier
Trail is a day old	+2
Trail is a few days old	+5
Trail is a week old	+8
Tracking during inclement weather	+5
Tracking over a hard surface (e.g. cement)	+10
Tracking through mud or snow	-5
Tracking *a* vehicle	-5

FIRST AID CHART

Wound Level	Difficulty
Wound, K, O, and/or shock	8
Heavy Wound	12
Mortal	15
Dead	No first aid possible

SCIENCE CHART

Complexity	Difficulty #
Simple	8
Average	12
Complex	15
Prototype	18
From cosm with lower tech axiom	-5
From cosm with higher tech axiom	+10
Consists of many integrated systems	+5
Consists of hundreds of integrated systems	+10

TORG VALUE CHART

Val.	Meas.	Val.	Meas.	Val.	Meas.
0	1	35	1E+7	70	1E+14
1	1.5	36	1.5 E+7	71	1.5E+14
2	2.5	37	2.5 E+7	72	2.5 E+14
3	4	38	4E+7	73	4 E+14
4	6	39	6 E+7	74	6 E+14
5	10	40	1E+8	75	1 E+15
6	15	41	1.5E+8	76	1.5E+15
7	25	42	2.5 E+8	77	2.5E+15
8	40	43	4E+8	78	4E+15
9	60	44	6 E+8	79	6 E+15
10	100	45	1 billion	80	1 E+16
11	150	46	1.5E+9	81	1.5E+16
12	250	47	2.5 E+9	82	2.5E+16
13	400	48	4E+9	83	4E+16
14	600	49	6 E+9	84	6E+16
15	1,000	50	1 E+10	85	1E+17
16	1,500	51	1.5E+10	86	1.5E+17
17	2,500	52	2.5 E+10	87	2.5 E+17
18	4,000	53	4 E+10	88	4E+17
19	6,000	54	6 E+10	89	6 E+17
20	10,000	55	1E+11	90	1E+18
21	15,000	56	1.5 E+11	91	1.5E+18
22	25,000	57	2.5E+11	92	2.5E+18
23	40,000	58	4E+11	93	4E+18
24	60,000	59	6E+11	94	6E+18
25	100,000	60	1 trillion	95	1E+19
26	150,000	61	1.5E+12	96	1.51+19
27	250,000	62	2.5E+12	97	2.5E+19
28	400,000	63	4E+12	98	4E+19
29	600,000	64	6E+12	99	6E+19
30	1 Million	65	1E+13	100	1 E+20
31	1.5 E+6	66	1.5E+13		
32	2.5 E+6	67	2.5E+13		
33	4 E+6	68	4 E+13		
34	6 E+6	69	6 E+13		

TORG BENCHMARK CHART

Value	Time	Weight	Distance
0	Second	1 kilo	1 meter
2			Tallest human
3		Human baby	
9	Minute	Human female	
10		Human male	Football Field
11		Lion	City block
12		Brown Bear	
15		Small Car	Kilometer
16		Large Car	Mile
17		Elephant	
18	Hour		
20		Empty Truck	
22		APC	
23			Marathon race
24		Loaded Truck	
25	Day	Blue Whale	
27		Boeing 747	
28		C5A Galaxy	
29	Week	Tramp Freighter	
30		Destroyer	Length of Great Britain
32	Month	Six-flat building	Paris to Moscow
33		Fully loaded train	New York to L.A.
34			New York to London
35			London to Tokyo
38	Year		Circumference of Earth
39		Battleship	
41		Aircraft Carrier	
45		Loaded Oil Tanker	

DIFFICULTY NUMBER SCALE

Description	#	Modifier
Very Easy	3	-5
Easy	5	-3
Average	8	0
2:1 Against	10	+2
Difficult	12	+4
10:1	13	+5
Heroic	15	+7
100:1	18	+10
1000:1	22	+14
Never Tell Me the Odds	25	+17

THE AXIOMS OF THE COSMS

	Magic	Social	Spirit.	Tech.
Core Earth	7	21	9	23
Living Land	0	7	24	7
Aysle	18	18	16	15
Nippon Tech	2	22	8	24
Cyberpapacy	10	18	14	26
Orrorsh	15	20	17	19
Nile Empire	12	20	17	21

SKILLLIST

CHARISMA
Charm
Persuasion
Taunt

DEXTERITY
Acrobatics
Beast riding
Dodge
Energy weapons
Fire combat
Flight
Heavy weapons
Lock picking
Long jumping
Maneuver
Melee weapons
Missile weapons
Prestidigitation
Running
Stealth
Swimming
Unarmed combat

SPIRIT
Faith
Focus
Intimidation
Reality

PERCEPTION
Air vehicles
Alteration magic
Divination magic
Evidence analysis
Find
First aid
Land vehicles
Language
Scholar
Space vehicles
Tracking
Trick
Water vehicles

MIND
Apportation magic
Artist
Conjuration magic
Medicine
Science
Survival
Test of Will
Willpower

STRENGTH
Climbing
Lifting

Skills listed in **boldface cannot** be used unskilled.

COVER VALUE CHART

Type of Cover	Example	Add/Max.
Soft	Bush, car door	+3/15
Medium	Logs, brick wall	+10/25
Hard	Steel, stone wall	+15/40

TRANSFORMATION TABLE

Time	Pure Area Transform	Roll #	Dominant Area Transform	Roll#
1 second	1 /E7	105	2/E8	130
1 minute	5/E6	90	9/E7	100
1 hour	3/ E4	60	5/E5	77
1 day	7/1000	40	1/E4	72
1 week	5/100	26	9/1000	38
1 month	20/100	18	4/100	28
3 months	50/100	12	11/100	19
6 months	75/100	6	25/100	17
1 year	93/100	3	37/100	14
18 months	98/100	2	50/100	12
2 years	100/100	—	60/100	9
3 years	100/100	—	75/100	6
4 years	100/100	—	84/100	4
5 years	100/100	—	90/100	3

The "E " notation is shorthand for large numbers. "E7" would be 10,000,000, which is 10 to the seventh power, or a one followed by seven zeroes.

MEASURE CONVERSION CHART

Measure is in units of	Value Modifier
Seconds	0
Minutes	+9
Hours	+18
Days	+25
Weeks	+29
Months	+32
Years	+38
Meters per round	0
MPH	+3
KMH	+2
Kilos	0
Pounds	-2
Tons	+15
Meters	0
Feet	-3
Kilometers	+15
Miles	+16

MULTI-ACTION CHARTS

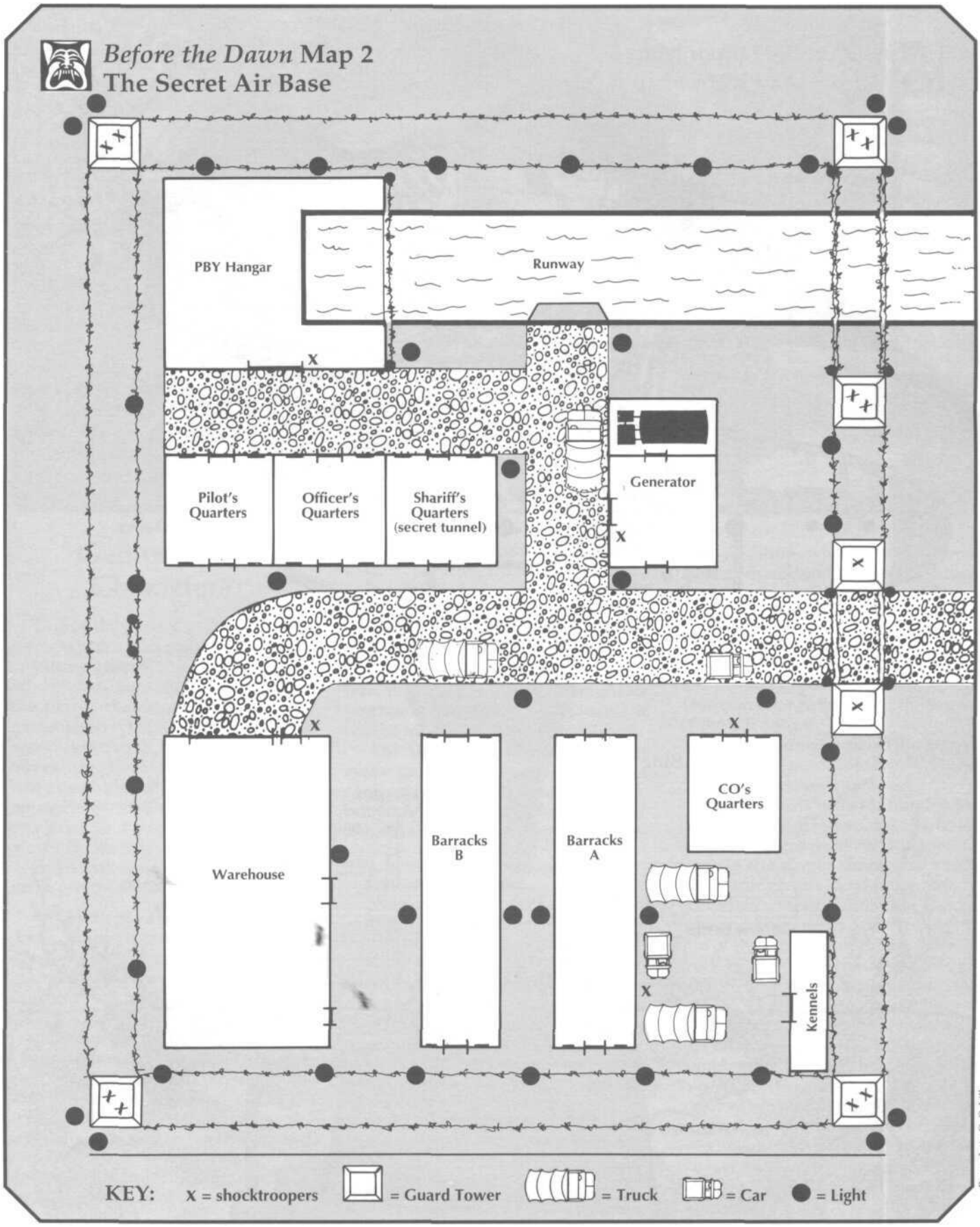
Many On One

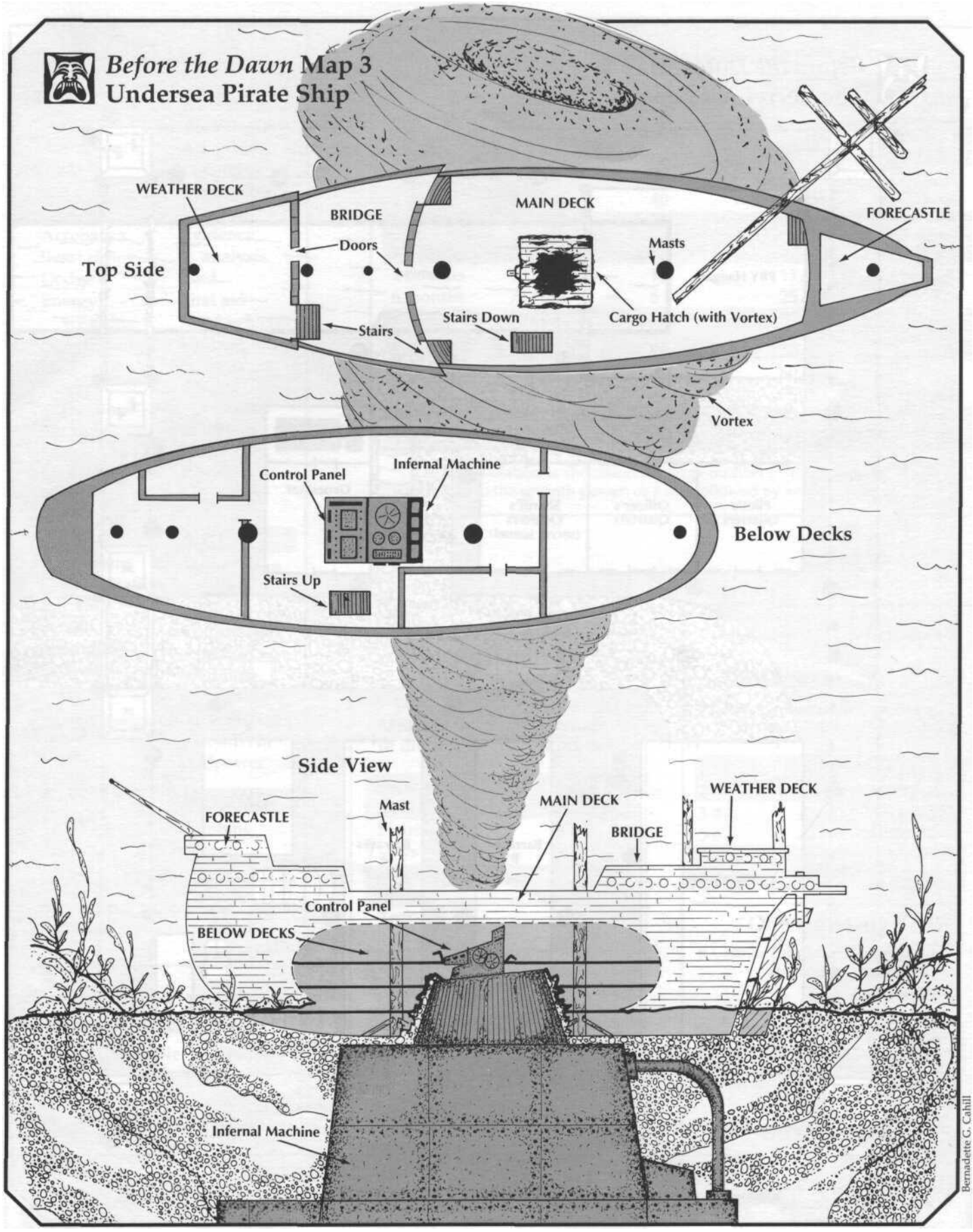
# Char.	Bonus Modifier	How Many Succeed
1		DN
2	+2	DN+2
3-4	+3	DN+4
5-6	+4	DN+6
7-10	+5	DN+8
11-15	+6	DN+10

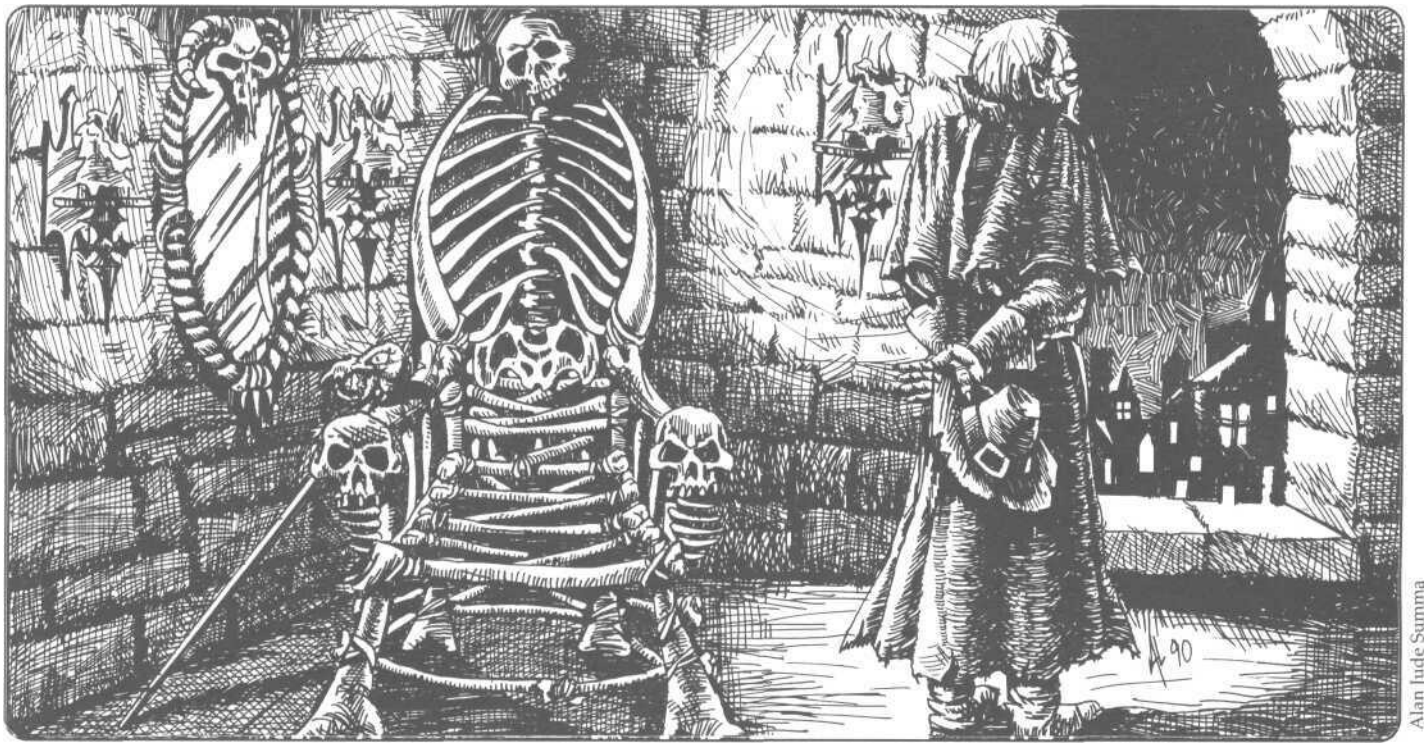
One On Many

# Char.	*Toughness* Increase	How Many Succeed/ Difficulty Increase
1		DN+2
2	+2	DN+4
3-4	+3	DN+6
5-6	+4	DN+8
7-10	+5	DN+10
11-15	+6	DN+12

DN = difficulty number; DN + ? means add the listed amount to the difficulty number.


Before the Dawn Map 2
The Secret Air Base
PBY Hangar
Runway
Pilot's Quarters
Officer's Quarters
Shariff's Quarters (secret tunnel)
Generator
Warehouse
Barracks B
Barracks A
CO's Quarters
Kennels
KEY:
X = shocktroopers
= Guard Tower
= Truck
= Car
= Light
Bernadette G. Cahill


Before the Dawn Map 3
Undersea Pirate Ship
WEATHER DECK
BRIDGE
MAIN DECK
FORECASTLE
Top Side
Doors
Masts
Stairs
Stairs Down
Cargo Hatch (with Vortex)
Vortex
Control Panel
Infernal Machine
Below Decks
Stairs Up
Side View
FORECASTLE
Mast
MAIN DECK
WEATHER DECK
BRIDGE
Control Panel
BELOW DECKS
Infernal Machine
Bernadette G. Cahill



Alan Jude Summa

Gamemaster Characters

One of the great joys of gamemastering is playing all the allies, neutrals, creatures, and villains that exist in an adventure to help, hinder, and oppose the player characters. These are the gamemaster characters, and if they are designed right, they can enliven an adventure. Even a combat-oriented scene can be jazzed up by creating an opponent who has a few unusual skills, or a trick or two to use against the player characters.

What makes a gamemaster character interesting?

• **Distinctive Appearance. Jot** down an adjective or two to use when you describe the character's appearance to the players—bald, ugly, beautiful, thin, tall, bulky, short, dark, fair, etc. This gives the players a tag with which to visualize the character.

• **Distinctive Speech.** Different characters should talk in different ways. A street thug, for example, speaks much differently from a college professor, and an Edeinos hunter differently from a pulp villain. Vary different characters' accents, vocabularies, and figures of speech.

• **Definite Objective.** Every gamemaster character, from a lowly Ord to a Possibility-laden master villain, should be given a definite objective. The character should want to get something out of his encounter with the player characters, be it information, help, power, or a few laughs. If you know what the character wants, it will be much easier to portray him.

• **Skills.** You do not need to design every gamemaster character with a complete set of skills and attributes, but you should note those you expect the character to use during an encounter.

Example:

Name: Alexander Becker

Template: Big Game Hunter (disguised as TV news producer)

Appearance: six feet tall, blonde hair, chiseled features

Speech: Hollywood mogul style — "Let's feel the vibes on this shot. Work with me baby, work with me."

Objective: To trick the player characters into believing he is a producer; to wipe out the human tribe.

Values: DEX 11, STR 10, TOU 10, PER 10, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI 8; reality 9, dodge 13, fire combat 13, unarmed combat 12

Possibility Points: 9

In addition, when creating gamemaster characters, spend some time thinking about the role they will play in your plot. Types of roles include:

• **Motivation.** The character's purpose is to motivate the player characters toward a specific series of action. This character helps direct the course of the adventure.

• **Information Source. This character** is used to provide information and clues to the player characters.

• **Obstacle.** Whether through combat, uncooperativeness, or some other means, this character is designed to impede the player characters' progress through the adventure. Many obstacle characters are minor henchmen and lieutenants of the major villain of the adventure and are actively working against the characters, though others — officious customs officials, punks, highwaymen, missionaries, wild dogs — are merely in the way.

• **Major Villain.** No adventure is complete without a hateful major villain to serve as an antagonist. The major villain must be powerful enough to stand up against a group of Storm Knights, clever enough to be behind the evil plans, and interesting enough to warrant a major role in the story.

In some adventures, the major villain is a shadowy figure who manipulates events from behind the scenes, never actually showing himself at all — or only in the last scene of the last act. "Before the Dawn" is an example of this type. Dr. Mobius is the antagonist of this adventure, but the player characters never get within a mile of him — and a good thing for them they don't, too!

• **Comic Relief.** This bumbling, funny, or otherwise amusing character is designed to lighten up portions of an adventure.

• **Mood-Setting Device.** Any characters designed to work with and reflect a particular setting help set the mood and tone of an act or whole adventure. For example, a fly-eating madman named Igor met at the start of a story will certainly set the horror mood.

Maps

By drawing simple maps for the players, you help them visualize what is going on and where they are in a particular act or scene. Most of the maps you'll want to sketch are those areas where combat is likely to occur. But you might also want to draw simple maps of buildings, towns or cities, in case someone asks for details.

It is sometimes useful to prepare two versions of the same map one for your reference with all the pertinent details in place, and one for the players showing them only what their characters could know or believe.

Scripts and Handouts

Anything you feel inspired to prepare for the adventure will only make the story that much more memorable and exciting. A good script to open the adventure *in media res,* clue-filled handouts such as newspaper clippings or computer screen printouts, and other types of props all work together to make the adventure more visual — and, therefore, more real.

Take a look at what we include in our published adventures to get a better idea of the range of handouts you can create.

Remember, all scripts and handouts should serve the following purposes: to impart information, to help visualize a scene, to give the players something to examine and refer to.

A Further Word on Plots

Below we'll briefly discuss the most common plots used to set up *Torg* adventures. You'll notice that most involve movement from one setting to another. An experienced gamemaster can run an adventure set in a single setting but, unless the setting is unusually rich and well-thought out, it is difficult to maintain the players' interest.

The Quest

The quest is an epic plot, wherein the player characters undertake (or are given) a task to perform. These tasks could be anything from removing a stelae, to rescuing a captured innocent, to throwing an evil magic item into a deep crevice. But while the goal might be quite straight-forward, the path leading up to that goal must be fraught with danger, intrigue, false clues, and deceptive omens.

Often, a quest will require that some item be acquired first, and then something done with that item before the major task can be performed.

The Gauntlet

This dramatic type of plot also involves a quest of sorts, but the path to the goal is deadly. Along the route to the specific goal, the player characters must "run the gauntlet." In other words, they must make their way through obstacle after obstacle, through villain after villain, in order to achieve their destination. Each step of the gauntlet has a distinctive personality, and each step wears down the heroes — perhaps even killing a few — so that by the time they reach the final goal, they have no doubt that one side or the other will be utterly destroyed in the final conflict.

The Gathering

In this type of plot, the player characters must go from place to place and accumulate elements to be used to complete their goal. They may be forced to roam from realm to realm in their travels, or the entire adventure might take place in a single realm. They may be gathering anything from clues, to pieces of a powerful relic, to hard evidence, or even allies to help fight against a terrible threat.

Finally, the Climax

In addition to everything else, the climax should present the player characters with plenty of opportunities to accomplish amazing feats. Never design an adventure where the player characters take a back seat to a gamemaster character. They should be totally involved and completely instrumental in the climatic events and resolutions of the adventure. After all, they didn't play through the entire thing just to sit and watch the conclusion happen to someone else!

Some types of climaxes include the classic fight-to-the-finish with the major villain, the timely arrival to prevent the villain's goal and save the day, the chase to the villain's last refuge, and the bloody clash of major forces while the heroes confront the bad guy. It doesn't matter which climax you use, just as long as the player characters play a major role in the outcome.



Chapter Five

Before the Dawn

A *Torg* Adventure

Mobius, perplexed, stepped away from his Darkness Device. He examined the thread that led to the realm of Orrorsh, running his gloved hand over its stone surface. The hieroglyphics carved into the smooth stone praised his power and dominion in a thousand different ways. Then the praises started again, curving up to where the thread faded in mid air.

"I do not understand," Mobius said aloud. He turned to address the six sarcophagi of the previous pharaohs of Egypt which rested at the base of the Device. "Why does not my loyal servant return from Orrorsh realm? Why does not the Gaunt Man answer my request for an audience?"

"Perhaps, Pharaoh," replied the ravagon as it entered the vast chamber, "the Torg would grant your request if he were able. But his most-trusted lieutenant, Thratchen, sends his greetings."

"I told you and your kind never to enter this room!" Mobius raged at the winged demon.

"A thousand pardons, High Lord," the ravagon said in mock regret. "I assumed you would want the information that I have brought. But if I disturb you ..." The ravagon let the sentence hang unfinished as he turned to leave.

"Wait," Mobius commanded. "What news have you brought?"

"Just this. The Torg has taken a short trip, as he is wont to do. During his absence, he has left Thratchen to oversee the realm. Thratchen says to carry on with your work, and leave him to carry on with his."

The Gaunt Man is away? At this critical moment? Well, thought Mobius, then perhaps the time is right for me to put my plan in motion ...

"Summon Professor Shariff," Mobius called, striding from the chamber. There was work to be done.

Lieutenant Adams wiped the sweat from his brow as he swept the forward area with his binoculars. The perpetual storm surrounding Philadelphia obscured much of his view, but, from what he could see, the Edeinos were once more in retreat.

"All right. Call this another win for the good guys," he said to Corporal Morrison, his radioman. "The enemy is pulling back."

He squinted up at the sun, cursing its immobility. By his watch, it was 2:00 am; the sun had been in that same position for 20 hours. Already, the temperature had risen nearly six degrees from yesterday's record high.

The casualty reports began to come in. Adams listened with growing dismay. Two men of his depleted company killed, three missing, and 12 wounded. Half of the injured were cases of exhaustion and heat-prostration. Hell, they had lost more men to the weather than to enemy action!

If the temperature continued to climb, he didn't think his company would survive a week.

Introduction

"Before the Dawn" is the first adventure set in the Near Now of *Torg*. It is designed for up to six players and a gamemaster. The gamemaster should read the World Book and the entire adventure prior to play, in order to become familiar with the overall *Torg* story and the adventure plotline. Players should not read the adventure, as knowing what is going to happen removes the suspense and excitement of the story.

This adventure is designed to introduce a group of Storm Knights to each other and to the world of *Torg*. It is set just after the Earth has stopped spin-

ning (see "Core Earth" in the World Book), and allows them to meet denizens of the Living Land, the Empire of the Nile, and Orrorsh.

Everything you need to play "Before the Dawn" is in the game box. Begin by helping the players create characters (see the Rule Book), then start the adventure.

Adventure Format

Each act starts with its own synopsis, called "The Major Beat," which outlines what the player characters must accomplish before they can move on to the next act. Within an act the characters can move about rather freely, perhaps even skipping some scenes, but until they finish the major beat, they cannot move forward in the adventure. Acts are broken into smaller segments, called "Scenes," and these are defined as either "standard" or "dramatic" for purposes of drama card play (see the Rule Book). Scenes begin with sections called "The Situation," and these may be read aloud or paraphrased by the gamemaster in order to set the scene.

Adventure Background

Some important things have happened to Earth over the past three months. It all started with the appearance of the maelstrom bridges and the sweeping storms that changed reality. The World Book describes what the realities of different portions of Earth have changed to, but suffice to say that in some places the laws of nature have become very strange indeed. Millions of people have transformed into beings more suited to these new realities. Technology has broken down in some places; in others it has become frighteningly advanced.

Death and destruction accompanied the storms of change, as did the terrible Possibility Raiders. These invaders have attacked our planet with blinding speed and ferocity, killed hundreds of thousands, enslaved countless others. And now, as the third month of the invasion comes to a close, the planet itself has started to break down — the planet Earth has stopped spinning and even more deaths are imminent from heat and cold.

The Gaunt Man, leader of the invading realms, has been neutralized by another group of Storm Knights (see the "Possibility Wars" novel trilogy, available where you purchased this game). This has left his mystic-science machine for siphoning off the Earth's energy unsupervised. It rests beneath the Indian Ocean, in the Java Trench, waiting for the command to release its stored energy.

Pharaoh Mobius, High Lord of the Nile Empire, has discovered the great vortex of power that marks the machine's location. With his own weird science, the Pharaoh knows he can get the machine to give him the energy. Then he can claim the Torg title and the cosmverse will be his!

But a second group of Storm Knights - the player characters — happen upon the Pharaoh's scheme. Not only must they deny Mobius this energy, they must return it to the Earth so that the planet can resume its spin before all life is destroyed by the extreme temperatures settling across the planet's surface.

Adventure Synopsis

The adventure begins during the second night of the Still World. The player characters are in the Living Land, returning from a successful resupply mission, when a tire blows on their army vehicle. While they are repairing it, a young woman rushes up to them and begins shouting wildly at them — unfortunately, in German. While they attempt to calm her and figure out what she is saying, they are attacked by a group of Edeinos.

After the attackers are beaten off, the woman tells the heroes that she and her father have been taken prisoner in the New Empire of the Nile, and forced to accompany Professor Shariff to the Living Land in a fantastic digging machine of her father's design, from where she recently escaped. She also tells them that, from what she has overheard, Professor Shariff's mission has something to do with the stopping of the Earth!

Act One climaxes with the battle between the Storm Knights and Professor Shariff's forces.

In Act Two, the heroes meet the girl's father, Doctor Marlen, and search the digging machine. They discover that Professor Shariff was in the Living Land at Dr. Mobius's command, to trade Edeinos warriors weapons, in return for some kind of an "egg," which would be useful to him in stealing the energy the Gaunt Man gained by stopping the Earth. They hope to discover the Earth-stopping machine's location by journeying to Shariff's base in the Nile Empire.

The heroes may choose to stick around and, pretending to be Shariff's men, trade the weaponry for the egg (or steal it from the Edeinos); if so, they will be puzzled to discover that it is a Faberge egg, a stunning and beautiful piece of jewelry, but of dubious military, magical, or scientific value.

The Storm Knights take the digging machine back to the base in the Nile Empire. Here, they skulk around, evading Nile shocktroopers, interrogating prisoners, and attempting to discover the location of the Earth-stopping device. They learn its exact location — and that Mobius himself will shortly be arriving to board a seaplane (in a nearby hangar) to go there himself!

The Storm Knights determine to steal the plane and beat Mobius to the punch. The battle to steal the plane is ferocious and bloody, but, as the shocktroopers are surprised to be attacked this deep within their own lines, they are ultimately defeated, and the Storm Knights steal the seaplane.

Act Two ends with a battle between the seaplane and a pair of Nile fighter planes. The fight is complicated by the arrival of Shul, a huge brute of a mechanic who was hidden aboard the seaplane when it took off. Shul does his very best to kill everyone he encounters — while the fighter planes pepper the seaplane from outside!

In Act Three, the heroes arrive in the realm of Orrorsh. They fly to the location marked on the map, discovering there a weird, unnatural tornado, fixed in position directly at the coordinates. They land their plane as close to the tornado as possible.



Francis Mao

Once landed on the sea, their airship is attacked by a huge white shark, who slams into its hull with frightening violence. This shark is a demon named Gibberfat. Once they "kill" the demon shark, it transforms into a vicious electric eel. Once the eel is dispatched, Gibberfat assumes his true form. He calls to them in English, telling them to desist or they will perish. If the Knights have the egg, they can use it to buy Gibberfat off, otherwise, they must fight him. Once he dies or is bribed, the heroes must face the last obstacle between them and the Gaunt Man's device.

The climactic battle for the Earth takes place 50 meters beneath the surface of the ocean. The Storm Knights, wearing old-fashioned diving suits and armed with various weird science weapons from the arsenal of Dr. Mobius, battle against the final guardians of the Earth-stopping device - skeletal, long-dead pirates! Some of the heroes must hold off the pirates while the others work feverishly to master the controls of the machine. Meanwhile, the ocean floor itself begins to bubble and melt; soon it will be so hot that the device will fall straight through into the mantle, taking the heroes, and all hope of restarting the Earth, with it!

If they are successful, the Earth gradually resumes its spin, and thousands of people's lives are saved. If not, the Still World is permanent; in a few short years, most of this planet will be uninhabitable.

ACT ONE

A Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight

The Major Beat

In this act, while traveling in the Living Land, the heroes meet Hildy Marlen, a beautiful young damsel in distress. They rescue her father, Doctor Marlen, from the clutches of the evil Professor Shariff, a servant of the even more evil Dr. Mobius. The heroes (incorrectly) come to understand that Dr. Mobius has something to do with the stopping of the Earth. They may acquire a Faberge egg, which they believe will aid them in restarting the world.

Following their slim leads, they board a fabulous tunneling machine to a secret base in the Empire of the Nile, where they hope to find the location of the device which has caused the Earth to stop and possibly learn how to restart the planet.

SCENE ONE: The Meeting

The Situation

Standard. The heroes are running supplies into the Living Land. This scene takes place on a dirt road, deep in the jungle, when their tire blows out. As the heroes are changing a tire on their truck, they meet a beautiful young German woman.

The world has surely gone to hell recently. The USA has been invaded by dinosaurs and lizard-men; the United Kingdom and Scandinavia

have been overrun by knights in armor, Vikings and sorcerers; France has been transformed into a dark-ages theocracy; the Middle East has been taken over by a raygun-weilding lunatic who wishes to recreate the glories of Ancient Egypt. It's been a bad couple of months.

And now the Earth has stopped moving. The sun has been in the same place for over 20 hours — somewhere over the ocean near South America — and the temperature over North America has risen almost six degrees above the record high for this day. You shudder to think what it must be like in South America now — and what it will be like here in a week.

But there's nothing you can do about that, so you are doing the best you can, running supplies into the boundaries of the so-called "Living Land" - a place that used to be called Ohio. Despite the invasion of the dinosaurs and the Edeinos, despite the destruction of the cities, despite the collapse of technology, people still live there, refusing to leave their beloved homes.

They may be foolish — even crazy - but you cannot simply let them starve or die for lack of food or proper medicine. So, every day for the last couple of weeks, you have been running a truckload of supplies into Ohio from still-normal Kentucky, at the same time, attempting to convince the people to leave.

After a few terrifying experiences in the first trips, you've gotten the hang of it by now — more or less — and this trip has so far been uneventful. You are heading down a dirt road back toward Kentucky. The road has degraded significantly, and, hitting a sharp rock, your front left tire blows out.

The Action

Have the Knight driving the truck generate a *land vehicles* total. If the total exceeds 5, he brings the truck to a safe stop. If less, the truck crashes. An army deuce-and-a-half, the truck is sturdy and emerges unscathed; each Knight is hit with a damage value of 5.

The Deep Mist

The Living Land is enshrouded in a veil of mist, called "The Deep Mist." The Deep Mist obscures vision; a character cannot ever see more than 10 meters around him. In addition, the Deep Mist screws up compasses and other direction-finding devices, making it very difficult to get anywhere without getting lost.

Deuce-and-a-Half: Tech 22, Speed 100kph/60mph (value 12), Passengers 14, TOU 22. Price: 60k (value 24).

Description: The deuce-and-a-half is so-named because it weighs around 2.5 tons; it's not so easy to change a tire. The difficulty of changing a tire is 8 *(land vehicles* skill); the base time value is 17, or around 40 minutes. Subtract one from the time value for each level of success above *minimal* the character receives (that is, on an *average* succes it takes 25 minutes; *good* success, 15 minutes; etc.). The coordination difficulty of this task is 5.

Enter Hildy

While the heroes are repairing their tire (at least five minutes before they have finished), they hear something coming down the road toward them. Whatever it is, it is not attempting to be silent; they can easily hear it splashing through puddles, cracking branches, and so forth. The Knights may attempt *find* or *Perception* rolls against a difficulty of 8 to learn more.

Under no circumstances should the Knights be allowed to kill Hildy. If anyone foolishly wishes to fire off a burst before seeing what they are firing at, Hildy gives off a frightened scream (she saw a large snake in the trees) just as they are about to fire. If the Knights insist upon firing anyway, they miss. Period.

Seconds later, Hildy appears out of the Mist. Seeing the Knights, she throws herself in the arms of the nearest handsome male and begins jabbering at him hysterically -- unfortunately, in German — while pointing down the road from whence she came.

Hildy Marlen (Damsel in Distress): DEX 8, STR 7, TOU 7, PER 7, MIN 8, CHA 12, SPI 10.

Skills: dodge 10, running 10, unarmed combat 9, scholar (geology) 13, charm 14.

Description: Beautiful young blond German woman. Dressed in standard explorer's gear in pretty disarray.

Once the characters succeed in calming her, she manages to remember her English, and says, "Please help me! I am being chased by those terrible, how you say? I forget the words. Oh, yes, I remember now! Lizards!"

Right about then the lizards show up.

The Edeinos Attack

There are seven Edeinos in the hunting party — six warriors and one optant (an Edeinos priest). They picked up Hildy's trail about three miles back; though they could have captured her at any time, they let her run, to increase the fun of the chase. They are about to pay dearly for that decision.

When they left their tribe this morning, the hunting party was blessed with the miracle *See Through Mist,* allowing them to see up to 40 meters through the Deep Mist (remember, the heroes can see only 10 meters). When they get within sight of the truck, the warriors spread out, planning to encircle the truck and hit it simultaneously from all sides. Meanwhile, the optant begins to cast the miracle, *Animate Plant* on the jungle around the truck. Once cast, the Edeinos attack.

Edeinos Warriors (6): DEX 11, STR 9, TOU 10, PER 9, MIN 9, CHA 8, SPI 10.

Skills: dodge 12, melee weapons 12, missile weapons 12, stealth 12, unarmed combat 12, tracking 10, focus 11, faith 11.

Natural Tools: claws 13, teeth 11, tail 9.

Equipment: hrockt spears; damage 12, range 5/10/15.

Notes: Can see 40 meters through mist because of *See Through Mist* miracle.

Edeinos Optant: Same attributes and skills as warriors, except: SPI 12, faith 14, reality 13. Possibilities 2.

Miracle: *Animate Plant,* community rating 12, difficulty 16; range: sight; duration 18. Area of effect: 20 meter radius. Cast time two rounds. Effect: Immobilizes victims.

When the *Animate Plant* miracle is cast, all of the plants within the area of effect writhe and wriggle as if alive, seeking to entwine anything nearby, attacking animals and beings with an *unarmed combat* skill of 12. If successful, the plants have wrapped around the character, immobilizing him and causing him to suffer a -4 to all *Dexterity-based* skills or any skills which require movement. The character may attempt to break free by making a *Strength* roll of difficulty 13; other free characters can help, coordination difficulty 5.

The plants are animate only for one round (though anything they catch will be held for the full duration of the spell); after the first round, other characters can enter the area without risk.

Hildy's Story

Read the following or paraphrase it in answer to the Knights' questions:

"I am the daughter of Herr Doctor Heinrich Marlen, a famous engineer. We were in Cairo when the Pharoah came. My father was captured, and forced to work for the Pharoah, under the direction of Professor Shariff." *(Here she gives a pretty shudder.)* "Professor Shariff said he would do things — terrible things! — to me if my father did not work for him.

"In the next two months, my father built a fantastic digging device. He could never do this before; I think he changed somehow when the world did." *(In fact he transformed into a weird scientist.)*

"Three days ago, Professor Shariff took my father and myself onto the digging device and forced my father to drive it to this place. During the two-day trip, we overheard the Professor talking to the soldiers. He told them that they were to meet some Edeinos, to trade weapons — there are several hundred rifles on the device— for a key. He said that Pharoah would be able to use the key to unlock the power of the Still World!"

"When we arrived here this morning, the Professor met with some of the lizards — I do not know what they said. Then the lizards left; we have been waiting ever since. Two hours ago, my father and I were let out of the device to get some fresh air. My father hit our guard on the back of the head and told me to run and get help. As I left he was struggling with the guard.

"An hour later, I was discovered by the Edeinos. They chased me until I met you.

"My father is an old man; they are sure to kill him! Won't you please rescue him?"

The Storm Knights may be more interested in the "key" to the Earth-stopping device than in rescuing the doctor; in any event, they must go to the digging device if the adventure is to continue. Hildy knows the way back (more or less); the journey takes about 45 minutes.

Cut To...

Forty minutes later. The Knights follow Hildy back down the road and up a trail. She tells them that she thinks the camp is just up ahead, somewhere in the mist.

SCENE TWO: Doctor Marlen's Incredible Digging Device

The Situation

Dramatic. The heroes head down the road in the direction Hildy came from. Ten minutes later, they hit a path leading off into the jungle. Following that, they eventually reach the clearing where Doctor Marlen's incredible digging device is located.

From what Hildy has told you, the digging device is just up ahead, maybe 50 meters down the path, which runs between the jungle and the swamp off to your right. There are 10 shocktroopers on board, armed with some kind of machine pistol or gun; Hildy doesn't know what kind of weaponry Professor Shariff may have. She also tells you that it takes five minutes to start up the digging machine when the engine is cold. Other than that, she doesn't know much of any use.

The Action

See the "Assault on the Digging Device" map in the pullout section: the guards are located at the spots marked "X"; six more and Professor Shariff are inside the digging machine. The heroes arrive from the south, about 30 meters below the two shocktroopers guarding the southern path.

The shocktroopers' first priority is to sound the alarm. The moment they spot the Knights — or, if the Knights are being sneaky, the moment they are attacked by the Knights — they fire their weapons to alert the other guards. The other guards rush toward the sound of battle, except for the guard atop the pile of dirt and rubble, who has orders to stay there and guard the machine.

The guards inside the digging machine emerge in the first round following the alarm sounding; Professor Shariff emerges in the next round. Professor Shariff is a fanatically loyal servant of Dr. Mobius; he fights to the death. If it looks as if he is going to be defeated, he retreats into the digging machine and attempts to initiate the start-up sequence. This takes roughly five minutes (or 30 rounds). The door to the digging machine has a *Toughness* of 24; the lock has a *lockpicking* difficulty of 10.

Shocktroops (10): DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 7, MIN 7, CHA 7, SPI 9.

Skills: dodge 10, fire combat 10, unarmed combat 10, climbing 10.

Equipment: Schemisser Machineguns; damage 17, range 15/25/100. Knives; damage STR + 3.

Professor Shariff: DEX 9, STR 10, TOU 8/20*, PER 9, MIN 12, CHA 9, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 12, dodge 13, energy weapons 14, maneuver 11, unarmed combat 10, land vehicles 12, scholar (weird science) 13, science 13, test 13, weird science 14, willpower 14, charm 12, taunt 11, intimidation 12.

Possibilities: 10.

The Sound-Gun: This weird science gizmo looks like a cross between a megaphone and raygun. It has three settings and power for 12 shots.

Stun Setting: +3 to hit. Damage: 20 (Stun, KO, Knockdown damage only).

Wound Setting: Damage: 16 (normal damage plus deafness for a number of rounds equal to half the result points of the shot).

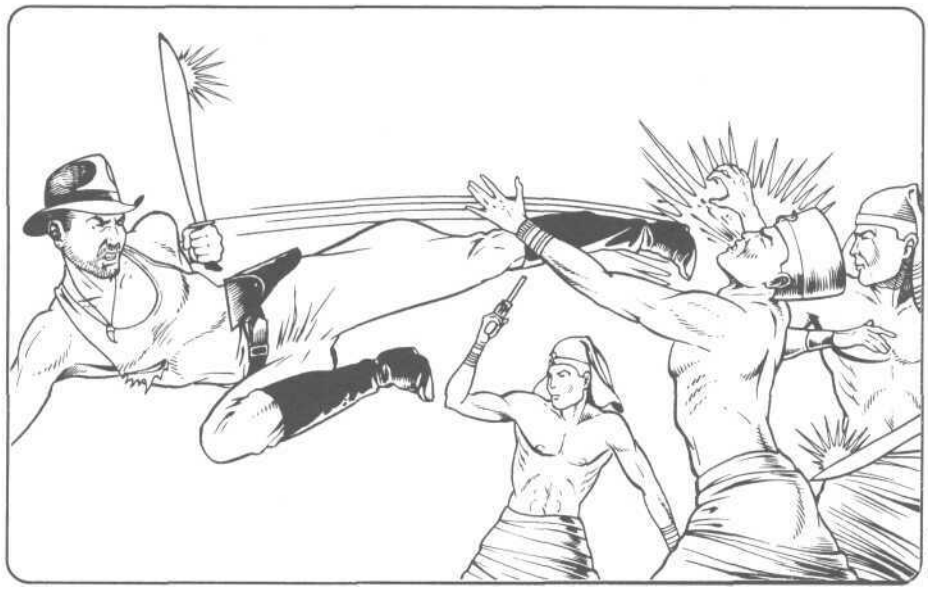
Kill Setting: Damage: 20 (two charges per shot. Normal damage plus deafness for a number of rounds equal to the result points of the shot).

***Force Field Generator:** This gizmo looks like a bulky backpack. When turned on, Professor Shariff is surrounded by a heavy nimbus of electrical energy, making him almost painful to look at. There is power for 15 rounds' continuous use. The force field gives the equivalent of +12 armor protection, increasing Professor Shariff's *Armor Value* to 20.

Variables

The main risk here is that the Storm Knights will be defeated. If so, Professor Shariff will attempt to capture them and imprison them in the digging machine, so that he can gloat over them at his leisure, and bring them back to Dr. Mobius as prizes. If this occurs, you will have to give them an opportunity to break free of their bonds and overwhelm their opponents, either during the trip, or when they reach the base (see the next act).

Another risk is that the heroes somehow manage to completely destroy the digging device — possibly by the injudicious use of magic or high explosives. *Don't let them!* This causes you no end of headaches — it destroys an important clue, kills Dr. Marlen, and removes the vehicle which is supposed to take them into the next act. Assume that, since most of it is still underground, the device gains a lot of protection from the rock and dirt. Any potentially lethal attacks do at most heavy damage to the digger, requiring several hours' time to repair.



Bob Dvorak

Finally, you may be in trouble if the Knights decide not to attack at all, instead preferring to return to Kentucky to get help or do something else altogether. You have a number of choices: you can use Edeinos to herd them back to the encounter; once they are in Kentucky, you can feed them clues and hints suggesting that they go to the Nile Empire and find the hidden base; or you can somehow get them directly to Act Three in Indonesia, skipping Act Two altogether.

If the Knights simply refuse to have anything to do with Dr. Mobius or attempting to start up the Earth, you will have to run your campaign in the Still World setting, as described in the World Book.

Aftermath

In all likelihood, the heroes have emerged victorious, having killed Professor Shariff and killed or driven off the shocktroopers. Hildy has a tearful reunion with her father, tied up inside the digger. After ransacking the machine, the Knights find Professer Shariff's diary; give the players "Professor Shariff's Diary" handout from the pullout. If they don't find the diary, Dr. Marlen knows the information, having snuck a look at the diary during the trip.

Cut To...

If the Knights stay around to get the egg, cut to Scene Three. If they proceed directly to the secret base, cut to Scene Four. If they do something completely unexpected, cut to the Act Awards and following Cut To section for advice.

SCENE THREE: Guns for Butter (or Eggs)

The Situation

Standard. This scene occurs only if the heroes decide to stick around and get the egg from the Edeinos.

The heroes have several hours before the Edeinos return; they can spend this time tidying up the battlefield, questioning Dr. Marlen, disguising themselves as shocktroopers, and so forth. Once they have completed their preparations, cut to the arrival of the Edeinos.

The Action

Clever Storm Knights will attempt to con the Edeinos into giving the egg in return for the weapons (which they have time to render inoperable before the Edeinos arrive); bloodthirsty Knights will probably choose to fight it out with the lizards. If so, they may be a bit dismayed when a dozen Edei-

nos show up riding a Bor Aka, a dinosaur roughly the size of a bad-tempered football field. This may convince them to take a less violent approach: if not, let the chips fall where they may.

The thing to remember is that the Edeinos are not expecting any trouble. They have been given an assignment by Baruk Kaah himself, to pick up a package from another group of Edeinos and bring it to Professor Shariff, who will in return give them several crates of weapons. If the heroes keep cool, the Edeinos will notice nothing (all humans look alike, after all). They will be unable to test the weapons, which they detest as dead things and do not understand how to operate anyway.

If the humans give them any trouble, the Edeinos riding the Bor Aka will cheerfully turn it loose, telling it to stomp all of the humans into so much paste.

Edeinos (12): Same as those in Scene One. There is no optant in this party, and they have not been blessed with the miracle *See Through Mist.*

Bor Aka: DEX 10, STR 41, TOU 43, PER 10, MIN 5, CHA 5, SPI 5.

Skills: running 11,swimming 11, trick (13), test 12, willpower 12, intimidation 14, taunt (7).

Natural Tools: bite 42, trample 44.

Description: A very, very large creature, roughly similar to a brontasaurus. The Bor Aka is a vegetarian; so (for whatever it is worth) it will spit out any characters it picks up and chews to a pulp.

What are those Guns For, Anyway?

Baruk Kaah plans to arm several hundred Gospog with the weapons and use them to lead the next assault upon Philadelphia. If the Storm Knights do not disable the weapons before giving them to the Edeinos, the soldiers at Philly are going to be in for a very nasty surprise...

Cut To...

Scene Four.

SCENE FOUR: Off to Egypt

The Situation.

Standard. The Storm Knights will probably choose to commandeer the digging device and head back to the secret base in the Empire of the Nile. Doctor Marlen will gladly operate the device, as long as they first go to Kentucky and drop his daughter off with the authorities. The trip to Egypt takes two days (the device travels amazingly quickly underground); there's just enough power left in the mega-batteries to make the return journey.

The Knights -- particularly any weird scientists in the bunch — can fiddle with the device to their hearts' content; it looks a lot like a Flash Gordon-like space ship with a big screw at either end. Feel free to make up internal details to match; it should have lots of dials and floor-mounted throttles, sparking Van De Graaf generators, and be built almost entirely of big riveted plates. It's a goofy weird science device, so have fun with it (see the accompanying diagram).

Remember that Professor Shariff's diary is hidden in the captain's cabin.

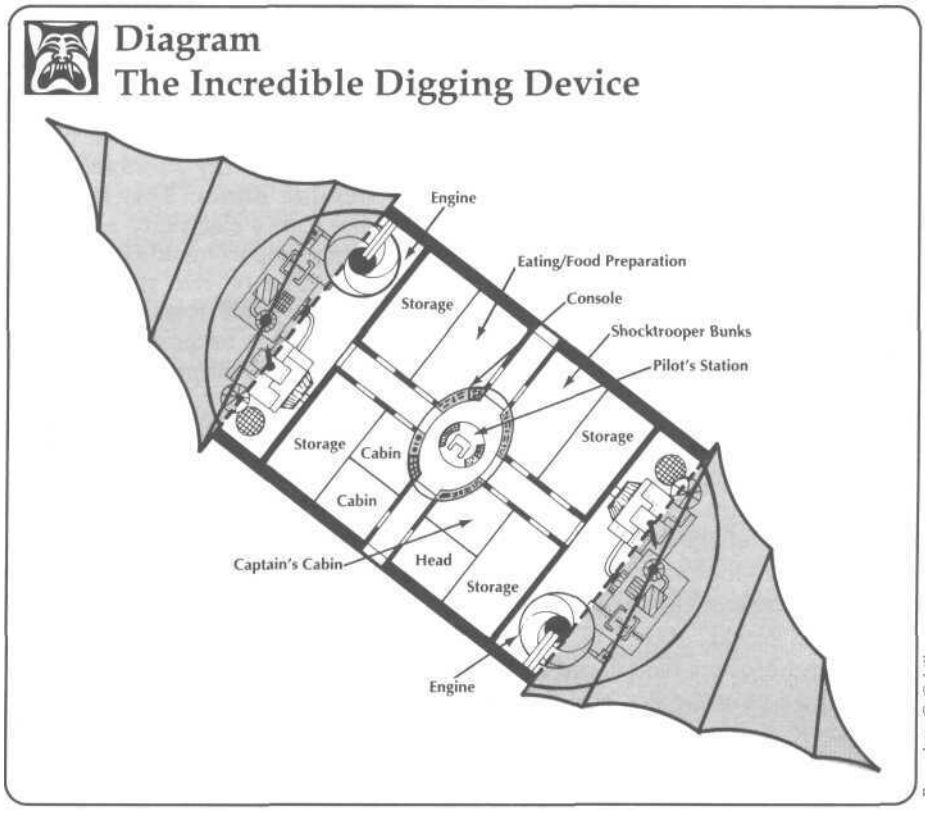
Digger: Tech 21ws (24s), speed 160kph/100mph (value 14), Passengers 20, TOU 32.

Act Awards

The player characters should receive around two Possibility points for this act. One if their play was well below average, and three if they were outstanding.

Cut To...

Act Two, Scene One. There's nowhere else they can easily go; if they somehow learn the Earth-stopping machine's location through their own devices (esoteric magic or whatever); they can skip the next act and go directly to Act Three. If they do this, they will need to provide their own underwater gear, however.



ACT TWO

Into the Empire of the Nile

The Major Beat

The Knights travel to Egypt, to a secret airbase deep within the Empire of the Nile, to learn the location of the Earth-stopping device. They can steal the pilot's flight plans or they can steal the pilot. Once they have the plans in their possession, they travel to the Indian Ocean near Indonesia, probably stealing Dr. Mobius's PBY seaplane to do so.

SCENE ONE: The Airbase

The Situation

Standard. The airbase is located about 10 miles outside of Thebes proper, in a Pure Nile zone. If the Knights have taken the digging machine, they have no problems finding the base, as the machine is pre-programmed to return to its dock (a secret chamber located below Professor Shariff's quarters in the base). If the heroes haven't taken the digging machine, Dr. Marlen knows the base's location; if he's not around, they will have to bribe or con Empire officials to find it.

Still World and the Nile

Remember how it was very hot in the Kentucky scenes, and the sun was high in the sky — even at 3:00 a.m.? Well, the Nile is just the opposite — or it would be if not for Mobius' science. The Nile Empire is on the dark side of the Still World, and it is very cold. But Mobius has placed an artificial sun in the sky, and this provides light and heat to his realm.

The Action

There is a map of the base in the pullout; refer to it when reading the following descriptions.

The base consists of a number of prefabricated metal buildings surrounded by barbed wire. It is located in the middle of the desert, 10 miles from the nearest population center, Thebes. There are 20 guards on duty at all times (at the locations marked on the map), plus 10 or more workers doing maintenance, repairs, and so forth. There are an additional 20 guards asleep in barracks A.

Barbed Wire Fences: The wire is three meters in height. There are two sets of fences, with two meters between them. That area is patrolled by four guard dogs.

Guard Towers: The towers are seven meters tall. They are standard prison-camp-style towers -- small rooms on top of an open wooden framework. Each tower is equipped with a searchlight and is manned by two guards.

Kennels: Small building where the dogs sleep.

CO's Office: This building contains a small office with two desks, a large two-way radio, and a tactical map of the base and surrounding area on the wall. The commanding officer, Colonel Manotep, and his secretary are usually found in this building.

Motor Pool: Contains the base's vehicles, mainly army trucks and jeeps.

Generator Room: This building holds the base's electricity generator and water pumps. Outside is the gasoline tank. One or two maintenance workers here at all times.

Barracks: A: Contains 20 sleeping shocktroopers. B: Empty; where workers sleep.

Shariff's Qtrs: Semi-opulent house with substantial library of weird science literature; secret door in kitchen leading down to tunneler dock.

PBY Hangar: A large open structure with a canal running in under garage-style hangar door on north side. The walls are lined with airplane maintenance tools; the center of the building is taken up by the PBY airplane, floating in the canal. It barely fits through the hangar doors. Small pilots' office in southeast corner; possible location for flight plans. Two maintenance workers here; plus the pilot, Captain Lefleur.

Officer's Qtrs: Four beds and footlockers line the walls; table in center of building. Nothing of special interest here.

Pilot's Qtrs: Beds, weather reports, map case, other pilot stuff. Possible location for flight plans.

Warehouse: Food, equipment, weapons locker in back, contains several dozen schmeisser machineguns, ammunition, grenades, and the like. Two workers here.

Cast of Characters

Shocktroopers (40): DEX 9, STR 9, TOU 9, PER 7, MIN 7, CHA 7, SPI 9.

Skills: dodge 10, fire combat 10, unarmedcombat 10, climbing 10.

Equipment: Schmeisser Machineguns, damage 17, range 15/25/100. Knives, damage STR +3.

Colonel Manotep: DEX 10, STR 10, TOU 11, PER 10, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 9.

Skills: reality 10, dodge 12, fire combat 12, unarmed combat 12, climbing 12, trick 12, test 12, taunt 12, intimidation 12.

Possibilities: 4.

Equipment: Schmeisser Machinegun, damage 17, range 15/25/100. Knife, damage STR +3.

Personality: Shrewd, careful. Follows orders to the letter. Not too easily conned or frightened.

Workers: DEX 8, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.

Skills: 10 in work-related skills (maintenance, dish-washing, vehicle repair skills, etc.).

Captain Lefleur (Pilot): DEX 10, STR 8, TOU 8, PER 10, MIN 10, CHA 10, SPI 10.

Skills: air vehicles 14.

Personality: Bitter, sarcastic. Hates Mobius, Nile Realm, and everything else. A native of Terra, Lefleur works for Mobius because he sees him as his

only chance to get back home. Might jump at a chance to hurt Mobius — if it involves no personal risk. Speaks English. Has memorized the location of the Earth-stopping device.

Objectives

The Knights need to learn the location of the Earth-stopping device. There are a number of places within the base where they could find this information — in a locker in the pilots' quarters, in a small office in the PBY hangar, or from the pilot, Captain Lefleur, who could be found in either the hangar, the pilots' quarters, or, if you want to be difficult about it, in the brig (in the CO's office) for drunken and disorderly conduct.

Attached to the flight plans is a cargo manifest, listing, among other things, a half-a-dozen diving suits and oxygen tanks. From this, the heroes should assume that their final destination is somewhere under water.

Once they have the location, the heroes can escape in any way they choose. For your purposes, it is much better if they take the fueled PBY seaplane — not only do they then get the diving suits necessary to finish the adventure, but it also allows you to run the exciting climax to this act — the "Big Dogfight."

Running the Scene

This scene is a big production — if this were a movie, probably 30 percent of the film's budget would be spent on the special effects for this one. The heroes of the film are infiltrating the enemy base. In the beginning, they may disguise themselves as shocktroopers or Nile officials, bamboozling the foolish enemy, but at some time they will probably be discovered and the scene ended in a blaze of gunfire.

On the outside, things look pretty grim for the Knights. The heroes face around 50 well-armed and trained opponents. The base is surrounded by barbed wire, and soldiers with spotlights watch all approaches. Even if the Knights use the digging device to get in, arriving at the secret dock under Professor Shariff's quarters, there are a number of guards stationed on the inside of the base, and a whole lot more within easy hailing distance.



Bob Dvorak

However, in this case, appearances are deceiving. This encounter is standard, not dramatic. That means that the Drama Deck is heavily weighted in the Knights' favor. Though things may appear tough, if the Knights keep their wits about them, they should have little trouble defeating the shocktroopers. Try to run this encounter as though it were a scene from your favorite *Macho American Bodybuilder vs. the Dimwitted Foreigners who Can't Shoot Worth a Damn* film. The hero wades out into a storm of automatic fire, taking not a scratch, and, with a single burst of his M-16, knocks the enemy soldiers down like tenpins. Encourage the players to be flambouyant — let even outrageous plans succeed, if they are cinematically appropriate to the genre.

Let the Knights attack a sentry (or, if outside, a patrol) to get their uniforms. Let them blow up the generator to create a lovely pyrotechnical diversion, hopefully immolating a bunch of guards in the process. Let them steal a truck and drive it through a barrack or two, or into the base of a guard tower. Maybe one hero slips outside and fires off a burst of gunfire, drawing a large number of guards out after him while the other heroes trash the base. The hero outside dispatches a bunch of soldiers, leading the others on a merry chase. When the other heroes accomplish their mission and head down the canal in the PBY, the hero leaps onto the outside of the airplane, clinging to a strut while it roars off into the sky.

The scene is dangerous, and with an unlucky turn of the dice a hero could get hurt or killed, but, more than anything else, this should be a lot of wholesome, violent fun.

Don't worry about going too light on the heroes; you can really hammer them in the next scene.

CutTo...

Scene Two if the Knights steal the seaplane; you'll have to extemporize their escape if they do not. The heroes will have to find their own transportation to the Indian Ocean; they will also have to come up with their own diving suits or other underwater gear.

SCENE TWO: The Big Dogfight

The Situation

Dramatic. The heroes have stolen the flight plans, giving them the location of the Earth-stopping device. They have also stolen the PBY seaplane and are roaring off into the night.

When the heroes are in the plane, describe it according to the accompanying diagram. *Don't* mention the secret compartment, unless someone specifically searches the area behind the cargo and generates a *find* total of 14 or higher — with all hell breaking loose, the heroes probably won't do this until it is too late. If they *do* search this area successfully, they will meet Shul ahead of schedule, which is unfortunate, but not catastrophic.

In any event, in this scene the heroes get to experience a dogfight. Their plane is very slow and very unwieldy, but it has been equipped with three machinegun cupolas. The opposition is in the form of two Nile fighter planes, Spitfires, manned by Possibility-rated pilots.

And just when things look their grimmest, they get a whole lot worse. The mechanic, Shul, who has been hiding in the secret compartment aft, steps forth and does his best to pound the heroes into dust. As Shul is a huge brute of a man and also Possibility-rated, this should be quite an interesting experience for the heroes.

You've got the flight plans; you've got a plane capable of getting there; and it's loaded with the equipment you need to complete your mission. Considering that you have had to go through 50-odd guards to get this, everything has gone quite smoothly, indeed. Why does that make you nervous?

In a moment you find out why, as two Nile Spitfires come screaming out of the clouds. Taking up positions to your rear, they call over the radio and demand to know who you are and what you are doing.

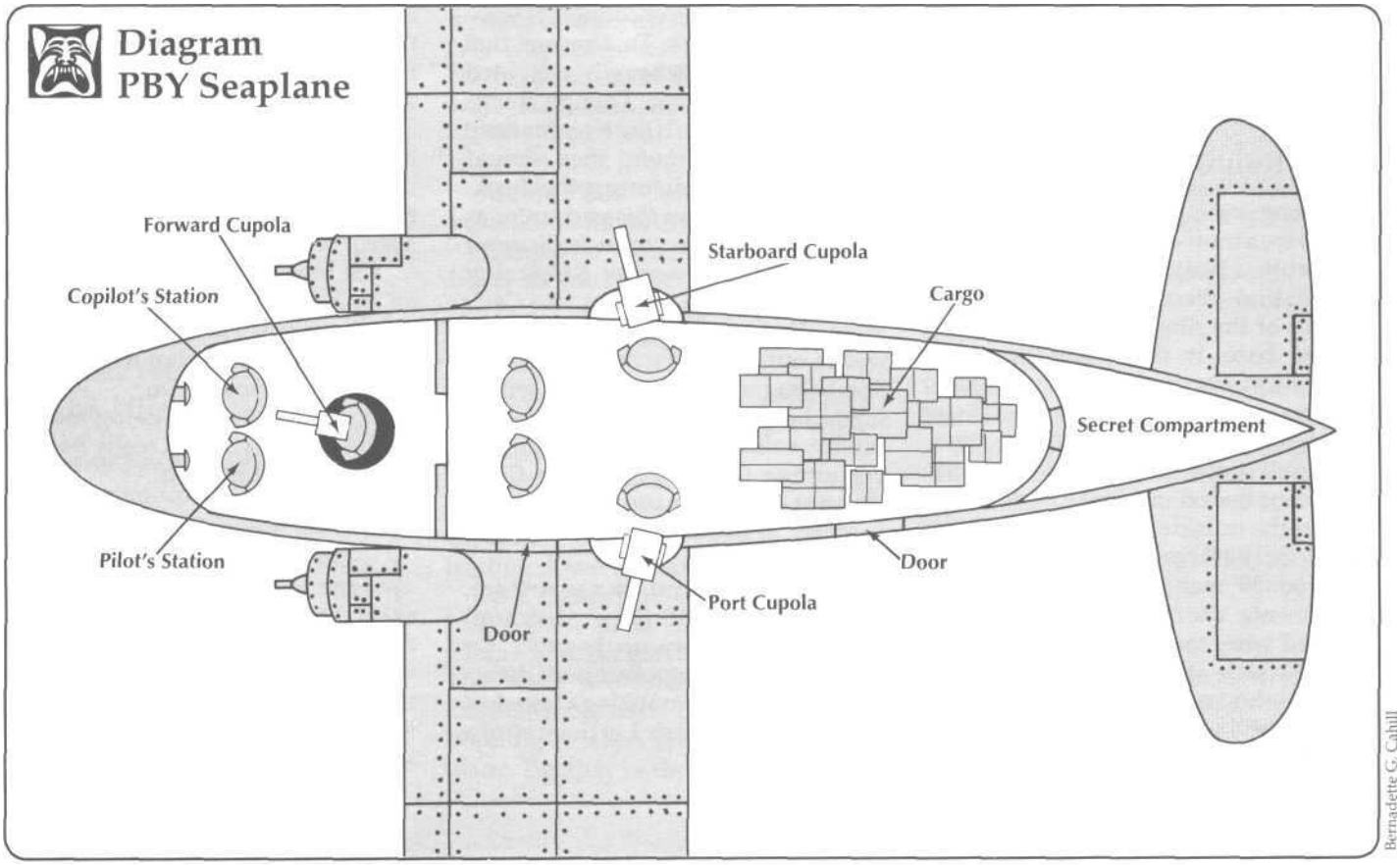
The Action

There are two things the heroes can do: attempt to con the pilots into letting them pass, or say "the heck with it" and blast merrily away.

Conning the Pilots

The pilots' statistics are below. Both speak English (on Terra, as on Earth, all international pilots must speak English). They are aware that Dr. Mobius is supposed to take off in the PBY, though they were told that he would not be leaving for another few hours. If the Knight on the radio concocts a plausible story, let his player generate a *Persuade* total against the pilots' *Minds* of 11.

The pilots are currently *neutral* to the plane. On a *negotiated agreement*, the pilots will hold off attacking; however, they will not let the plane travel any further toward the Nile border until they receive confirmation from Ground Control (it will take Ground Control about 10 minutes to contact the base, which will probably blow the heroes' story sky-high).



On a *yes* result, the pilots will let the plane proceed. They will still radio in to Ground Control for confirmation, however; when the heroes' story is blown, they roar off after the plane, catching up to it about two minutes before the plane leaves Nile airspace.

The Dogfight

The air battle will resemble more a fighter attack against a WWII B17 Flying Fortress than it will a dogfight between fighters. The PBY is slow and clunky; there is no way it can outrun the Spitfires (see the chase rules in Chapter Seven of the Rule Book).

During the chase, if the Knight flying the PBY generates a higher *air vehicles* total than a pilot, he decides what his airplane's relationship to the Spitfires is — he can be in front, behind, to the left or right. The co-pilot can combine on this roll: coordination difficulty of 8. If the pilot's total is higher, you decide where the Spitfire is in relationship to the PBY.

This is important because the PBY's machineguns have limited fire arcs: one can fire only to the front, one to the left, and one to the right. Note that the Spitfires' machineguns are forward-firing only; however, because of their greater speed and maneuverability, the pilots can always manage to make their attack runs head-on — they fire each round, if they choose, no matter whose *air vehicle* totals were highest.

The pilots can use all of their combat skills, including *maneuver, trick, test* and so forth in this battle. They can spend Possibility points to reduce damage to their vehicles. Normally, all damage caused by machinegun fire is against the target vehicle; the gunners can attempt to shoot at Knights visible within the vehicle — the pilot, anyone in a cupola firing a weapon — this is a *vital blow* attack.

PBY Seaplane: Tech 21, Speed 200kph/120mph (value 14), Passengers 20, TOU 17.

Weapons: Three Vickers Machinegun Cupolas, 2 aft, 1 fore; damage 23, range 100/500/1K.

Spitfires: Tech 21, Speed 600kph/380mph (value 16), Passenger 1, TOU 17.

Weapons: One Spandau Machinegun on each; damage 24, range 100/500/1K.

Pilots: DEX 11, STR 9, TOU 10, PER 11, MIN 11, CHA 8, SPI 9.

Skills: air vehicles 14, air vehicle weapons 14, maneuver 14, reality 10, trick 12, test 12, taunt 10, intimidate 12.

Possibilities: 4.

A Small Complication

At about the time the air battle begins, a small complication arises. When the Knights entered the seaplane's hangar, Shul, a mechanic, was inside the airplane, supposedly making some last-minute repairs. However, he had decided to slip into the secret compartment of the plane to catch a quick nap. He slept through any unpleasantness at the base (the compartment is soundproofed), and only awoke once the plane was airborne. At first terrified that Dr. Mobius was on the plane and would punish him severely, he kept hidden. Once the air battle commenced, however, he emerged to offer his services.

Imagine his surprise when he discovers that the plane has been hijacked. Not the subtlest of individuals, Shul decides to do what comes naturally: he picks up heavy things and attempts to bounce them against the heroes' heads.

Shul: DEX 10, STR 14, TOU 12, PER 8, MIN 8, CHA 8, SPI 8.

Skills: reality 9, dodge 12, fire combat 12, unarmed combat 14, trick 10, test 10, taunt 14, intimidation 14, vehicle repair 14.

Possibilities: 4.

Weapons: Luger; damage 14, range 10/25/50. Knife; damage STR +3.

Running the Dogfight

Remember the fight between Indiana Jones and the big hulking bruiser outside of the airplane in *Raiders of the Lost Ark?* Well, the combat in the back of the plane should work like that — except with the added complication of a dogfight in progress.

The pilot of the PBY dives straight down, attempting to avoid the Spitfires, dumping everyone in back in a heap; Shul yanks someone away from his machinegun and tries to throw him out a door; the crates in the back of the plane come loose and slide alarmingly across the floor; a burst of gunfire rakes the PBY's wing, puncturing a gas tank and setting an engine on fire...

Cut back and forth between the action outside the plane and the action inside; keep things moving. Though there are a lot fewer opponents, this is probably a lot more dangerous than the previous encounter.

If the heroes' airplane is mortally wounded, it will stall and head toward the ground. The pilot must make a difficulty 12 *air vehicles* roll to land safely. The heroes must then either repair their vehicle or find other transport to Indonesia.

Searching the Plane

In the crates stored aboard the pontoon plane, the Knights find 10 full diving suits with air tanks, 10 spear guns, 10 octi-grenades, 10 Nile sun blades, and 10 torpedo pistols. See Act Four for their statistics.

Cut To...

As the characters fly off into the darkness, read:

It is dark and very, very cold - outside of the range of Dr. Mobius's artificial sun, it is about 15 degrees colder than it should be. Below you, you see the lights of a few cities and towns bravely attempting to carry on in the face of the unending night, but you know that, if the Earth does not soon begin moving, they will all die in the cold darkness.

Hours pass. You cross the Indian ocean, flying south to avoid Indian airspace — a good thing to do, flying a Nile airplane. Up ahead you see lightning and dark black clouds. It is the border to Orrorsh, the dark realm. Beyond, in what used to be the Indonesian Sea, is your destination. You tighten your seatbelts and prepare to brave the storm.

Act Awards

The heroes should receive three Possibilities for this act.

ACT THREE

It's Always Darkest

The Major Beat

The final act takes the Knights to the Indian Ocean, inside the Orrorsh realm, where they must destroy the machine that has stilled the Earth and return the energy needed to restart the world's spin. They must first get past the outer guardian, a demon named Gibberfat; once past him, they must hold off the machine's inner defenders, skeletal pirates, while one of the Knights reverses the machine.

SCENE ONE: The Dead Sea

The Situation

Dramatic. The plane approaches the area marked on the flight plans, but you would recognize it anyway. A great vortex of energy spirals out of the sky and plunges into the sea, piercing the darkness with unearthly light. According to the charts, you are just north of Christmas Island in the Indian Ocean. The water around the vortex is surprisingly calm.

The Action

First, the Knights must get past Gibberfat, a demon placed here by the Gaunt Man to ward off intruders. Gibberfat has three different forms— that of a great white shark, a giant electric eel, and his true form, a deep red, horned, somewhat portly humanoid. All three must be defeated in turn.

Round One: The Shark

When the Knights land their seaplane, they notice a giant white fin cut the water near their boat. After circling once, the fin disappears. Several seconds later, their plane is rocked as the shark rams it from underneath. The shark continues to attack the plane from underneath, where the plane's machineguns cannot hit it, until the heroes come out to play.

Gibberfat's Great White Shark Form: DEX 12, STR 18, TOU 18, PER 8, MIN 12, CHA 12, SPI 12.

Skills: reality 14, dodge 14, maneuver 14, swimming 14, unarmed combat 14, trick 10, test 14, willpower 14, taunt 14, intimidation 14.

Possibilities: 10.

Natural Tools: hide armor +3, bite 21, ram 18.

Round Two: The Electric Eel

When the shark is "killed," the body sinks out of sight, where it transforms into a giant electric eel. The eel will wait to attack the Knights when they are in the water. (See the sidebar for descriptions of the equipment and weaponry the Knights will most probably use in this battle.)

Gibberfat's Electric Eel Form: DEX 18, STR 12, TOU 12, PER 12, MIN 12, CHA 12, SPI 12.

Skills: reality 14, dodge 20, maneuver 20, shock 20, swimming 20, trick 14, test 14, willpower 14, taunt 14, intimidation 14.

Possibilities: 10 minus those used in round one.

Natural Tools: hide armor +2, electric shock 20.

Round Three: Gibberfat's True Form

Once the eel is killed, its body too will sink into the ocean, where it will transform into Gibberfat's true form, that of a pudgy, bright red humanoid with gills and webbed feet and hands. The demon will swim up to the Knights and tell them in a sonorous voice: "Flee puny humans! Or I will send you to the coldest pit of hell, where you will writhe in agony for all eternity!" He will ruin the effect somewhat by sneezing violently at the end of his recital.

The heroes have two options: if they have brought the egg with them, they can offer it to Gibberfat in exchange for free passage; otherwise, they must fight him.

Bribing Gibberfat

If the heroes have got the egg, Gibberfat takes it eagerly. He thanks them profusely, telling them that he can use it to buy his way out of this unpleasant assignment, bribing the Gaunt Man's demon overseer, an Efreet with a real weakness for fine craftsmanship. He apologizes for his earlier attacks, explaining that "one has to keep up appearances — when the Gaunt Man gives you an assignment, you had better live up to it, you know?"

Beyond that, Gibberfat is an amiable, somewhat vainglorious sort. He's from another plane, doesn't know anything about conditions on this one, and couldn't care less. He can tell the heroes something about the Earth-stopping device (see sidebar), and that there are further guardians below, "some dead humans, I believe. Nasty, reclusive sorts; I'd be careful of them if I were you."

Then he takes his leave, disappearing into a vortex of black light, clutching his precious egg to him.

Fighting Gibberfat

Though he looks pudgy and somewhat ridiculous, Gibberfat is anything but a pushover. He is physically powerful and well-versed in the magic arts. He will use all methods at his disposal to defeat the heroes.

Gibberfat will continue to fight until he is mortally wounded, at which point he is banished back to his own plane of existence for 1,000 years and a day.

Gibberfat in True Form: DEX 14, STR 14, TOU 14, PER 14, MIN 12, CHA 12, SPI 12.

Skills: reality 14, dodge 16, maneuver 16, swimming 16, unarmed combat 16, alteration magic 16, divination magic 16, trick 16, apportation magic 16, conjuration magic 16, test 14, willpower 14, taunt 14, intimidation 14.

Possibilities: 10 minus those used in rounds one and two.

Natural Tools: magical toughness +2, rending claws 17.

Arcane Knowledge: death 3, life 3, inanimate forces 3, living forces 3, water 5, elemental 3, control 3.

Spells:

Charm Person: As spell in Rule Book.

Cold: This spell works exactly as the *Lightning* spell, except that the caster sends out waves of numbing cold for four rounds, effect value of 15. The skill is *alteration inanimate force 19.*

Ink: Similar to *Mage Dark,* but works underwater.

Strength: As spell in Rule Book.

Weakness: As spell in Rule Book.

SCENE TWO: The Final Battle

The Situation

Dramatic. The Knights follow the Vortex down to its source far below the waves. 100 meters down, they find that the vortex funnels into a thin beam and enters a 17th Century shipwreck resting atop an undersea mountain.

The vessel, an old pirate ship, contains the main controls to a gigantic machine that extends far below into the crust of the planet. Guarding the machine is the ship's undead crew of skeletal pirates. To succeed, some of the Knights must hold off the pirates while the others use dramatic skill resolution to deal with the machine.

Treat your descriptions as if they were part of a horror story, for even with their suit lamps, the shadows are thick and murky. Build suspense by telling the Knights they catch movement out the side of their helmets, but they see nothing when they turn. And sound is muffled and strange under the sea and inside a pressurized suit.

When the heroes touch the ship, the vortex begins spinning faster and faster. Several skeletal figures emerge from below decks, walking drunkenly, carrying cutlasses. The dramatic conflict begins.

See the map of the pirate vessel in the pullout.

The Pirates

There are 12 pirates aboard the vessel. They cannot be reasoned with; they cannot be tricked; they cannot be frightened off. They have only one responsibility: to hold off attackers until the Earth-stopping device has a chance to retreat deep into the center of the Earth. They fight until destroyed.

Skeletal Pirates (12): DEX 6, STR 8, TOU 9, PER 4, MIN 6, CHA 2, SPI 12.

Skills: melee weapons 9, swimming 10, unarmed combat 9, trick 8, test (12), taunt 10, intimidation 16.

Natural Tools: Bite 12. Do not take shock damage; cannot be KO'ed. Regeneration: Completely healed when *Villain Up* card is drawn. Can only be stopped permanently if dismembered once "killed" (takes three rounds of concerted breakage).

Equipment: Cutlass, damage STR +5.

The Equipment

There are 10 of each of the following aboard the seaplane, packed in the crates in the back. When clad in a diving suit, a hero can carry up to three of the weapons strapped to his belt where he can get at them easily; any additional equipment must be awkwardly tied or strapped on, requiring two or more rounds to get at.

Diving Suits: These are bulky, cumbersome, 30's-style suits. They are composed of heavy rubber-coated cloth covering torso and limbs, with big steel helmets with little glass portals to the front and sides. They have big airtanks on back, connecting to the helmet, with enough air for two hours. When wearing a suit, a character suffers a penalty of -1 to all *Dexterity , Perception,* and *Strength*-related skills. The suits are equipped with head-mounted lamps and radio communicators.

The suits provide +3 protection. They are segmented & self-sealing; if a section is punctured (the character takes a wound or worse), several gallons of water pours in and then the hole or slash seals. The victim suffers an additional -1 to *Dexterity* and *Strength-based* skills.

If the attacker gets 12 result points or better in one attack, he has cracked the glass on the suit's helmet. The victim begins to drown in a number of rounds equal to his *Toughness* - 6; before that time passes he must activate the emergency escape rockets on the suit's boots; this will propell him immediately to the surface.

Spear Gun: damage 14, ammo 5, range 5/10/25.

Torpedo Pistol: damage 18, ammo 3, range 25/40/100.

Octi-Grenade: damage 20, ammo 1, range 3/5/7.

Nile Sun Blade: (Designed to provide light, and serve as a weapon against Orrorsh creatures) damage STR+5, max 19.

The Infernal Machine

Below deck the Knights find an item that was definitely not aboard the vessel when it sunk. A large machine fills much of the forward hold. The machine is covered with dials, electric globes, switches, and other mechanisms out of a mad scientist's dreams — the vortex control center. Atop the machine is a rotating globe. This is where the tight beam of the vortex terminates.

Beneath the control center, through places where the deck has broken away, the Knights can see that the rest of the machine descends down into the ocean floor. The machine is huge, warm to the touch, and glitters with power. As the Knights study it, it grows appreciably hotter.

The Gaunt Man has somehow imbued the machine with Possibility energy. Any physical, mental or spiritual attacks against it are absorbed as though "bought off" with Possibility points. Short of effects not in any way available to the heroes, the machine cannot be destroyed. It might also be noted that it would do no good to destroy the machine; it would not

restore movement to the Earth. To do that, the machine has to be reversed.

There is a certain urgency to the task, as well. The machine continues to grow hotter from the moment the heroes touch the pirate ship, a security measure placed there by the Gaunt Man: if any Possibility-rated being touches the ship, the device releases some of its stored energy as heat, melting the ground around the machine, causing it to sink deep into the planet's core.

This of course makes it exceedingly difficult for the Gaunt Man to get at the machine to take its stored energy and become Torg, but he figures that he is more capable of doing so than almost anyone else. He's correct.

From the moment they set foot on the pirate ship, the Knights have 20 rounds to fight through the pirates and reverse the machine. Deactivating the machine must be done through dramatic skill resolution; if all steps are not completed by the 20th round, the heroes will have failed and the Earth will not regain its motion. It is also quite likely that they will be parboiled by the heat of the machine, but that's small potatoes when compared to the calamities the rest of humanity will suffer.

Dramatic Skill Resolution

While the pirates attack, some Knights must try to figure out and reverse the Gaunt Man's machine. This is simulated by dramatic skill resolution. Knights may coordinate their efforts on the machine (as long as they are not involved in combat). The coordination difficulty is 8. All coordinating characters must have at least one of the following skills to use: *science; weird science; air, land or water vehicle repair; scholar (engineering); alteration magic; etc.*

The steps involved in this skill test are as follows.

Step A allows the Knights to determine the machine's controls; difficulty 10. Step B allows them to turn off the vortex; difficulty 12. Step C lets them reset the controls to reverse; difficulty 10. Step D throws the proper switches to return the energy to Earth; difficulty 12.

If the Knights only get as far as step B or C by the 20th card flip, the machine collapses through the now magma-hot ocean floor. The Knights cannot return the stolen energy back to the planet, but neither can Mobius use it to become Torg. It is sealed within the machine until the Gaunt Man claims it. You must set your campaign within the Still World (see the World Book).

If the Knights return the energy to the planet, then the machine destroys itself in spectacular fashion (another failsafe so that it cannot be used again). You are ready to begin a *Torg* "Infiniverse" campaign.

The Epic Conclusion

Assuming the Knights use the machine to restore the stolen energy to Earth, once they reach the surface they see a most heartening sight.

As they take off in the pontoon plane to head back home, the sky slowly brightens as the sun rises over the horizon. The Earth has resumed its spin and, although the Raiders are still here, there is hope for the future.

Awards

If the Knights stop Mobius from becoming the Torg but don't restart the Earth, give each character six Possibilities.

If the Knights reverse the machine and restart the planet, give each character 12 Possibilities.

In addition, see Chapter Two of this book for other award guidelines.

The Infernal Machine and Other Loose Ends

As is described elsewhere in full detail, the Gaunt Man has intiated the attack against the Earth for one purpose: to gain the Possibility energy necessary to achieve immortality and become Torg. However, there is another, little-mentioned facet to the process of becoming Torg: the High Lord must, at the same time he infuses himself with Possibility energy, infuse himself with physical energy as well — otherwise, he would literally burst from the power of the Possibility energy he consumed.

The physical energy required is enormous. The Gaunt Man has stolen this energy from the Earth. Basically, the infernal machine has taken the Earth's kinetic energy — that which caused it to spin — and stored it in a huge, otherworldly battery, deep below the planet's surface. The vortex is merely a side-effect of the energy drain.

The Gaunt Man had planned to tap into the device as soon as it had fully drained the Earth of motion, but he was prevented from doing so by the timely intervention of several Storm Knights (see *The Possibility Wars* novel trilogy).

Figuring out the Gaunt Man's intentions, Professor Mobius decided to take advantage of his absence to steal the energy from the device. Mobius sent a party to scout the device; they did so, reporting the existence of the guardian Gibberfat who, after killing several, let the others escape, telling them that he would let anyone pass who carried "a gold and silver egg of unsurpassed craftsmanship and beauty."

Mobius correctly interpreted that to refer to a Faberge Egg, several of which were on exhibit in New York City when the invasion began. Mobius made a deal with his ally Baruk Kaah to trade the egg for weapons — though, of course, without telling Kaah what he wanted it for. The heroes arrived when Mobius sent Shariff to pick up the egg.



Chapter Six

Adventure Ideas

Here are a series of adventure ideas that you can expand into full adventures like "Before the Dawn." You will need to break the acts into scenes, determine where to use standard and dramatic encounters, and design statistics for the characters, creatures, and equipment described.

IDEA ONE:

Terror Island

Setting: Orrorsh.
Theme: Horror.
Goal: To survive and escape.

A thick, lush jungle sprawls in all directions, covering the island. But for all the flourishing life, the island is silent, still. On closer inspection, the plants appear as nightmarish parodies of themselves — sharp thorns drip from tangled vines. Foul fungi hang from bent, twisted trees, which seem to rustle though there is no wind.

And then, breaking the unnatural silence, a terrible sound echoes out of the jungle. And the sound is coming closer ...

Background

In this adventure, a group of Storm Knights is marooned on a small island in Indonesia. The island, in good horror-story fashion, is alive. It is the monster of the story. It hopes to lure the Knights to its lair somewhere in the center of the jungle. The Knights must survive the obstacles that the island throws at them and defeat the monster, or find a way to escape before they are destroyed.

Unknown to the Knights, the island is being explored by Orrorsh Victorians at present, and they have set up a command post on the far side of the island. The Victorians do not know what is going on here either; depending upon the heroes' actions, they may be additional foes or possible allies for the Knights.

ACT ONE: The Crash

The Storm Knights, on their way through the Orrorsh realm, encounter a terrible storm. The storm disables their vehicle (be it plane or ship) and washes them ashore one of the small islands that dot the seas around Indonesia. You can make the opening more exciting by calling for *survival* checks as they battle the elements to survive the crash. Or, if you really want a dramatic opening, they can be stranded some distance from the shore when a huge sea monster attacks. They must then fend off the creature as they rig paddles to get them to shore.

The Knights eventually find themselves on a deserted beach. The beach is surrounded on three sides by the dark jungle, on one side by the ocean. The beach is eerily quiet. No sounds can be heard anywhere, except the constant lapping of the waves.

Decide up front whether or not you want this to be a true test of survival. If so, you can have most of the Knights' equipment lost in the crash. Then they will have to build weapons and other gear from whatever they find in the jungle.

ACT TWO: The Labyrinth

The island is a living, semi-intelligent entity with animal-level cunning. It provides the Knights with a clear path into the jungle, but if they try to go back the way they came they find the path overgrown and blocked off. The island forms a labyrinth of plant



Rick Harris

growth that leads the Knights toward the island's center; the path is filled with minor hazards to weaken the island's prey. As they trek deeper into the jungle, the Knights can encounter any of the following hazards:

Vine covered pits; tangling, thorny, self-propelled plants; man-eating plants; walking trees; human-shaped extensions of the island made from rock, mud, or plants; quicksand; earthquakes; and frightened Victorians (who are also being pursued by the island).

While the Victorians and Knights will probably initially distrust each other; they may eventually agree to ally against the common foe. (In addition, the Victorians make useful mood-setters: whenever the tone gets too light, you can have the heroes stumble across the remains of a soldier, killed in some gruesomely spectacular fashion.)

If the Knights decide to fight their way along the coast (and make some heroic die rolls), they discover the remains of a cargo ship. No sign of the crew remains. But the Knights do find material to make passable firebombs (styrofoam pellets, gasoline, and long-necked soda bottles).

Eventually, the path leads them to the very heart of the island.

ACT THREE: Heart of Darkness

At the center of the island the Knights find an ancient statue. Framed by a living canopy of leaves and brush, the statue resembles a demonic gargoyle. Its stone lips are locked in a permanent grin; its jewelled eyes glow with evil intelligence.

The statue is host to a foul entity that has extended its control to the island itself, and now the island serves as one of Orrorsh's outer defenses. Craving warm flesh and hot blood, the entity has led the Knights to its center of power in order to consume them.

As the heroes approach the statue, the very ground they walk on begins to form itself into huge stone and dirt hands, which attempt to grab and crush them. The statue comes to life and strides toward them as well. The statue is impervious to *all* damage, unless the attack is specifically targetted toward its jewelled eyes. These too are remarkably resistant; however, if destroyed, the whole statue shatters into a million pieces and the stone hands subside. Several minutes later, the island itself begins to break up.

The heroes have only a short time to reach the Victorian camp and the boat that is moored there before the island disintegrates.

IDEATWO:

The Cruise

Setting: Core Earth.
Theme: Mystery.
Goal: Protect Core Earth scientists.

The passengers are enjoying themselves this night, putting the problems of the reality-torn world behind them until the start of the conference in the morning. They talk and joke, but none speak of the invaders. That is for tomorrow, to be discussed in the light.

Then a scream comes from the Lido pool. A figures lies face-down within, framed by a slowly growing red stain. The problems of the world have found even this tiny vessel floating in the Caribbean Sea.

Background

In this adventure, a group of Storm Knights joins the passengers aboard *The Caribbean Lady*, a luxury cruise ship bound for the Caribbean Sea. The Knights have been hired to provide protection for the passengers — scientists from the nations of Core Earth attempting to come up with a defense against the Possibility Raiders.

The United States is host to this gathering, and attending scientists come from the Soviet Union, Australia, West Germany, China, and other nations. But some uninvited guests have stowed away on the ship also — agents from the invading realms.

Each of these agents has his own reason for coming aboard. The Dark Shadow, a pulp villain from the Nile, has been sent by Mobius to disrupt the meetings through sabotage. Brother Pierre, a cyberpriest, is aboard to gather information on the scientific capabilities of the heathen nations that must be purified by the fires of the Cyberpapacy. Lady Yuka is an assassin sent to foster animosity among the Core Earth nations by murdering selected scientists and leaving evidence that blames delegates from another nations. Finally, Lord Bonterre, a vampire from Orrorsh, has been sent by Thratchen to observe the other High Lord's agents, and perhaps assist the Core Earthers if the opportunity to discredit the other Raiders presents itself.

ACTONE: Who Done It?

The Knights are hired as guards for the First Conference of World Scientists They spend some time mingling with the various passengers aboard *The Caribbean Lady* when the first murder is discovered. The victim is a phycisist from Italy, and evidence at the scene points to a German biologist as the likely suspect. Additional murders occur, and the Knights encounter loads of possible suspects, including Brother Pierre. To complicate matters, Lady Yuka decides to play up to one of the Knights in a romantic fashion in order to stay near them in case they get too close to discovering her role in the murders.

ACTTWO: A Dagger in the Dark

The Knights interrupt the Dark Shadow as the villain goes about an act of sabotage. After that battle, they find themselves too late to save the Soviet delegate — an assassin's dagger is buried in her back. Finally, the bloodless body of the Brazilian diplomat leads the Knights to Lord Bonterre. The vampire is powerful and a shape-changer, and unless the Knights can dispatch him quickly, he will escape into the night.

ACT THREE: Assassin Foiled

Deciding that the conference must go on, the remaining scientists meet in the morning. But by being all in one place, they play into the assassin's hands. Lady Yuka and her team of Ninjas cut the lights and begin to stalk the scientists. Now the Knights must defeat the high-tech killers before all of Earth's top scientific minds are murdered. If they succeed, the conference can go on to develop some important theories which may in a year's time yield a defense against the invading realms.

IDEA THREE:

Wizard's Shame

Setting: Aysle, Cyber France.
Theme: Fantasy, Cyberpapacy.
Goal: To stop a war.

The wizard stepped away from his work table, removed his glasses, and wiped them with a dirty cloth, smearing the grease more than removing it. Replacing the glasses onto his long nose, he once again bent to examine the item on the table.

"I have no choice, Quebert," the wizard said to the cat-sized dragon that sat on his shoulder, holding the note up for the dragon to read. "I must kill Bishop Bernard ..."

Background

The wizard Duncan's name comes to the Storm Knights via a dead cyberpriest. The cyberpriest was on his way to exterminate the wizard when the Knights dispatched him. Now all they have is a data readout with Duncan's name, Nottingham address, and extermination order on it.

Though the heroes don't know it, agents from Orrorsh have kidnapped the wizard's daughter. If he does not do what they want, they will kill the young woman. To secure her freedom, the wizard must go to Cyberpapist France and destroy Bishop Bernard, a high-ranking church official, using the most potent spell he can cast in the Avignon reality. This will set in motion a war between the Cyberpope and Aysle, which will keep Lady Ardinay too busy to provide adequate help to the nations of Core Earth — or to bother Thratchen as he fights to secure his own station in Orrorsh.

Since Lady Ardinay is not yet in full command in Aysle, there is no reason to believe that she would emerge victorious from the battle — her defeat at this time would be disastrous to Europe and to the entire Earth.

ACT ONE: Presto Chango!

The Knights arrive in Nottingham, England, at the address of Wizard Duncan. The wizard, who has divined that the Knights would come to stop him, has set a trap for the heroes. Being a good man, he does not want to hurt the Knights, but he does want to detain them so they cannot interrupt his mission. He will not risk his daughter's life by failing the task set before him.

So he prepares a massive spell to change the Knights into something harmless — frogs! After the spell goes off, the wizard apologizes and takes his leave, shutting the Frog Knights up in his English flat. But the Knights are still Possibility-rated heroes, no matter what their form, and they figure that one of the potions on the far table will change them back. All they have to do is survive such hazards as the now giant-sized apartment and the wizard's pets — a snake, three white rats, and a tiny dragon.

ACT TWO: Cyber France

Once the Knights reach the potions and turn themselves back into their original forms, they find the note from Dr. Randall of the Victorian Institute of Science, which tells the wizard that they are holding her daughter and tells him what he must do to get her back. This leads the heroes to France, which is now operating under the axioms of the Cyberpapacy. As Storm Knights, they are marked by the Inquisitor and must deal with his agents and the church police. Then they again pick up the wizard's trail. But he evades them using more spells.

The heroes also discover that the wizard plans to kill the bishop at this evening's midnight mass. That gives them a few hours to find the wizard's daughter before they return to the church to stop Duncan from starting a war between the realms.

Orrorsh has an embassy in Cyber France, and this is where Dr. Randall holds Duncan's daughter. The embassy is guarded by gospog, a ravagon, and the doctor himself, who changes into a berserk monster by downing a vile potion of his own design. The Knights must defeat him to rescue the young woman.

ACT THREE: Burn the Wizard!

With the rescued daughter in tow, the Knights return to the church where Bishop Bernard is holding mass. They arrive just prior to midnight and find that things aren't the way they thought they would be. Duncan has been captured and is tied to a stake set in the church's courtyard. The bishop himself is about to begin a mass which will conclude with the burning of a heathen practicioner of the foul arts.

Of course, Duncan's daughter now pleads with the Knights to save her father. After all, Duncan is a favored advisor of Lady Ardinay, and burning him at the stake will just as effectively begin the war that Orrorsh wants.

To save the wizard, the Knights must defeat the church guards and the attending cygoyles. Bishop Bernard, in typical villain fashion, escapes by inciting the crowd of believers to suicidal action.

OTHER IDEAS

Torg provides many unique opportunities for interesting play. And, because of its very nature, you can play *Torg* without giving up the campaign that you have been playing in for years.

For example, if you have been part of a long-running fantasy campaign and have grown very attached to your characters, you can bring them over into the *Torg* world. On one hand, your fantasy world can be part of Aysle, which has attached itself to Earth. Or, if you want to go back in history, Uthorion could invade your fantasy world for its possibility energy. Even better, instead of Earth being the focus of the Gaunt Man's invasion, your fantasy world can be the cosm he and the other High Lords choose to invade. You could even make your particular roleplaying campaign world a good cosm which decides to attach to Earth in order to help stop the Possibility Raiders. The story is the thing in *Torg*, and there are so many ways to hook into it. The possibilities are literally endless.

"There are always possibilities, my sergeant told me.
But he never had his possibilities torn away
like wings from a fly."

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RULEBOOK

The Near Now ...

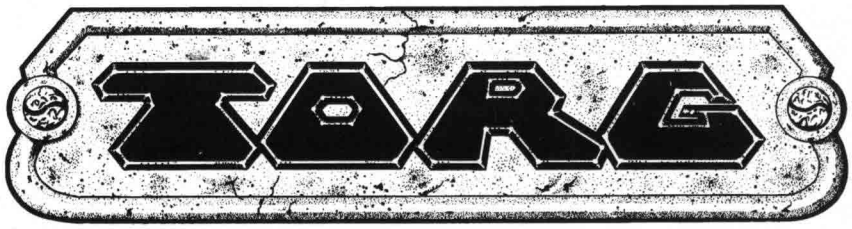
Later today, early tomorrow, sometime next week, the world began to end.

They came from other cosms — other realities — raiders joined together to steal the Earth's living energy ... to consume its possibilities. The Possibility Raiders brought with them their own realities, turning portions of our planet into *someplace else.*

Led by the Gaunt Man — self-proclaimed Torg of the cosmverse — the High Lords each claimed a piece of the Earth for themselves. Baruk Kaah, Pharaoh Mobius, Lord Uthorion, Pope Jean-Malraux I, Kanawa-sama, and the Gaunt Man; each has established his primitive, pulp, dark fantasy, cyberpapacy, high tech, or horror realms on our world, setting the conquest in motion.

But the invasion did not go as the Gaunt Man planned. His millennia of preparation did not take into account the Storm Knights — men and women who weathered the raging reality storms that transformed the planet, retaining their own realities when everything around them changed. Through their actions, these heroes neutralized the Gaunt Man and helped bring the Infiniverse into being. By reflecting the cosmverse over and over, all possibilities became real in an infinite instant. If Earth was destroyed in one cosmverse, there was a chance that it would survive in another. The conquest had been delayed ... for now.

Now, throughout the Infiniverse, on a million-million Earths, the remaining High Lords battle to control the awesome possibility energy of Earth — to become the Torg. And if the Storm Knights cannot stop them, then every Earth will die ...



Roleplaying the Possibility Wars ™

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Introduction

Now it is three months after the initial invasion of Earth, and the invaders' boundaries have stabilized. The Gaunt Man's land of horror extends across Indonesia and Malaysia, though he is no longer there to maintain it. Kanawa controls Japan and parts of the Far East; Mobius holds northern Africa and the Middle East under the sway of the New Empire of the Nile. France, dark and grim, is united by the God-Net of the Cyberpapacy, and the United States and Canada struggle against the shamanistic powers of Baruk Kaah's Living Land. Only in Britain and Scandinavia is there a glimmer of hope, as the Lady Ardinay has arisen to replace the evil Lord Uthorion — though there are rumors that Uthorion still walks the Earth.

And the High Lords are in turmoil; without the Gaunt Man to lead them, they scrabble for power, for the ultimate power of immortality that accompanies the title of Torg.

The rules and background in this box, and the campaign you create with them, describe one of the many Earths now reflected throughout the Infiniverse ... what happens on your Earth, what direction the Possibility Wars take on your world, will be very different from what happens elsewhere — but what you and your players create can and will effect the entire Infiniverse.

What Is Roleplaying?

Roleplaying is simply another way of playing games. Most familiar board games have controlled rules. At the other end of the spectrum are games like Cowboys and Indians, otherwise known as "Let's Pretend." Let's Pretend can be fun, because we get to take on the *role* of a hero, and we control the action and make the game play the way we want it to. The trouble with Let's Pretend is the "I-got-you-no-I-got-you-first" arguments — because Let's Pretend has no *rules*.

Consider roleplaying as Let's Pretend with rules. There is a referee, also called a *gamemaster*, who judges disputes. The gamemaster also sets the scenes and creates the story lines that the players experience through their *characters*. The characters are really the heart of the roleplaying game.

Each player takes the *role* of one character, a participant in the great story being woven by the gamemaster, who plays the roles of all the other characters in the story, called *gamemaster characters*. The player characters' actions will directly affect that story, often changing the course of events in significant ways. The back-and-forth storytelling aspects, the playing of new and unfamiliar roles, and the freewheeling format of the action are what make roleplaying games so challenging and exciting.

Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars

Torg is a multi-genre game system that does what no other game before it has done. It combines the action of the pulps, the heroic adventure of fantasy, and the grim situations of future technology into one all-encompassing game system with one coherent, compelling story!

There are a lot of roleplaying games on the market, and most use similar mechanics to achieve interactive storytelling. In *Torg*, we introduce two brand new concepts.

The first is evident when you open the box: the *Torg* interactive drama cards. These are more than just character cards or equipment cards — they actually help the gamemaster and players control the flow of action, and add to the dramatic storytelling by creating plots and subplots that really fit into an adventure.

The second innovation concerns the nature of interactive storytelling itself. In other roleplaying games, the players interact with the world created by the gamemaster — and that's it. In *Torg*, West End Games has created the computer-moderated *Infiniverse Interactive Campaign Game*, a newsletter that allows your entire gaming group to interact with other gaming groups across the country, and with West End itself, to make the Possibility Wars progress the way *you* want!

Getting Started

In this box you will find the Rule Book (which you're reading now), the World Book, the Adventure Book, the Drama Cards, the Infiniverse Interactive Campaign Game, and a 20-sided die.

After reading this introduction and the "To the Point" section that follows, the next thing to do is read the Player Section of this book. Imagine yourself as a Storm Knight in the world of *Torg*, opposed to the High Lords of the invading realms, dedicated to freeing Earth and its many reflections from tyranny.

After that, if you're planning on just being a player, stop reading. The game and the world of *Torg* will be more exciting for you if you don't know all the secrets of what's going on.

If you want to be a gamemaster, read the World Book next, to get a feel for the background of *Torg*. Then you can come back and read the rules in the Gamemaster Section of this book. When you're ready to run an adventure, read the Adventure Book.

Infiniverse: The Interactive Campaign Game is a newsletter full of useful and interesting information, but can be read last, after you're comfortable with the system.

So, get started with "To the Point," and keep reading the Player Section after that. You'll be ready to play in no time!

To the Point

There are a lot of pages in this box, but you don't need to read all of them to have fun. The mechanics of the *Torg* game are not very difficult at all.

This page explains the essential systems of *Torg;* reading it will make learning the game much easier.

Values and Measures

Torg uses a unique system of "values" and "measures" to translate back and forth between the game and the real world. A *value* is a quantity measured in a way that can be used in the game (such as a *weight value* of 11). A *measure* is a measurement from the real world (such as "160 pounds"). Measures can be translated into values and vice versa, but that is a task for the gamemaster.

Attributes and Skills

All characters have the same attributes, though not in the same quantities. All characters have skills, but types of skills vary from character to character. Skills are rated by *adds*, which is the number you add to your character's base attribute to get the value for that skill. So, a character with a base attribute of 10 and a *running* skill add of 3 would have a *running* value of 13.

The Die Roll

The die included with the *Torg* game is printed with the numbers from 1 to 20. You roll the die each time your character tries to use a skill value or attribute value to accomplish a task.

Whenever a player rolls a 10 or a 20 on the die, he may roll the die again, adding the next roll to the first 10 or 20. The player may keep rolling and adding, until a number which isn't a 10 or 20 appears. He adds in this final number to obtain the *final die roll.*

Generating a Total

Compare the final die roll to the *bonus chart* printed at the bottom of your character template. Beneath each range of final die rolls is a corresponding bonus number. The sum of your skill value and the bonus number is called the *action total.*

Some actions require you to obtain two totals, the first to determine if you succeeded at the action, the second to tell you how well you did. You get a second total by adding the **same bonus** (the die is *not* rolled again) to a different value after your action succeeds. The second total is called an *effect total.*

Beating a Difficulty Number

Some actions are harder than others. Whenever the gamemaster calls for an action total, she also sets a difficulty number for the deed. Your character succeeds **if your action total is equal to or greater than the difficulty number.** If your total is lower, you fail.

Possibility Energy

Storm Knights (player character heroes) can store possibility energy, energy which can temporarily alter the world around them in a variety of ways to allow characters to perform amazing feats.

The Axioms

Each of the invading realms has its own reality. The key to what can and cannot exist, what does and does not work, are the *axioms.* The axioms describe the levels of four basic traits of a world: magical, social, spiritual, and technological.

If an axiom is not high enough to support an activity, performing that activity creates a *contradiction* in that realm. The possibility energy of the realm is organized so as to enforce the axiom levels, eliminating contradictions. The immediate effect of the axiom laws is that equipment, spells and certain creatures foreign to a realm will not work as well in that realm.

Combat

A combat round represents 10 seconds of "game time." In each round, one side gets to perform all its actions; then the other side performs its actions. Initiative is determined by flipping the top card of the drama deck. The side that has the initiative goes first.

Damage

Once a character is hit, a second total (the *effect total*) determines damage. The attacker's damage value is his *Strength,* possibly modified by a melee or missile weapon, or the damage value of the weapon itself (for firearms and other weapons that provide their own energy). The difficulty is the target's *Toughness* (or armor value). The more the difficulty number is exceeded, the more the target is damaged.

Stormers and Storm Knights

As a result of the Possibility Wars, certain people on Earth reach what is called a *moment of crisis.* At that moment, the person gains the ability to manipulate possibility energy, for good or for evil.

The Raiders call these beings *Stormers.* Those that oppose the Raiders prefer to call themselves *Storm Knights.*

Your character is a Storm Knight, opposed to the High Lords of the invading realms. Your goal is to free the Earth from the varying realities and stop the Raiders before they consume the living power of the planet. If they succeed, the world dies.

Those are the basics. Now you're ready to get to the details ...



Player Section



Timothy Bradstreet



Chapter One

Creating a Character

" There may be some people who are born heroes ... but the rest are just folks in a desperate situation who do what most folks wouldn't—they win."

— Colonel Robert Blanchard, Philadelphia Defense Force

Torg: Roleplaying the Possibility Wars is a game that tells of the great struggles between the Possibility Raiders and the heroes of Earth. To take part in these stories you'll need a *character*. A character is a representation, in game terms, of a hero in the world of *Torg*. Here's how you create your own character.

Selecting a Template

There are 24 *character templates* printed in the World Book. The templates describe the types of characters central to the stories of the Possibility Wars. Some are from Core Earth, the portion of Earth not yet conquered by the Possibility Raiders. Others are renegades from the realms of the raiders. Each template has basic game information for the character, as well as background material about the character's motives, and what sort of world he comes from.

Choose a template that appeals to you. You should realize that a character template is only an outline, a character sketch; you provide the imagination and detail that brings the character to life. Not all Soldiers of Fortune, National Heroes, or Doubting Clerics are alike.

However, a group should be balanced. Each character has different abilities — some can fly aircraft, and others are good at medicine. Some come from the invading realms, and have skills not available to characters from Core Earth. Characters from other realms are limited, though, when it comes to Core Earth skills; your Curious Mage may be really hot with magic, but driving a Toyota south on I-71 may be beyond her. Try to get together with the other players and choose your characters with balance in mind.

Copying Templates

The templates are bound in the World Book; photocopying them is a good idea. Each page is divided into two templates, and they are printed front and back. The front of each template has all of the numbers and data necessary for playing the game, while the back has the character's background. Cut the photocopies apart, making sure you have both the front and back parts of your template. If you don't have access to a photocopier, write down the necessary information on a blank sheet of paper. You can refer back to the book to jog your memory about the background; you don't have to copy all of it onto your sheet.

Your character template is your playing piece for *Torg*. You'll want to have your template in front of you when you play, penciling in changes as the game progresses.

Customizing Templates

Next you customize your template, making the character more like what you want him to be. To do this, you'll need to know something about attributes, skills and action values.

Attributes and Skills

All characters have *attributes*. An attribute is defined as an ability that all living beings have. One character may have more of an attribute, such as strength, than another, but all characters have a *Strength* attribute.

There are seven attributes in the game—*Dexterity, Strength, Toughness, Perception, Mind, Charisma* and *Spirit*. We sometimes abbreviate them as DEX, STR, TOU, PER, MIN, CHA, and SPI. The first three are broad measures of physical ability, the next two gauge your character's mental prowess, while the last two measure his spiritual ability. The number listed next to each is the *attribute value*. An attribute of six is poor, eight is average, an attribute of 10 is quite good, and 13 is the normal maximum for Core Earth humans.

Skills are abilities that not every character has. They are usually abilities that can be taught, although some have to be acquired in peculiar ways — in the pulp realm, for example, some skills can be acquired only through a "freak scientific accident which altered the character forever."

Your character template lists all of the skills initially available to your character. One of the skills already has a number (3) filled in on the template. This is your character's best skill, or *character tag* skill. All characters based on the same template — the Soldier of Fortune, for instance — have the same attribute values and tag skills. But you choose the rest.

Choosing Skill Adds

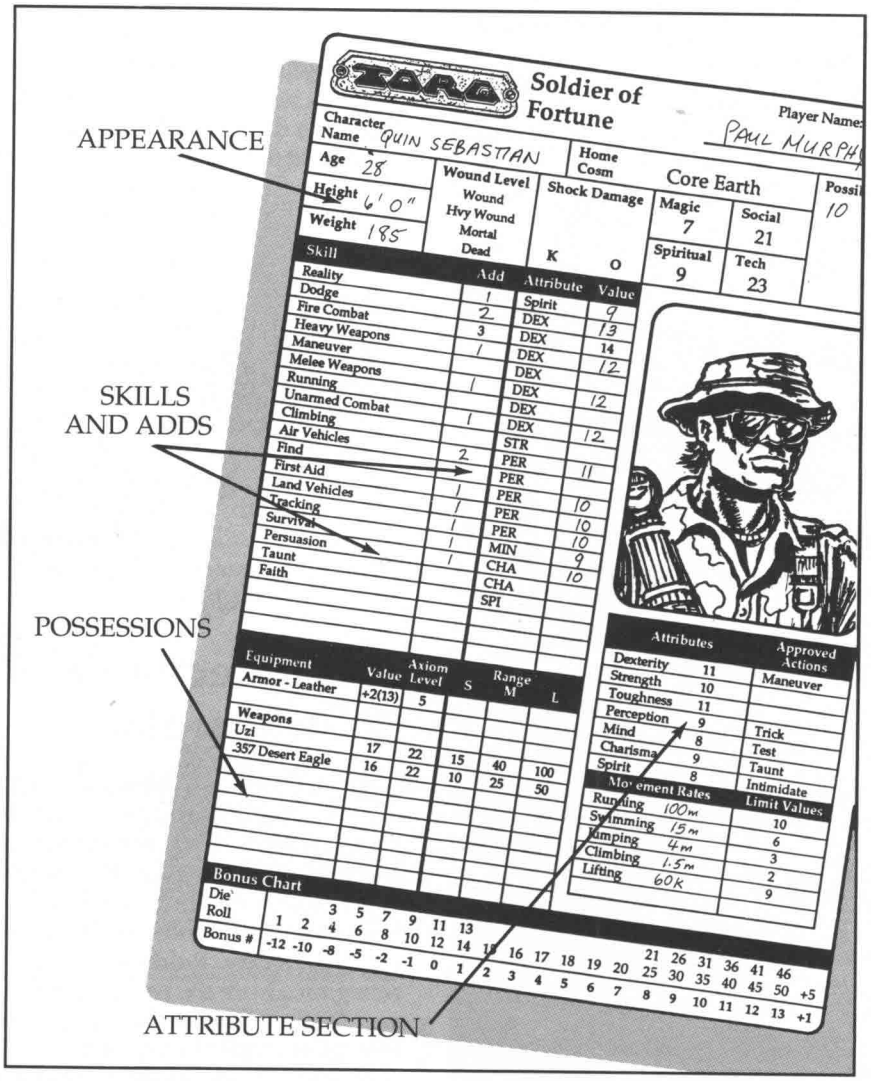
You get to choose which of the available skills your character has, and how good he is at each skill. You have 13 points to distribute among the skills listed on your template. The points are called *adds* (short for 'additions'), and you write down the number of adds allocated to each skill in the "Adds" column. Follow these rules when distributing adds:

1. You must distribute all 13 adds (and no more than 13).

2. You may not allocate more than *three* adds to any one skill. The tag skill

Enter a Soldier

Suppose you choose to be a Soldier of Fortune. This is what the character template looks like:



At the top of the template enter your name, your character's name, "10" in the "Possibilities" box, an age, a height, a weight, and a sex. Decide how you want your character to look, and write a brief description in the "Appearance" section. Other details, such as clothing, posture, and mannerisms, are yours to make up. The more detail you put into a character, the more interesting he will be to play.

In this example Paul Murphy has decided to play a Soldier of Fortune; he names the character Quin Sebastian. The numbers in the attribute boxes are Quin's attribute values, while the skill adds are written next to the skill names. The 3 next to *fire combat* was already printed on the template: *fire combat* is Quin's tag skill. After thinking about Quin for a bit, Paul decides not to take *climbing* or *running* as skills, and then distributes his 13 adds as shown on the sheet.



Alan Jude Summa

already has three adds, so no more may be allocated.

3. You do not have to allocate adds to every skill on your template. If you do not allocate at least one add to a skill, your character does not have that skill. Skills printed in **boldface** cannot be used at all if you don't allocate at least one add.

4. All characters must allocate at least one add to the *reality* skill.

5. Give adds only to skills, not attributes.

Figuring Skill Values

Next to each skill on your template is a column labeled "attribute." In this column is an abbreviation for the attribute on which the skill is based.

Example: On the Soldier of Fortune template are listed *dodge* and *fire combat*, both of which have "DEX" listed in the attribute column next to them. Both skills are based on *Dexterity*. The template also lists *first aid* with "PER" listed in the next column. *Perception* is the base attribute for *first aid*.

The rightmost column is labeled "Value." Here is where you record your character's value for that skill. A *skill value* is equal to your character's **skill add plus the base attribute value**. If your character has not taken an add in a particular skill, do not record a value for that skill.

Example: Quin has a *dodge* add of 2 and a *Dexterity* value of 11, for a *dodge* value of 13. Quin has no *running* skill so he records no value for *running*.

A Brief Look at Action Values

In the stories you play in *Torg*, your character will be confronted with obstacles of all kinds, from primitive tribesmen with shamanistic powers to rickety rope-bridges suspended over dizzying chasms, to pulp gangsters with ruthless henchmen. The outcome of the story often hinges on how, or whether or not, your character overcomes such obstacles.

Whenever your character is confronted by an obstacle, her action value will help determine success or failure. *Action value* is the collective term for both skill value (when you use a skill) and attribute value (when you use no skill, just your raw attribute). However, as we know, life is very variable, and what you can do easily one time may be much more difficult the next time you try. If this weren't true, for example, bowlers would always bowl perfect games!

So, in *Torg*, when your character faces an obstacle, you roll the 20-sided die and consult the *bonus chart* on your character sheet, adding the bonus number there to the action value to get an *action total*. Obviously, the higher your character's values are, the better he is at performing certain tasks, and the better his chance for success.

Equipment

Your template lists your character's starting equipment. All characters begin with some tools of the trade, including weapons. Many begin with money, although the currency is not always what Core Earth locals would consider cold hard cash. Your character is considered to have had time to equip from his home realm as well as from Core Earth. If you want to purchase equipment for your character, see the equipment section on page 132 of this book.

Character Connections

How your character fits in with the rest of the characters is important. Who you know and how you know them helps you decide how to act in a given situation. In heroic fiction, characters who are friends move mountains to help each other or to defeat a common enemy. Connections are possible ways you have of knowing the other characters in the group, a way of starting the heroic bond important to adventure fiction.

Try to come up with a reason your character would feel friendship toward at least one other member of the party. Talk it over with the other players and the gamemaster to come up with connections which make sense. Not all characters need to love each other, and you may even want some dramatic tension between them, but there has to be enough chemistry to bond the group together through all of the travails and troubles ahead — after all, adventuring isn't as much fun if you have to do it alone.

Here are some ideas of how characters might know each other:

Escaped Together

The characters may be from the same cosm, in which case they may have joined forces while fleeing a High Lord's minions. Characters from Core Earth might meet each other in a city while taking refuge from the invaders.

Called

If characters are from different cosms, perhaps one was called to seek the other(s). A character who is called (by a deity, a message from another cosm, or simply by "destiny") has a good reason to leave his home cosm.

Same Home Town

The characters may be from the same home town or region. The attachment to their home area gives the characters an element upon which to share a sense of loyalty.

Previous Missions

The characters may have worked together before. The players should agree on the extent and nature of their previous experience. Characters from the same cosm could have more of a shared past than characters from different cosms.

Employee

One of the characters might have employed the other. A character with status or wealth, such as the Disgruntled Corporate, may have hired the Soldier of Fortune to perform a dangerous mission, or to act as a bodyguard.





Relatives

Any characters from the same cosm can be relatives. Relatives often like each other, but even when they don't they usually feel an obligation to each other. If another character is your relative, think about their relationship with the rest of the family. Was your family ravaged by the Possibility Raiders? If your family is still intact, do you know where they are?

Reputation

If a character is famous, or has a reputation, other characters may seek him out. In the disorganization and upheaval following the Possibility Raiders' invasion of Earth, charismatic figures could attract other characters, giving the group a focus. Perhaps a National Hero fought in a highly publicized battle, or a Doubting Cleric's parish church became a rallying point for opposition to the invasion.

Previous Institution

Characters may have spent time at the same school or university. They may have worked for the same company, or held government posts in the same agency. Maybe they served in the military together.

Current Institution

The characters may be attending or working for the same institution. This list is like that above: government agencies, the military, private corporations or foundations. Perhaps they work for the Red Cross in disaster relief; there is certainly plenty of disaster to go around.

The Rest of the Sheet

Most of the remaining sections of the *Torg* character sheet are self-explanatory. There are two things, though, that bear further explanation.

Cosm

A cosm is a reality, a dimension which is physically separate from other worlds and other realities. Each character has a *home cosm*, which is where he is from, and which describes the sort of reality he is used to living in. Core Earth is the cosm of Earth, the Earth not under the control of a Possibility Raider — the Earth we are used to. Each of the other realms on Earth is part of a cosm under the control of a Possibility Raider, called a High Lord.

Characters not from Core Earth are presumed to have had good reason to quarrel with the High Lords or their minions; being a possibility-rated character (having the *reality* skill on your template) is reason enough for someone connected to a High Lord to take notice of you.

For a brief overview of the cosms, see the World Book.

Possibilities

All templates begin with 10 Possibilities (unless noted otherwise). Enter "10" in the Possibilties box. Possibilities help your character succeed against terrible odds, just like a hero of fiction.

Can I Play Something Else?

Twenty-four templates is quite a lot, but what if the exact sort of character you want to play isn't one of them? The character templates are provided to make creating a character quick and easy, but there are other ways.

The first choice is to tinker with a template. Talk the changes over with your gamemaster to make sure your character fits into the sort of game she plans to run.

If none of the templates suit your taste, you can create a template from scratch. The rules on page 141 tell you how. We recommend that you take a template for your first game; creating your first character from scratch can take a good deal of time.

Start Now

Choose your character template and customize it. Then, read the rest of the Player Section. Better yet, if there are other players who have read or played the game, have them explain the basics to you. Then you'll be ready to go!



Chapter Two

The Basics

"Knowledge of the basics may not always save your life, but it certainly enhances your probabilities."

— *Dr. Hachi Mara-Two*

This chapter teaches you enough of the rules to play. The rules are covered in greater detail in the Gamemaster Section, but only the gamemaster really needs to read those chapters.

Values and Measures

Because *Torg* uses a unique system to translate back and forth between the game and the real world, we've created terms to distinguish game numbers from "real" numbers. A *value* refers to a quantity measured in a way which can be used in the game, such as a *Strength* of 11. A *measure* is a measurement from the real world, such as "150 pounds." Measures can sometimes be translated into values, and vice versa, but that is a task for the gamemaster (see Gamemaster Chapter Two). For instance, the gamemaster has a way to find out whether a *Strength* value of 11 is enough to lift a measure of 150 pounds.

Attributes and Skills

All characters have the same attributes, though not in the same quantities. All characters have skills, but types of skills vary from character to character. Skills are rated by *adds*, which is the number you add to your character's base attribute to get the value for that skill.

Example: Quin Sebastian has *land vehicles* add of 1. *Perception* is the base attribute, with a value of 9. Whenever Quin tries to drive or operate a land vehicle, his value is 9+1 or 10.

What If I Don't Have a Skill?

Sometimes your character is faced with an obstacle requiring a skill he doesn't have an add for. In this case, the character acts *unskilled.*

When performing an unskilled action, use the base attribute for that skill as the skill value; in addition, a character performing an unskilled action loses the roll again on 20 benefit (see "The Die Roll," on page 13). This limits his chance of gaining great success or performing really difficult feats.

Example: Quin needs to pick a lock. He does not have the *lockpicking* skill, but he has a *Dexterity* of 11. His *lockpicking* value is 11, and he does not get to roll again on a 20.

Some actions may not be taken by unskilled characters. The skill descriptions (Gamemaster Chapter Three) specify which actions may not be attempted unskilled. For example, Quin would fail any attempt at surgery as *medicine* may not be used unskilled.

If a skill is printed on your character's template, your character can learn the skill. If it is not, your character may not begin the game with an add in that skill; she may be able to learn it later, after she has gained some knowledge of the world. For example, a character whose home cosm is the

Living Land cannot start with *air vehicles* skill, but it is possible that the character may later learn the skill.

The Die Roll

The die included with the *Torg* game is printed with the numbers from 1 to 20. You roll the die each time your character tries to use a skill value or attribute value to accomplish a task. The higher the roll, the better your character does at the action he is trying.

There is a roll-again rule which lets some rolls get really large, allowing characters to perform the same spectacular feats as heroes in fiction. Whenever a player character rolls a 10 or a 20 on the die, the player may roll again, adding the next roll to the first 10 or 20. If the next roll is also a 10 or 20, the player may keep rolling and adding, until a number which isn't a 10 or 20 appears. He adds in this final number to obtain the *final die roll.*

Example: Paul rolls a 10, and being lucky follows it with a roll of 20; his third roll is an 8, for a final die roll of 38 (10+20+8).

Generating a Total

In *Torg,* the success of all actions is determined by an *action total.* To generate an action total, roll the die as explained above and compare the final die roll to the *bonus chart* printed at the bottom of your character template. Beneath each range of final die rolls is a corresponding bonus number. **The sum of your skill value and the bonus number is called the action total.**

Example: The gamemaster asks Paul to generate Quin's *land vehicles* total. If Paul rolled the 38 from the previous example, his bonus number would be 11. Quin's *land vehicles* value is 10; the *land vehicles* total is 21 (11 + 10).

A negative bonus number reduces the value. Adding a negative number is just like subtracting.

Example: The gamemaster calls for another *land vehicles* roll from Quin. Paul rolls a 2. The bonus is –10; Paul subtracts 10 from Quin's *land vehicles* value of 10, to generate a total of zero.

As shown on the bonus chart, if you are lucky enough to get a roll larger than 50, your bonus number increases by one for every five points (or part thereof) of the final die roll in excess of 50.

Example: A spectacular series of rolls yields a final die roll of 73! This is 23 points higher than a 50, so dividing by five and rounding up gives a bonus of five more than the maximum shown (13). The bonus number is 18 (13 + 5).

The Effect Total

Some actions require you to obtain two totals, the first to determine if you succeeded at the action, the second to tell you how well you did. You get a second total by adding the **same bonus** (the die is *not* rolled again) to a different value after your action succeeds. The second total is called an *effect total.*

The most common use of an effect total is combat. You generate the first total to hit, and the second to determine the extent of damage. The second total is usually referred to by its function; "damage total" for determining damage, "speed total" for movement in a chase, and so on.

Example: *The whine and twang of bullets hitting too close caused Quin to gun his Land Rover to top speed along the ridge, with the troops of the Nile Empire in hot pursuit. As he careened down a hill, a familiar outcropping of trees brought a lump of hope to his throat; he brought the Land Rover to a screeching halt. With a shout of glee, he pulled aside the camouflage netting at the side of the road, revealing a cache of serviceable anti-armor missiles he had previously hidden. Seconds later, as one of the enemy jeeps came over the hill, Quin opened fire.*

Quin's *heavy weapons* value is 12. The missile has a damage value of 27. Paul rolls a 14 (bonus of 1) for a *heavy weapons* total of 13. The gamemaster says 13 is a hit. Quin's player then checks for damage. Adding the missile's damage value of 27 to the bonus of 1 yields a damage total of 28.

As the missile struck home, the lead jeep flipped out of control and began to burn. The other jeeps scattered and headed for cover. Grinning broadly, Quin dashed back to his Rover. That ought to slow them for awhile.

Beating a Difficulty Number

Some actions are harder than others. Whenever the gamemaster calls for a skill or attribute total, she also sets a difficulty number for the deed. Your character succeeds **if your total**

THE BONUS CHART

Bonus Chart

Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	**-12**	**-10**	**-8**	**-5**	**-2**	**-1**	**0**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**	**8**	**9**	**10**	**11**	**12**	**13**	**+1**

is equal to or greater than the difficulty number. If your total is lower, you fail.

The Gamemaster Section has rules for setting the difficulty numbers.

Example: *With a hairpin turn followed by a sharp left, Quin found himself in a narrow defile, safe for the moment. His grin was interrupted by the squeal of the Land Rover's brakes as he brought the vehicle to a stop five feet from the edge of a deep gorge. Quin could hear the sound of the remaining pursuit closing in.*

Paul decides that Quin is going to jump the Land Rover across the cliff. The gamemaster informs him that as Land Rovers do not fly, the jump is almost surely fatal; he assigns the task a difficulty of 22. Paul checks Quin's *land vehicles* value; it's a 10.

He rolls a 20, followed by a 10, followed by a 13; a final die roll of 43! The bonus number for this roll is 12. The total is 22, just enough for Quin to make it!

"Grow wings," growled Quin as he backed up, then gunned her forward. The Land Rover roared in response, throwing the soldier back against the seat as the vehicle leaped across the gorge, bouncing roughly on the other side. Quin howled in triumph.

Opposed Actions

If you are opposed by another character, his attribute or skill totals are often your difficulty number. If your total equals or exceeds your opponent's attribute or skill total, your action succeeds.

Sometimes your opponent's total will not include a bonus (i.e., no die roll). Then you must exceed his raw attribute or skill value with your total.

Example: Quin has a *dodge* value of 13. An opponent would have to get a total of 13 or better to hit Quin with a pistol shot.

Possibility Energy and Storm Knights

Storm Knights can store possibility energy, energy which can temporarily alter the world around them. This is the energy the Possibility Raiders seek, and is perhaps the heroes' most powerful tool for defeating the schemes of the High Lords. It can be used in a variety of ways to allow characters to perform amazing feats.

Possibilities and the Die Roll

When attempting an action, you may spend one Possibility and roll the die again, adding the number rolled to the final die roll. No more than one Possibility may be spent on any one action. You may spend a Possibility **after** seeing your first roll. As possibility energy is so potent, any extra roll that is less than 10 counts as a 10 (but, of course, does not grant further rolls unless the extra roll is actually a 10 or 20).

Example: In the gorge-jumping example above, Quin got very lucky. What if he had been a little less lucky, rolling a 20 followed by a 9 (die roll of 29, giving a bonus of 9) for an action total of 19? Since the difficulty was 22, the first answer is that the Land Rover crashes in flames at the bottom of the gorge, as the jump fails. For Quin's player the better answer is to spend a Possibility and roll the die a third time, adding the number to his final die roll; if Paul gets a 12 on the third roll, the final die roll is 41, giving him a bonus number of 12 for a total of 22. Quin safely makes the jump.

Countering Possibilities

Whenever an enemy spends a Possibility to alter a die roll, your character may cancel the extra die roll by spending a Possibility himself. You must counter at the moment the enemy spends a Possibility, **before** the die is rolled. Both points are spent, and there is no extra roll. This works both ways — the gamemaster characters can spend Possibilities to counter your extra rolls as well.

Example: Count Von Starker is firing a pistol at Quin with a skill of 13. He needs a total of 13 to hit Quin.

The gamemaster rolls a 7, for a bonus of –2; the shot will miss. The gamemaster announces that Von Starker is spending a Possibility on the shot; Paul says he will counter. Both Quin and Starker cross off one Possibility, and the roll stands.

Countering Effects

Characters may spend a Possibility to rid themselves of the effects of damage. No more than one Possibility may be spent to rid your character of damage (see "Combat" later in this chapter) from a single blow. Possibilities spent to avoid damage may not be countered.

Example: Quin is hit by a shot from a .38! The gamemaster tells Paul that Quin has suffered a wound, and a knockout. Paul grimly spends a Possibility; Quin is only shaken by the shot.

The crack of the pistol was followed by a searing pain as the bullet struck Quin in the shoulder. "Just a flesh wound," he muttered, as his Uzi spat death into the night.

Possibilities and Reality

Reality works differently between one cosm and another (see "The Axioms" later in this chapter), and possibility energy constantly flows to maintain the reality — meaning that equipment, magic, and even skills from your home cosm might not work so well in an alien cosm.

A character in a foreign cosm may spend a Possibility and cocoon himself in a "reality bubble" for 15 minutes. During that time, everything — technology, magic, etc. — works for that character as it would work in his home cosm. There are restrictions, but leave those to the gamemaster.

Example: Quin is in a "pure zone" of the New Empire of the Nile. In the pure zone of a lower tech level, his Uzi simply does not work. If he wished, Quin could spend a Possibility to make the automatic weapon work for 15

minutes. During this time, Quin's other equipment (his night scope, his antiseptic spray, his tear gas grenades) would also work.

Possibilities are a powerful tool for getting your character out of a jam. But once you spend them they are gone, so spend them wisely.

Non-Combat Interaction

In *Torg*, interaction between characters is very important. Your abilities with these skills can be as useful, if not more so, than your ability in combat. The interaction skills are: *charm, persuasion, intimidation, taunt, trick* and *test of wills.*

Charm

Charm is used to change the attitudes of characters you meet. The base difficulty for *charm* is the target character's *willpower;* if the target has no *willpower* skill, use his *Mind* instead. A successful *charm* improves the target character's attitude toward your character. There are five possible attitudes: *enemy, hostile, neutral, friendly,* and *loyal.* To make a *charm* attempt you must tell the gamemaster what you are saying or doing that would improve the target's attitude toward you.

Each successful *charm* **temporarily** improves the target character's attitude by one step — from *hostile* to *neutral,* for example. After a time (at the gamemaster's discretion), charmed characters return to their *base attitude,* which was the character's attitude toward you before the charm attempt began.

Charming characters who like you is easier than charming characters who hate you. The gamemaster will let you know how well you've done in a *charm* attempt.

An unsuccessful or minimally successful *charm* prohibits your character from any further *charm* attempts on his target (for a while, anyway), although you may "press the issue". If you roll better than you need to *charm* a character, you can continue to *charm.*

Pressing the Issue

If you fail a *charm,* or if your *charm* is only minimally successful, you must stop the *charm* attempt, unless you want to risk *pressing the issue.* This simply means that you ignore your first failure and try again.

If you press the issue, you are allowed one more attempt, regardless of how successful you are. As usual, a successful result improves the target's temporary attitude one step.

However, if you press the issue and *fail,* the target character's attitude is immediately **worsened**, as he is now aware that you have been putting on the charm.

Example: *Crowfire sat herself down by the campfire. She had long ago noticed the tension in the other seated warriors, but chose to ignore it. The shaman, Iwesaka, emerged from the Stone Meeting.*

"We have disturbing news, my people," the shaman intoned. He whirled to stare at Crowfire. "We have a traitor among us, a traitor who has betrayed us to the Walking Dead!"

Crowfire stood up to face the shaman. "It saddens me to see that you misunderstand me and my actions. I thought we were friends, Iwesaka. Do you not remember the times that we hunted together? Was I not honorable, always?"

Crowfire has a *charm* value of 14. Her player tries to *charm,* rolling a 10 followed by a 14 for a final roll of 24 (bonus of 8). Crowfire's *charm* total is 22. The gamemaster says that is enough to temporarily bump the shaman from *hostile* (his base attitude) to *neutral,* and that Crowfire may continue to *charm.*

Crowfire tries again, getting a *charm* total of 18. The gamemaster announces another, minimal success, saying the shaman seems to have undergone a real change of heart and is now *friendly* toward Crowfire. Does she want to press the issue? The player stops right there; she doesn't want to take a chance on losing what she's already gained.

The shaman looked down, shame and memory playing across his face. "Perhaps you have been misjudged," he said with relief, "but the time to decide right and wrong is during the light hours. We shall talk on this in the morning."

After a successful *charm,* a character's **base attitude** toward your character might improve by one step. Your gamemaster will let you know.

Persuasion

The base difficulty for *persuasion* is the target's *willpower* value; if the target does not have the *willpower* skill, use his *Mind.*

Persuasion is used to persuade a character to take a suggested course of action. You can *persuade* a character to see things your way even if you do not *charm* him (but it's usually easier if you do). When you *persuade* a character, you have to tell the gamemaster exactly what you are trying to get him to agree to, such as "Crowfire wants the MP to agree to let her past the checkpoint." If you fail your *persuasion* attempt, you may not try to *persuade* the target character any further on any subject. *Persuasion* is made against the current attitude of the target, including any improvement due to *charm* (obviously, the *persuasion* attempt must be made soon after the *charm,* or the target will return to his base attitude).

The extent to which a character agrees to your suggestion depends on his current attitude toward your character. Even if you successfully *persuade* a hostile character, he is unlikely to do as much for you as would a friendly character.

Example: *"Hold on a minute, Starker," Quin said boldly as he desperately cast about for a way to stay his execution. "I have information you might wish to hear. I suggest you put down the gun."*

Paul is trying a desperate *persuasion* on an enemy character. In typical fashion he gets a huge roll and actually succeeds at *persuading* Starker. This does not mean he can have Quin order his deadly enemy to jump out a window — but Starker will stop and listen to what Quin has to say.



The villain considered for a moment, then smiled. "Certainly," he said. "But no tricks, now, or I'll gun you down like a dog."

Intimidation

Intimidation is used to prevent another character from taking action against your character, or at least to reduce his bonus against you. It can also be used to gain information from a character. The target of an *intimidation* is the other character's *intimidation* or *Spirit*.

If your *intimidation* is successful enough, the intimidated character's actions are reduced in effectiveness. A really successful use of *intimidation* (called an attempt to *awe* a character) prevents the character from acting against you as long as you do not attack him. He might even give up, or give in.

Example: *Quin arched his head over the hedgerow, taking in the sight of five guards near the factory fence. He and The Yellow Crab, a pulp-inspired hero from the New Empire of the Nile, were here to investigate rumors that Kanawa Ltd. was linked to the Possibility Raiders. They had to get inside.*

The Crab grabbed Quin's arm. "Let me take care of them, Quin."

The Crab tries to *intimidate* the guards. His *intimidate* value is 12. The *Spirit* of the guards is 8. Chris, the Crab's player, generates a total of 14. The result is good, but not great.

"I suggest you do nothing foolish, for I ... I am the Yellow Crab!" The guards hesitated for a second, then drew their weapons and blazed away wildly. The Crab dove for cover as the frightened guards' shots went wide.

Intimidation can also be used to interrogate a captive. In this case, the target's attitude toward the person or thing you want information about helps determine your chance for success.

Example: *"So tell me," Quin said, smacking the club into his hand with a steady, dangerous sound. "When is the raid planned?"*



Bob Dvorak

Quin is using *intimidation* to gain information from a captured Nile Empire shocktrooper with a *Spirit* of 9. The shocktrooper is loyal to his master, and will not reveal any information unless Quin gets a very high level of success. If the subject was a Nile Empire stoolie who was neutral about Dr. Mobius (High Lord of the Nile Empire), a smaller roll would suffice.

A failed interrogation roll means that no further information may be gained by that questioner from that target.

Test of Wills

Test of Wills (short form: *test*) is used to slow your opponent's reactions. With spectacular success, you can actually get an opponent to flee or surrender with a *test*. The target of a *test* is the other character's *test* skill or *Mind*.

Taunt

Taunt is used in a manner similar to *persuasion*, but is most often used to **force** a character to act rather than **preventing** her from acting. The target of a *taunt* is the other character's *taunt* or *Charisma*.

When you *taunt* an opponent, you should tell the gamemaster what effect you'd like the *taunt* to have. If your total is high enough and the gamemaster allows the effect, the opposing character will do what you want.

Example: *The Crab stared at the shopkeeper in mock disbelief. "You want me to pay* what *for the horse? Have you forgotten all the teachings of your parents, just because you're too fat to go to worship on Holy Days? That price is usury!"*

As you can see, the Yellow Crab is *taunting* his opponent. Chris says he would like the *taunt* to make the shopkeeper ashamed so that she will **give** the Crab the horse. Chris then generates a *taunt* total of 18. The shopkeeper's *taunt* value is just a little too high for Chris to get full effect; however, the gamemaster rules that the *taunt* has caused the shopkeeper to lower her price by 20 percent.

Trick

Trick is also similar to *persuasion*, in that it can be used to force an opponent to act in a specific way.

The use of a *trick* allows a check against the target's *trick* or *Perception* with the object of slowing him down or negating his action. You should announce a desired effect before rolling for the *trick*. If your total is high enough, the opponent acts as you desire.

Combat

"The object of life is the death of your enemies."

— *Kurst of Orrorsh*

In a roleplaying game, combat isn't often fought on a board. Usually, the combat situation is described to you by the gamemaster; she describes your surroundings, your opponents and what actions your enemies are taking. Then she goes around the table asking each player what his character is doing this round. When she comes to you, tell her what your character is doing, and what skills he is using. **If you have a defensive skill, you are always assumed to be using that skill passively unless you state you are taking an active defense** (see "Defensive Skills" on page 18).

How Long Does It Take?

A combat round represents 10 seconds of "game time." Resolving a combat round takes longer than 10 seconds of real time, but for your character only 10 seconds have passed.

Who Goes First?

In each round, one side gets to perform all its actions; then the other side performs all its actions. Actions are *not* simultaneous. Initiative is determined by flipping the top card of the drama deck (see Player Chapter Three).

The side that has the initiative goes first. Of the characters on a side, the one with the highest *Dexterity* value goes first; the other characters act in descending order of *Dexterity*.

How Many Things Can I Do?

While there are many different types of action your character can take, you may only roll the die for one of them in any round.

The possible actions are: *attack, defend, maneuver, movement, simple action, intimidation, taunt, test of will,* and *trick*.

Action Descriptions

An *attack* action is the action your character takes to damage a target. An attack action always requires a die roll.

A *defend* action is the use of a defensive skill such as *dodge* or *melee defense* (see below). You do not have to roll a die, but if you do your defense will be increased.

Maneuver gets your character to a better position than before (see Player Chapter Three).

A *movement* action allows your character to move faster than his base movement rate. You may roll for a movement total to try to increase your character's speed.

A *simple action* is one such as shouting commands, flipping a switch, or similar easy tasks which require no die roll to perform.

An *intimidation* is a check against your opponent's *intimidation* or *Spirit* value. A successful *intimidation* gives you a tactical advantage (see Player Chapter Three).

A *taunt* is a check against your opponent's *taunt* or *Charisma* value.

A *test of will* is a check against your opponent's *test* or *Mind*.

A *trick* is a a check against your opponent's *trick* or *Perception*. A successful result on *taunt*, *test*, or *trick* wins you a tactical advantage.

Note: A simple action and/or a passive defense may be combined with any other action.



Defensive Skills

Some skills can make your character harder to hit. If your character has the *dodge* skill, his *dodge* value is the difficulty number for an opponent's fire combat or missile attack. This is called a *passive* use of the skill because no die roll is involved.

Your *melee* skill may also be used as a defensive skill, if you have a melee weapon; your *melee* value is the difficulty number for an opponent's unarmed or melee attack. Your *unarmed combat* skill value is the difficulty number for an opponent's unarmed attack if you do not have the *melee* skill or a *melee* weapon.

Active Use

A defensive skill may be used *actively*, if you announce your action as the use of a defensive skill (such as *dodge*). You may generate a defensive skill total for all attacks against your character in the round in which you announce active defense.

When rolling a bonus for an active defense, **treat all bonus numbers of less than one as one**. This makes sure your character does better by taking an active defense instead of passive.

Example: Quin decides to evade P-slug fire from the Karawa guards (he takes an active *dodge*). His *dodge* value is 13. The guards open fire, generating attack totals of 13 and 16. Paul's *dodge* total cannot be lower than 14 against the first attack, so the first guard misses. Against the second guard, Paul rolls and generates a total of 17. Quin just barely evades the second shot.

Declare whether or not you are rolling for your defensive skill prior to the rolls of your attackers. If you use an active defense, you may not roll for any other action that round. This is true even if the attackers roll so poorly that an active defense is not needed; your character is still focused on avoiding attack that round.

Attack Skills

Attack skills include *energy weapons*, *fire combat*, *heavy weapons*, *unarmed*, *melee*, and *missile*. Magic and spiritual skills can sometimes be used as attack skills. When using an attack skill, if your skill total is equal to or higher than the difficulty number of the attack, your character hits his opponent. The difficulty number is either an opponent's defensive skill, or his *Dexterity* if he has no skill.

Damage

"Hitting an adversary is necessary but not sufficient."

— *Dr. Hachi Mara-Two*

Once a character is hit, a second total (the *effect total*) determines damage. The attacker's damage value is his *Strength*, possibly modified by a melee or missile weapon, or the damage value of the weapon itself (for firearms and other weapons that provide their own energy). The difficulty is the target's *Toughness* (or armor value). The more the difficulty number is exceeded, the more the target is damaged. Your gamemaster will tell you the specific effects.

Remember that to get an effect total, you use the same bonus number that generated the first total.

Example: Quin's Uzi has a damage value of 17. His roll to hit was 15 for a bonus of 2; this gives a second total of 19 (17+2). The guard has a lined vest with an armor value of only 12, so Quin did damage.

Types of Damage

A character can suffer up to three types of damage when he takes a blow: *shock*, *knockout condition* and *wounds*. An additional, temporary effect called a *knockdown* is also possible. When your character is hit, the gamemaster will tell you what kind or kinds of damage the character takes.

Shock damage is expressed as a number. Record shock damage in the "Damage" section of your character template. When the total number of shock points taken equals or exceeds your character's *Toughness*, he falls unconscious.

Knockout conditions represent blows to vulnerable areas. Knockout conditions are marked by the letters "K" and "O." The gamemaster will tell you if you take a K blow; record this on your template. If a character with a K-condition takes another K blow, two additional shock points are taken. If a character with a K later gets an O, he is knocked unconscious.

Wound damage is damage that lingers. There are four levels of wound severity: *wounded*, *heavily wounded*, *mortally wounded*, and *dead*. When your character takes a wound, record this on your template. Wounds are cumulative: a *heavily wounded* character who takes another *wound* is now *mortally wounded*, and so forth. When a character reaches the *mortally wounded* level, he will soon die unless he receives medical attention.

Another possible result is a knockdown. This represents the force of the blow physically knocking a character off his feet. A character who has been knocked down may only defend for his next action.

Possibilities and Damage Reduction

A player may spend a Possibility to reduce the damage his character takes from the current blow. Each Possibility may do three of the following:

1. Remove three points of shock damage from the blow.
2. Remove a knockout condition from the blow.
3. Remove a knockdown result.
4. Remove one level of wound.

A player may spend one Possibility to reduce damage from a single blow. The Possibility is spent **after** the blow is taken. Cards (see the next chapter) that act as Possibilities may be spent **in excess** of one.

Example: A guard gets off a good shot at the Yellow Crab, resulting in a *wound*, a K, and four shock points. Chris spends a Possibility to rid the Crab of the *wound*, the K-condition, and three shock. The Crab takes one shock point.

Example: In a hail of gunfire, Quin takes a *mortal wound*, a "KO" and five points of shock. Quin needs to stay

conscious, but he has already taken some shock damage. One Possibility gets rid of three points of the shock damage, and the K, leaving Quin with the ability to remove only one wound level; he ends up with a *heavy wound*. If he had a "hero" or "drama" card, he could eliminate all the remaining damage.

Healing

Each type of damage takes a different amount of time from which to recover.

Shock damage is removed at a rate of one point per minute. The O portion of a KO is removed in one minute. A character regains consciousness when her total shock damage taken is less than her *Toughness*, and she is not KOed. A K requires a half an hour to go away.

Once a day, beginning with the day after the wound was taken, a wounded character is entitled to a healing roll. The "skill value" is the character's *Toughness* (a measure of his or her vitality as well as resistance to damage) and the difficulty number is the character's *Toughness* as modified by the wound level. If the healing check is successful, the wound improves one level. An attending physician can help your character make a healing check (your gamemaster will explain how).

Example: Quin has taken a *heavy wound* in combat. The next day Quin makes a healing roll. The skill value is his *Toughness*, an 11. The difficulty number is his *Toughness* plus 3, a 14. He rolls a total of 12. The wound does not improve. Quin should probably seek medical attention, a fact that the Yellow Crab helpfully points out.

WOUND HEALING CHART

Wound Level	Difficulty #
Wound	*Toughness*
Heavy Wound	*Toughness* +3
Mortal	*Toughness* +6

First Aid

A successful *first aid* check stabilizes a mortally wounded character, preventing him from dying. In addition, *first aid* removes all shock and knockout conditions, and lets the treated character regain consciousness. A character cannot be permanently healed by *first aid*.

Movement in Combat

On your template, to the right of the skill section, is a section for your movement rates and values; the movement rate given is in meters per round. The rate assumes you are running (or otherwise moving) full tilt.

You may announce a movement action and generate a movement total to try to go faster than your movement rate. Movement is like a defensive skill in that any bonus less than one is treated as one when you make an active movement roll. Ask your gamemaster for advice.

If you are walking, you can walk 10 meters per round. Any movement at a rate greater than 10 meters per round is considered running.

The Axioms

Each cosm has its own reality; dragons which are real in fantasy are not physically possible in the Living Land of the primitives, and would have a miserable existence in Core Earth. The key to what can and cannot exist, what does and does not work, are the *axioms*. The axioms describe the levels of four basic traits of a world: magic, social, spiritual, and technological.

Example: Quin Sebastian comes from Core Earth. Core Earth's magic axiom is rated at 7, the social at 21, the spiritual at 9 and the tech at 23. Core Earth is a lot more advanced technologically than spiritually or magically.

If an axiom is not high enough to support an activity, performing that activity creates a *contradiction* in that cosm. For example, using an automatic pistol in the fantasy realm of Aysle would cause a contradiction.

The possibility energy of the cosm is organized so as to enforce the axiom levels, eliminating contradictions. If a creature needs a certain level of magic to survive, and a cosm does not provide that level, the creature will soon die. If a piece of equipment needs a certain tech level to function, it can fail if used in a cosm of lower tech. Certain social inventions, such as credit, democracy, or even money, are not possible at very low social levels, and would not be understood by denizens of those cosms.

The immediate effect of the axiom laws is that equipment, spells and certain creatures foreign to a cosm will not work as well in that cosm. Your gamemaster has more details.

The Reality Skill

Characters with the *reality* skill are called *possibility-rated characters*, because they can store possibility energy using this skill. Possibility-rated characters are better connected to the possibility energy of their cosm, giving them several advantages over non-rated characters. For example, non-rated characters, or Ords, roll the die again only on a 10, giving them far less of a chance of performing a spectacular feat.

Uses of the Skill

If your equipment or abilities fail because of the difference in realities, your *reality* skill may get them to function once again. You may try once per round to get your equipment or abilities working.

The *reality* skill may be used to invoke a *reality storm*, a contest between two possibility-rated characters from different cosms. The contest is fierce and quite dangerous, ending with one opponent stripped of all his Possibilities. A storm can drain you of Possibilities, cause increasing physical damage to the area, transform you over to the reality of your attacker, even lock you into a swirling maelstrom of primal possibility energy, a cycle of creation and destruction which



may never end. Reality storms are therefore to be used only with extreme caution. They can destroy your character.

Ords

The Possibility Raiders coined the term "Ords" as a derogatory contraction of "ordinaries" when referring to beings without the *reality* skill. The usage has become common in all the cosms. While Ords are more restricted than possibility-rated characters, they can be quite powerful, as the only criterion for being an Ord is the lack of a *reality* skill. The largest giant in the fantasy realm, with strength enough to lift buildings, would still be considered an Ord if he did not have the *reality* skill.

Stormers and Storm Knights

When the Possibility Raiders invade a cosm, one consequence is the huge reality storms caused by the intermixing of two separate axiom sets. These storms, filled with possibility energy that wrack and warp reality, often create the conditions by which heroes reach their potential and become possibility-rated characters. As the Raiders observed that these heroes were found most frequently in the wake of a storm, they called them "stormers."

One hero, a Tolwyn Tancred of the Aysle cosm, decided to use the truth in the Possibility Raiders name, but to coin a more noble title. She created the term *Storm Knights* to refer to those heroes who oppose the High Lords and the other Possibility Raiders.

Story Structure in the Game

The game of *Torg* consists of placing your character in stories which the gamemaster has plotted. Your choices for your character, combined with the rules of the game, determine the outcome of the story. You 'win' the game by achieving a favorable outcome for your character. Since *Torg* is a game structured around storytelling, the rules reflect the structure of stories. The following definitions are referred to throughout the rules.

An *adventure* is a complete story. The player characters confront the main problem or conflict in the story, and achieve a final success or failure.

An *act* is a large portion of the story in which the characters solve a problem or obtain a goal necessary to go on to the next step in the story. A *Torg* adventure usually has from two to five acts.

A *scene* is a portion of an act. The action in a scene is continuous. If the story makes a jump in time or place, then the scene has changed. If the characters are still dealing with a character or situation introduced in a scene, then that scene has not yet ended.

An *event* is an action or situation confronting the characters in a scene. A scene may have more than one event. Events introduced in a scene are resolved in a scene, but may trigger other events in other scenes.

Awards

"Guys who do a tough job are good; guys who do a tough job and learn something from it are heroes."

— Rick Alder, NYPD

Your character can be awarded from zero to three Possibilities per act. The more heroic your character is, the more great deeds performed and opponents defeated, the greater the number of Possibilities awarded at the end of the act. To be awarded three would require an exceptional effort on the part of your character.

At the end of a successful adventure, the gamemaster may reward your character by giving him additional Possibilities, usually from six to 12.

You can save these points and use them to alter die rolls and lessen damage in the next adventure, or spend them to improve your character's attributes and skills.

Improving Attributes and Skills

Improving a skill costs a variable number of Possibilities depending on how skilled you already are. The better you are, the more difficult it is to improve your skills. You improve a skill one add at a time, i.e. if you want to improve a skill from four to seven you would have to buy skill five, then six, and finally seven. You may not skip steps, although you may improve more than one level at a time if you have enough Possibilities.

To increase a skill costs a number of Possibilities equal to the skill add purchased. Increasing a skill add from three to four would cost four Possibilities. To gain the first add of a new skill costs two Possibilities if your character can find a teacher, five Possibilities if self-taught. Gaining a skill that cannot be used unskilled costs five Possibilities if taught, 10 if untaught. If a skill requires knowledge not native to your character's cosm the cost of learning the skill is doubled.

Example: Yellow Crab picks up *test of wills* for two Possibilities, and ups his *science* add to three for three Possibilities. He's interested in learning *divination magic*, but that would cost him 10 Possibilities, since he cannot find a teacher and the skill cannot be used unskilled.

Improving Attributes

Attributes may also be improved, but at a far greater cost. An attribute may never be improved beyond the racial maximum.

Improving an attribute costs Possibilities in the same manner as improving a skill, but the cost is *tripled*.

Example: If the Crab wanted to improve his *Dexterity* attribute from 10 to 11, it would cost him 33 Possibilities.





Chapter Three

The Drama Deck

"The drama of life! If only we could do without it!"

— *Father Christopher Bryce*

Torg uses drama cards to mimic the ebb and flow of action in an adventure story. The gamemaster deals a hand of four cards to each player, but does not deal himself a hand. The rest of the cards are placed into the *drama deck*. When cards are discarded they are placed face up in the *discard pile* to the side of the drama deck. When cards are flipped by the gamemaster they are placed in front of the deck in the *action stack*.

Some gamemasters may not want to run *Torg* with the cards. While we strongly urge that they do so, they will tell you at the beginning of the game if they are not.

During normal scenes, when the player characters are searching a room, discussing among themselves, etc., time passes at about the same rate in the game as it does during real life. At these times, cards may be played at any time during the scene (see "Your Hand," below, for more details).

During a scene that involves a chase, combat, or other conflict (for more details see Chapter Six in the Gamemaster Section), action is divided into *rounds*.

During a scene with rounds, only one card may be played each round (see next page). Each round, the gamemaster flips a card from the drama deck and places it on the action stack. Even if the action is not combat and is not proceeding in 10-second increments, the gamemaster might still flip cards to mark the beats and to regulate the amount of action each character performs in a given part of the scene. The cards affect the flow of the action by giving the initiative to one side or another, and by introducing additional dramatic elements. The cards have text which explains many of their functions.

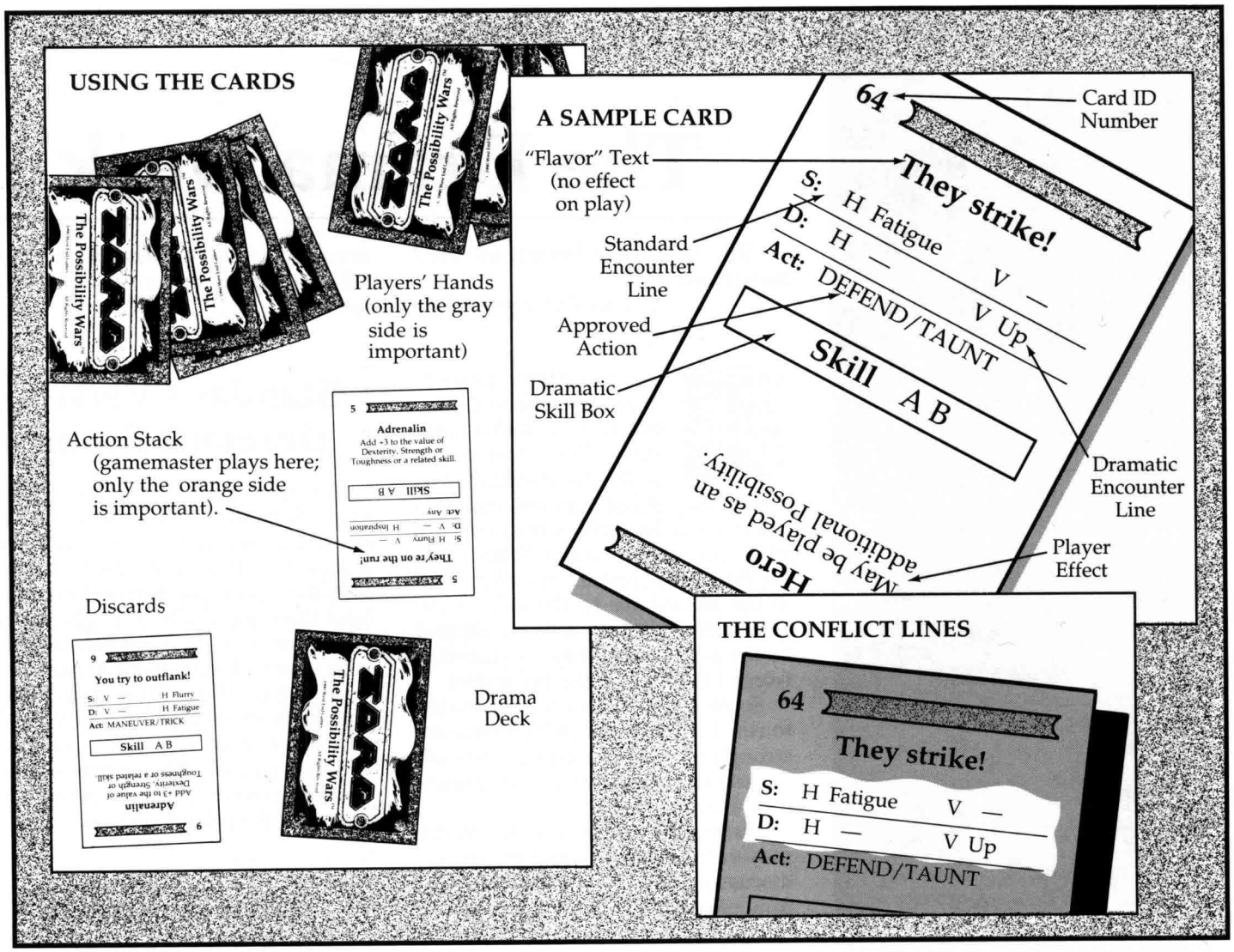
Standard Versus Dramatic Scene

The gamemaster sets the tone of a scene depending upon how important the scene is to the story. Ordinary scenes are called *standard* scenes. In a standard scene, the player characters have the edge; the pace is quick and the action fast. In a *dramatic* scene, your party is faced with a tough situation, or a conflict central to the story. The cards are stacked against you — only clever play, good cards, or luck will save the day. The pace is slower and more intense, as there is more at stake and the odds are greater.

Initiative and Advantage

The card on top of the action stack determines which side of a conflict has initiative and what advantages or disadvantages, if any, the sides have. The deck assumes there are two sides to any conflict: the hero side, consisting of player characters and their allies, and the villain side, which is composed of all of the characters opposed to the heroes. If the action includes true neutrals, those who are simply caught in the way, they are lumped with the heroes for card purposes.

The faction listed on the left half of the encounter line has the initiative. An "H" stands for hero and "V" stands for villain. Any other advantages, disadvantages, or instructions are listed next to the appropriate faction.



A faction can have one of the following advantages: *flurry*, *inspiration*, or *up*. A faction can have one of the following disadvantages: *break*, *confused*, *fatigue*, *stymied* or *setback*. The gamemaster will explain what these effects mean when they appear on the encounter lines. A "—" means that no advantage or disadvantage is in effect.

The dramatic text above the conflict line ("They're on the run!") is included for flavor, and has no effect on play.

Your Hand

The four cards dealt into your hand are separate from the rest of the drama deck. Ignore the part of each card with the orange border; you are interested only in the half with the gray border, which gives you advantages over your opponents by increasing a skill value or bonus, or by allowing you to "break the rules" in some specific way.

During parts of scenes that are not progressing by rounds, you may play cards directly from your hand, at any time during the scene. But when the action begins to go in rounds (when the gamemaster starts flipping cards onto the action stack), you can only play cards from your "card pool."

Card Pools

When a scene is progressing by rounds, you build a *card pool* by setting cards face up, aside from your hand. In a round, you may add one card to your pool if your character takes an action that would help move the scene along (whether he succeeds or not). If your character is taking an action that does not directly contribute to the events in the scene, the gamemaster might not allow you to put a card into your pool that round.

During rounds, you may **not play a card for its advantage directly from your hand**, only from your pool. At any time during a round, you may spend the cards in your pool in any combination you wish, from one card in your pool to all the cards in your pool. The only restriction is that you may not play cards, ask the gamemaster what effect you've had so far, and then play more cards. You must play all the cards you intend to play before finding out what effect you've had.

Example: *Quin veered sideways as the giant's club smashed down behind him. The shock was enough to tumble him off his feet. He let loose a burst from the Uzi, but the bullets had little effect on the behemoth. As the giant raised his club for another blow, Quin aimed carefully. He had only one more chance.*

After three rounds of combat, Paul has built up a pool of three cards. Quin fires in the next round, getting a damage total of 17. Paul figures this is not enough to really hurt the giant, and announces that he will expend his entire pool on this shot. After playing all three cards, his damage total increases to 26.

The club whistled down, but Quin's final burst caught the creature square in the head, bringing the giant crashing to the ground, bellowing in agony.

Approved Actions

On the top card of the action stack is a line labeled "Act:" which stands for *approved actions*. The line lists two actions, or "any" which means *any* of the following seven actions are approved: *Attack, Defend, Trick, Test, Taunt, Intimidate,* or *Maneuver*. **If your character *succeeds* at an approved action, you *draw* a card** from the drama deck; you can then add a card from your hand to the character's pool as usual. An attack is considered successful if you hit, even if you do not damage your opponent. A defense is successful as long as you are attacked and not hit. Your gamemaster may disallow certain actions in certain cases.

You can play a card into your pool if you fail at an approved action or even if you take an unapproved action, but you can't draw a new card from the deck. Taking approved actions is the only way you can build the really large pools that are necessary to affect impressive opponents. Otherwise you will run out of cards.

Example: *"Your mother was a human!" the Crab cried to the lizard-man. "You're a pitiful excuse for a warrior!" He danced backward as two thrown spears suddenly appeared quivering in the ground.*

In the first round, the "Act:" line shows *Trick/Taunt*. Chris elects to have the Crab try a *taunt*, and he succeeds! Chris draws a card from the drama deck and adds it to his hand. He then plays one card from his hand to his pool. If Chris had attacked instead, he could still have added a card to his pool, but he would not have been able to draw a new one first.

Playing for the Critical Moment

Once per act a player may play as many cards from her hand as she wishes directly into her card pool; these cards must be used to affect one character's action for that round only. This is called the character's *critical moment* in an act.

Example: *The Carredon's gurgling roar dispersed the fog long enough for Crowfire to see where it had flung Quin, who lay unconscious at the base of a boulder. The Carredon's head turned toward Crowfire with the grating creak of heavily armored hide. The young warrior had to do something or they would all die.*

Crowfire already has two cards in her pool. The pool is worth +3 to Crowfire's attack. Doubting that is enough to do any harm to the massive beast, Winter, Crowfire's player, declares this to be Crowfire's critical moment. She plays her remaining three cards on her shot. Thinking frantically, Winter declares that Crowfire is shooting for one of the beast's nostrils. The music swells in the background.

Winter spends two cards on the hit, for a +6 bonus. She spends another on the effect total, for a +3. She rolls a 14, which is good, but not good enough. Winter plays her "second chance" card and rerolls, getting a 10 followed by a 17, for a 27 and a total of +15 to hit and +12 damage.

The Carredon bellowed, rearing back on its hind legs in shock and pain. Crowfire pulled Quin to his feet.

"Hurry. If we make it into the deep fog it will have trouble finding us now that tracking by smell is so painful."

Losing Cards

Enemy action can actually remove cards from your pool through *tricks, tests,* and *taunts* used by the villains. If a villain successfully uses one of these skills on your character, the gamemaster may remove some of the cards from your pool. Part of the tension of the card play is in knowing how long to wait before expending your pool.

Trading Cards

You may trade cards in your pool with cards in another player's pool (if the scene is not in rounds, you may trade cards in your hand with cards in another player's hand). The other player must agree to the trade. You may trade at any time. You may trade more than one card, but for each card you trade to a player you must receive a card from that player. You may not just give or receive cards. This limit helps assure that all the characters in a story take part in the story, rather than feeding cards to a single player.

When you are trading cards, try to imagine what your character might be doing in the story which would explain the card trade. This adds to the story and the fun of the game.

Example: *Quin lay exhausted, recovering from his injuries while the Yellow Crab prepared camp. Crowfire attempted to hunt for some food for the evening.*

Winter rolls a 1. Crowfire's *survival* total is 0 — no food tonight. She has no cards that could help. Chris offers to trade a "second chance" card, but he must think of an action he can take that will make the trade make sense in the context of the story. When he does so, the trade is made.

"Hunting was bad," said Crowfire as she sat by the campfire.

"I have heard that in the Living Land, if you think like the fog, animals cannot sense your approach," offered the Yellow Crab.

Crowfire blinked and rose from the fire. Two hours later she returned carrying a dead Crosktreckt.





Francis Mao

Replenishing Your Hand

At the end of each scene, pick up the cards from your pool (but see "Special Cards," below) and put them back in your hand; then reduce your hand down to four cards by discarding the extras. After that (or if you have fewer than four cards to begin with), you may discard one card you no longer wish to hold in your hand. Now draw to fill your hand to four cards. Knowing which cards to discard and when to discard them is an important skill in *Torg*.

Card Descriptions

Special Cards

There are three types of cards that are specially tinted with only gamemaster colors; these cards do not count against your hand total of four at the end of a scene. Once played, they remain on the table (they are considered to be "in your pool" even if the scene is not in rounds) until they are used, or until the end of the adventure. These three types of cards are *subplot* cards, *connection* cards, and *alertness* cards.

Subplots

A *subplot* is a story within a story. In *Torg*, a subplot card adds an additional wrinkle to the story as told by the players and the gamemaster. A subplot card assigns your character a role to play or a motivation which helps guide your character's actions. When you put a subplot card into your pool, you might suggest to the gamemaster how this subplot applies to your character. Subplots are gamemaster-tinted cards, so they do not count against your hand total when replenishing your hand, and they are not picked up once placed in your pool. If you would rather not play a subplot, you may discard the subplot instead of putting it in your pool; you gain one Possibility for doing so.

The gamemaster can disallow any subplot card that he feels does not fit in the story. If the gamemaster disallows a subplot, discard the card and gain one Possibility. Once you **accept** a subplot, you cannot later discard it for a Possibility. If you and the gamemaster accept a subplot, put the subplot in your pool, where it stays until the end of the adventure. As a bonus for accepting a subplot, you receive one extra Possibility at the end of **each act**.

If someone plays the "campaign" subplot card, that player may choose a subplot which he wishes to make a fixture for the campaign. If the player who has the subplot agrees, and the gamemaster agrees, the subplot continues over several adventures.

Alertness

Alertness lets your character notice an item or clue you otherwise would have missed. You must place it into your pool normally, but once there, the gamemaster keeps track; when there is a clue to be found, and all characters have missed their chance to notice it, the gamemaster discards your *alertness* card and gives you the clue.

Alertness is a gamemaster-tinted card, and so does not count against your total of four cards when replenishing your hand; it remains in your pool until it is used.

Connection

Connection lets your character know someone in the area who can help you. This does not mean that you won't have to expend considerable effort finding the person, but you can be sure there is someone available.

A *connection* must be placed into your pool normally, but once there it acts like an *alertness:* the gamemaster keeps track of when it is activated (which may not be exactly when you wanted). It does not count against your hand limit, and remains in your pool until used.

Example: *"Face it soldier, we're lost," said the Crab. Quin scanned the fog of the Living Land in hopes of recognizing a distinctive landmark.*

"Look, Quin," the Crab continued. "The way I see it we can either walk around until we bump into something that eats us, or we can sit here until something finds us and eats us. I, for one ..." The Yellow Crab finished his sentence by sitting down. Quin ignored his companion and began examining nearby trees for blaze marks or other signs of habitation.

Paul plays a *connection* card from his hand, leaving it face up on the table. He looks imploringly at the gamemaster, who nods. Nothing happens at that moment, but now Paul knows there is someone in the area who can help them — if he can only find who it is.

"Come on, let's keep moving," growled Quin.

Cards That Increase Value and Bonus

Many of the cards in the deck are *action, coup de grace, presence, adrenalin,* or *willpower*. These cards allow you to add to a bonus or attribute value. If a card increases one of your character's **values**, the increase lasts from the time you play the card from your pool, until the end of the round, or until the gamemaster flips the next card on the action stack.

Action

The *action* card allows you to increase your bonus number for any action by three. It cannot be used passively, since it increases your bonus and not the underlying value.

Adrenalin, Willpower and Presence

Three cards, *adrenalin, willpower* and *presence,* add directly to the attribute value. While they can be used for one of several attributes, each card can only add to one attribute value at a time (you must say which value is increased when you play the card).

Coup de Grace

The *coup de grace* card increases only the *effect* value of your action; if you fail on the first total, the *coup de grace* is no help.



Possibility Cards (Hero and Drama)

Two types of cards, *hero* and *drama*, can be used as additional Possibilities; these cards are actually better than Possibilities since you can expend a Possibility normally, and *then* play the card for yet another roll. You can also use these cards as Possibilities to negate damage, in excess of the one normally allowed.

The *drama* card can be played as a hero card or, if saved until the end of the adventure, can be redeemed for *three* extra Possibilities.

Other Cards

These cards may all be played from your pool normally, but each has other restrictions, as listed.

Escape

Escape allows your entire party to escape an encounter. There is only one *escape* card in the deck. In order to use the *escape* card, it must be the first card played into your pool when a scene of rounds begins. The gamemaster will then have time to arrange the necessary circumstances.

Haste

A *haste* card gives you an extra action during a round. It may be played any time, even in the middle of the villains' actions.

Glory

Glory cards can only be played in rare circumstances. During **dramatic** situations, should your character's final die roll be 60+ on any action, you may play this card. The reward for the adventure is increased by three Possibilities for all players. *Glory* cards also help you in the fight against the High Lords by making it easier for you retake conquered territory. If such a situation arises, your gamemaster will explain.

Master Plan

A *master plan* card lets you take a card that has just been discarded, in exchange for the *master plan*, which is placed on the discard pile. You must play the *master plan* immediately after the card you want has been discarded. The card taken goes in your pool if the *master plan* was in your pool.

Monologue

The *monologue* card allows you to stop all hostile action while your character make a dramatic speech. (If the conflict in question is openly violent, the odds of anyone listening to reason are small.) The effect of the card lasts a round or more. There is only one *monologue* card in the deck. Your gamemaster may require you to actually perform the monologue in order for this card to work.

Opponent Fails

You play an *opponent fails* card immediately after the gamemaster tells you that the opponent has successfully acted upon you. The card "rewrites the script" so the action fails. This is the ultimate defensive card.

Second Chance

Second chance lets you immediately retry an action after you have failed the first time. Play the card immediately after the first failure; the first die roll is ignored.

Seize Initiative

Seize initiative allows you to either keep the card currently on the action stack on the stack for one more round, or to flip again for this round if you don't like the one just flipped. *Seize initiative* may be played at the beginning of a round, just before the card flip (if you wish to keep the current card) or just after (if you wish to flip a new card).

Supporter

The *supporter* card lets you add three to another player's total, after she has rolled for her action but before the gamemaster has announced the result.

Rally

The *rally* card lets all players discard as many cards as they wish and immediately draw to refill their hands to four cards (ignoring, for this purpose, all cards currently on the table). There is only one *rally* card.

Leadership

Leadership lets you play up to two cards from your hand or pool into other players' hands or pools; then you may discard any or all of your remaining cards and immediately refill your hand to four cards (ignoring, for this purpose, all your cards currently on the table).

Idea

The *idea* card simulates those brainstorms fictional characters always have. Whenever you are stumped as to what your character should do next, the *idea* card can get you a hint from the gamemaster.

STOP

You've read everything you need to be a *Torg* player. Try the solo adventure to get a feel for what roleplaying is like, then try a real game of *Torg*. If you want to be a gamemaster, read the Gamemaster Section starting on page 37.



Chapter Four

The Lizard and the Lightning

A *Torg* Solo Adventure

By now you should understand enough about the rules to begin playing — but there are important non-rules elements of the *Torg* game that you have yet to encounter.

What makes a good play session is really the *story*. The players each take the *role* of a single character in this story, while the gamemaster acts as the *storyteller* by crafting the basic plot, keeping the events flowing smoothly, and acting the parts of the minor characters in the tale.

As a player, you will be called upon to speak, act, and make decisions for your character. In short, you *become* the character. We recommend that you play through the following short solitaire adventure in order to familiarize yourself with the concept of "playing" a character. What distinguishes solitaire adventures from ordinary *Torg* adventures is the fact that no gamemaster is necessary for play. All of the gamemaster's functions are handled by the paragraphs below, as you will see.

The Lizard and the Lightning

Mission Accomplished! You pat yourself on the back for a job well done as you swing your twin-engine aircraft through the cloudy skies over Minneapolis, Minnesota, just on the fringe of the realm known as the Living Land. You've successfully delivered a planeload of perishable drugs to the resistance fighters based in the Twin Cities, and now you're heading back to your home base near Springfield

Ahead, the blue skies are slowly melting into an ugly shade of gray as a thick mist begins to swell over the ground, obscuring your view of the plains below. Something definitely seems wrong. Perhaps this adventure isn't over after all.

To play this solo adventure, you'll need a pencil, paper, a 20-sided die, and a copy of the sample character found on page 8.

Begin the adventure by reading the section labeled "1." Each section describes a situation and asks you to make a choice or test your character's abilities. The results of these choices and tests will then lead you to another section ("go to section **12**"). The adventure will tell you when you're finished.

The drama deck is not used while playing this adventure.

After you finish, try the adventure again. This time, make different choices and notice how they affect the outcome.

In this adventure, you will take on the role of Quin Sebastian, a fearless member of the resistance movement that is trying to prevent Baruk Kaah (the High Lord of the Living Land) and his minions from overrunning the sector of Core Earth that borders the Living Land. For a greater challenge, Quin only has three Possibility points available for this adventure.

1

You fly on for another half hour before you find what's causing the darkening skies: a fierce reality storm is brewing up ahead. As you approach, you hear a deafening roar and catch sight of fickle lightning bolts dancing near the storm's heart.

It's decision time. You can either continue on your present course, which will take you right into the heart of the storm, or you can turn back to avoid the storm completely.

You figure the odds are about a thousand to one of making it through the storm unscathed. One small benefit, though: if you do have to land, it's unlikely any hostiles on the ground will see you.

On the other hand, if you turn back over the Living Land, the alien axioms might prevent your plane from functioning. Even if you keep it working, you have limited fuel — if you fly around for too long, you will certainly have to land before you reach Springfield.

• *If you want to head into the storm, go to section* ***45.***

• *If you want to try to avoid the storm, go to section* ***51.***

2

DO NOT MAKE A TICK MARK FOR THIS PARAGRAPH. The Edeinos warrior attacks you with his war stick. His *melee weapons* value is 13.

Roll the die for a bonus, and add it to the warrior's *melee weapons* value as discussed on pages12-14 (don't forget, the warrior rolls again on 10s). If the total exceeds 12 (your *melee weapons* value, used defensively), you have been hit. (This means that you are hit on a roll of nine or higher — check to see for yourself).

• *If he misses you, go to section* ***19.***

• *If you are hit,* the stick strikes a painful blow! Add the same bonus to 11 (this is the warrior's damage value with his club). Since you don't know all the rules for assessing damage, use the following:

Effect total = 10 or less: no damage.
Effect total = 11-14: one shock point.
Effect total = 15-17: two shock.
Effect total = 18+: three shock.

Record your shock damage on your scrap paper. If the total shock damage you've taken so far equals or exceeds your *Toughness* (11), you are knocked out. After each blow, you can spend one Possibility to avoid taking the shock damage from that blow.

• *If you're still up, go to section* ***19.***

• *If you're knocked unconscious, go to section* ***13.***

3

The engine sputters once, then resumes its steady roar. Unfortunately, all this flying around has depleted your fuel to the point where it's no longer safe to stay aloft. With no other choice available, you quickly bring the plane in for a gentle landing at the very edge of an open field. Hopping out quickly, you take a look at your surroundings.

Go to section ***46.***

4

The first order of business is to get away from the plane: someone might have seen you come down. You gather the necessary items from your vehicle and set off into the nearby forest, wondering which way to go from here. Your musings are interrupted by a low, menacing hiss.

An Edeinos warrior, bearing an oddly shaped war club, stands before you on the forest path. Moving with amazing speed, the lizard man rushes at you!

Go to section ***2.***

5

The storm is fierce and your plane is badly damaged, but you're an experienced pilot. Skillfully avoiding the worst of the turbulence, you manage to glide in amid rain and lightning for a semi-powered landing at the very edge of an open field. At least you're sure that no one could have seen you come down! The plane lurches to a stop as the sky begins to clear above you.

Go to section ***38.***

6

The forest trail ends ahead of you. Time to backtrack.

Go to section ***37.***

7

Having made it across the gorge, you continue on your way. After a time, you emerge from the forest path into a clearing, only to find yourself face-to-face with six Edeinos warriors, each armed with a spear — and a menacing stare.

Thinking furiously, you remember that there are two Edeinos tribes in this area; unfortunately, they are quite different.

If these Edeinos are of the Furrek-Dah tribe, then they are fanatic followers of Baruk Kaah and will slay you out of hand. Your only chance is to take advantage of the Furrek tradition of single combat: if you quickly issue a challenge, you'll only have to fight one of them for your freedom. They look big and strong, but it's better than fighting all six.

On the other hand, if these are members of the Ahh-Keht, then they are one of the renegade Edeinos tribes working against Baruk Kaah. Challenging them would be a mistake, but a quiet parley might get you through alive. Just as you come to a decision, you notice an X pattern painted on the backs of the warriors' hands.

• *If you want to issue a challenge, go to section* ***41.***

• *If you want to persuade them to let you pass, go to section* ***25.***

8

You fight the controls as you descend, but the plane is too badly damaged. The pounding rain and the desperately rough air don't make things any easier, and with a gut-wrenching sensation the plane skips off a stand of trees and plunges nose-first to the ground!

As you pull yourself, groaning, from the wreckage of the plane, the storm begins to clear around you. You've taken a *heavy wound* (see page 18) in the crash. If you spend one Possibility, you are only *wounded*. If you spend two Possibilities, you are not wounded at all. Mark your wound status on your character template now.

Go to section ***38.***

9

Quietly, calling upon every ounce of woodscraft you possess, you advance into the forest. Because of your amazing stealth, the Edeinos warrior doesn't seem to be aware of your presence. Of course, the distant rumbles of thunder covering the sounds of your passage didn't hurt your cause.

You peer cautiously through the brush at the lizard man. The warrior looks nervous, as though waiting for something. You wonder if it would be better to wait and observe, or simply to attack.

- *If you continue to wait and watch, go to section* ***31.***
- *If you attack, go to section* ***19.***

10

The warrior you are examining has something painted on his hand that catches your eye, and you remember that the Edeinos use such markings to distinguish between tribes. The faint spiral-shaped markings place this warrior as a member of the Furrek-Dah, a malevolent band of Baruk Kaah's followers. The Furrek are bad news; they are numerous, fanatical, and powerful. You definitely want to avoid them.

In fact, the odds are that there are more of them nearby — time to skedaddle!

- *Go to section* ***14.***

11

An examination of the animal trails and types of foliage in the area leads you to believe that you can best escape the Living Land by heading northwest. You could be wrong, though....

- *If you want to head northwest, go to section* ***21.***
- *If you want to head southeast, go to section* ***37.***
- *If you want to go through the hills, go to section* ***36.***

12

You finally emerge from the forest and cross over the border, out of the Living Land. You immediately spot a band of Core Earth resistance fighters from the Twin Cities area who were sent out to look for you after the local command realized that your plane went down. You should be in Springfield in less than a day!

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the adventure.

Turn to section ***54.***

13

The Edeinos' mammoth blow sends you crashing to the ground. Unfortunately, the Edeinos don't usually take prisoners.

Things look pretty bad for Quin — perhaps if you were playing a regular adventure you could think of some way to save him. For now, the adventure is over. Turn to section ***54.***

14

Okay, you're out of danger for the moment: time to begin your journey out of the Living Land. To the west is the forest, to the south are the hills. It also occurs to you that it might be useful to know where the Edeinos warrior came from, but searching around for tracks will use up more of your time.

- *If you head west, go to section* ***39.***
- *If you head south, go to section* ***36.***
- *If you want to track down the Edeinos' point of origin, go to section* ***42.***

15

The reality storm begins to flare up overhead! Booming thunder shakes the trees, fierce winds whip across the landscape, and powerful lightning bolts arc groundward.

You have too little protection to weather this storm in the open! A bolt of lightning smashes the ground nearby, and an electric tingle suffuses your body. With a sigh of regret, you sink to the ground, unconscious.

We don't know if Quin will survive this terrible ordeal, but now it's time for you to get back to the rules. First, go to section ***54.***

16

You hear footsteps approaching your downed plane! Thinking quickly, you duck into the cargo compartment and look out a small window into the clearing outside.

Suddenly a fierce Edeinos warrior, one of the shamanistic lizard men inhabiting the Living Land, steps out of the underbrush and begins stalking around the wreckage. He is quite obviously an enemy (his strange warclub is held at the ready) and looks as though he is about to enter the plane to search. Your only chance is to ambush

him before he spots you and attacks. You spring into battle as the Edeinos approaches.

Go to section ***19.***

17

You plummet into the gorge and strike rock after a short fall. You're injured, taking a *heavy wound* in the fall. You can spend a Possibility to take no damage. If you are already wounded, remember the wound accumulation rules on page 18.

• *If you now have three or more wounds, the adventure is over for you. Perhaps if you were playing Quin in a real adventure, you'd be able to continue somehow. For now, go to section* ***54.***

• *If you are now* heavily wounded *or* unwounded, *go to section* ***7.***

18

You fight the controls as best you can, but the plane is all but dead in your hands: the primitive axioms of the Living Land can't sustain sophisticated machinery for long.

One last heave on the stick, and with a gut-wrenching sensation, the plane skips off a stand of trees and plunges nose-first to the ground!

You pull yourself from the wreckage of the plane, checking for broken bones. You're woozy: you've taken a *wound* (see page 18) in the crash. If you wish, you may spend one Possibility to avoid taking the *wound*. Mark your wound status on your character template now.

Go to section ***46.***

19

DO NOT MAKE A TICK MARK FOR THIS PARAGRAPH. You strike at the warrior. Roll the die to generate a bonus number and add it to your *melee weapons* value of 12 (remember, you roll again on 10s *and* 20s and you can spend a Possibility to get another roll). You need a total of 13 or more to hit the Edeinos (this means that you hit on a roll of 13 or higher — check to see for yourself).

• *If you miss, go to section* **2.**

• *If you hit,* you slam your knife into the Edeinos' thick hide! Add the same bonus to 12 (your damage value for the knife) to get a total. Since you don't know all the damage rules, use the following to calculate damage on the Edeinos:

Total = 10 or less: no damage.
Total = 11-12: one point of shock.
Total = 13: two shock.
Total = 14-15: three shock.
Total = 16-18: five shock.
Total = 19+: 11 shock.

Record shock damage to the Edeinos on your scrap paper. If the total equals or exceeds 11 points, you have defeated him.

• *If the warrior is still standing, go to section* **2.**

• *If you defeat the warrior, erase all shock damage and go to section* **47.**

20

The Edeinos appear to consider your request, muttering heatedly among themselves. They keep an eye on you, though; escape would be impossible. After a while, the leader speaks:

"You are not our enemy," he says, "but we have no way of knowing if



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you tell the truth or not. Your uniform could have been stolen from a true friend. You could be a renegade, working with the Furrek-Dah. We have no choice but to take you back to our village. Come, do not resist or we will kill you."

For Quin, the adventure has just begun, as he must now escape from the gentle prison of the Ahh-Keht. For you, the adventure has ended. Go to section **54.**

21

You continue along the forest path. The trail veers to the west, and suddenly you find a deep gorge blocking your progress. You walk to the edge and kick down a few pebbles to gauge its depth. At least 30 meters! The only way to cross the gorge is to climb a tree on one side and jump over to a limb on the other side. It's either that or wander aimlessly in the forest until the storm takes you.

This is a *jumping* skill check, but you do not have *jumping* skill. Generate a bonus number and add it to your *Dexterity* value of 11 — you do not get to roll again on 20s.

- *If your total is 10 or less, go to section* **17.**
- *If your total is 11 or more, go to section* **7.**

22

One warrior smiles, or seems to smile — it's hard to tell with Edeinos. At any rate, they appear a bit more friendly; now might be a good time to put your request. Or you could try to press your advantage and really win them over. If you do press, though, you run the risk of saying something foolish and losing what advantage you already have.

- *If you put your request now, go to section* **33.**
- *If you press your* charm, *go to section* **53.**

23

You summon all of your will and overcome the foreign axioms of the Living Land, creating a stable field of Core Earth axioms in a bubble around yourself. The engine, silent until now, begins to sputter back to life, and your wilting plane is suddenly renewed with energy as you climb back into the clouds.

You fly gracefully ahead of the storm, searching for an opening in the dark and roiling clouds. It doesn't look good, and time is running out.

Go to section **3.**

24

You know from experience that it's best to tell someone *why* they should help you even before you ask for their help. Clearing your throat, you step forward and speak:

"Friend Edeinos, I am Captain Sebastian of Springfield in Core Earth —"

As soon as you say 'Core Earth,' the six warriors are swarming over you, spears thrusting toward you.

Oops.

Quin is in bad shape. If you were playing a real adventure, perhaps a well-played escape *card could save you. For now, the adventure is over. Go to section* **54.**

25

You know from experience that it's best to tell someone *why* they should help you even before you ask for their help. Clearing your throat, you step forward and speak:

"Friend Edeinos, I am Captain Sebastian of Springfield in Core Earth." They stare at you stonily. "We fight for the same goals, you and I." Still no response.

This is a *charm* skill check. You do not have the *charm* skill. Roll a bonus and add it to your *Charisma* value of 9, but don't roll again on 20s.

- *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* **35.**
- *If your total is 12-15, go to section* **22.**
- *If your total is 16 or more, go to section* **40** .

26

You stand, gasping, over the fallen body of the defeated Edeinos warrior. The others mutter among themselves, looking at you with the Edeinos equivalent of frightened eyes. One steps forward and says, "We honor our promises ... you are free to go."

Weary from battle, you continue on. After a long journey, the storm brewing at your back, you finally emerge from the forest and cross over the border and out of the Living Land. You immediately spot a band of Core Earth resistance fighters from the Twin Cities area who were sent out to look for you after the local command realized your plane went down. You should be in Springfield in less than a day!

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the adventure.

Turn to section **54.**

27

The challenge hangs in the air for several seconds, and the Edeinos look at one another as if trying to decide what to do. Then one (the biggest, burliest one, as far as you can see) steps forward.

"I am Gon-Tin," he says in broken English, "and as challenged I strike first blow. If you defeat me, you pass unharmed. Prepare yourself, man of Earth."

- *Go to section* **49.**



28

You examine your surroundings, but find no clues to help you decide which way to go. You'll have to trust to luck — or not go into the forest at all.

• *If you want to head southeast, go to section* ***37.***

• *If you want to head northwest, go to section* ***21.***

• *If you want to go through the hills instead, go to section* ***36.***

29

With a deep breath and a prayer, you continue.

"My people are willing to see the Living Land continue to exist on Earth; we only wish to halt the advances of the evil Baruk Kaah. I hope that one day we may come to share mutual trust and friendship."

Roll a bonus number for your *Charisma* value of 9. Don't roll again on 20s.

• *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* ***53.***

• *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* ***30.***

30

Trying to sense the moods of Edeinos is difficult at the best of times, but you feel this might be the right moment to request safe passage: they're looking positively friendly!

After a slight dramatic pause, during which they lean forward eagerly, you put your request:

"And now, warrior-friends, I must hurry away to avoid the brewing storm. Please let me pass unharmed, and perhaps we will meet again one day."

Roll a bonus number for your *persuasion* value of 10.

• *If your total is 7 or less, go to section* ***20.***

• *If your total is 8 or more, go to section* ***12.***

31

This is a test of the *find* skill. You do not have *find*. Roll a bonus number for your *Perception* value of 9, but don't roll again on 20s.

• *If your total is 7 or less, go to section* ***43.***

• *If your total is 8 or higher, go to section* ***10.***

32

DO NOT MAKE A TICK MARK FOR THIS PARAGRAPH. You strike at the warrior. Roll a bonus number for your *melee weapons* value of 12 (remember, you roll again on 10s *and* 20s and you can spend a Possibility to get another roll). You need a total of 12 or higher to hit the Edeinos.

• *If you miss, go to section* ***49.***

• *If you hit,* you slam your knife into the Edeinos' thick hide! Add the same bonus number to 12 (your damage value for the knife) to get a total. Since you don't know all the damage rules, use the following to calculate damage on the Edeinos:

Total = 11 or less: no damage.
Total = 12-13: one point of shock.
Total = 14: two shock.
Total = 15-16: three shock.
Total = 17-19: five shock.
Total = 20+: 13 shock.

Record shock damage to the Edeinos on your scrap paper. If the total equals or exceeds 13 points, you have defeated him.

• *If the warrior is still standing, go to section* ***49.***

• *If you defeat the warrior, erase all your shock damage and go to section* ***26.***

33

After a slight dramatic pause, during which the Edeinos warriors lean forward curiously, you put your request:

"And now, warrior-friends, I must hurry away to avoid the brewing storm. Please let me pass unharmed, and perhaps we will meet again one day."

Roll a bonus number for your *persuasion* value of 10.

• *If your total is 8 or less, go to section* ***20.***

• *If your total is 9 or more, go to section* ***12.***

34

You spend several minutes examining the trail and the forest nearby, looking for signs of where the warrior came from, but you find no evidence of the lizard man's passage — he seems to have appeared out of thin air. Okay, time to get going.

• *If you want to head into the forest, go to section* ***39.***

• *If you want to head into the hills, go to section* ***36.***

35

The Edeinos look at you as though you are from another planet — come to think of it, you are. It might be wise to simply put your request now, before you make things worse with your chatter. Or, you could try one more time to soften them up.

• *If you put your request now, go to section* ***48.***

• *If you continue trying to be charming,* roll a bonus and add it to your *Charisma* value of 9, but don't roll again on 20s.

• *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* ***52.***

• *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* ***33.***

36

You walk down into the series of low hills, trying to keep out of sight as much as possible. The skies overhead are still darkening and you catch sight of a flock of pteradon-like Lakten fleeing the area. In fact, the lack of local wildlife in the region seems quite dis-

turbing, even considering the storm conditions.

Something is definitely wrong and it doesn't take you very long to find out what it is: you emerge from the forest path into a clearing, only to find yourself face-to-face with six Edeinos warriors, each armed with a spear — and each shooting you a menacing stare.

Thinking furiously, you remember that there are two Edeinos tribes in this area; unfortunately, they are quite different.

If these Edeinos are of the Furrek-Dah tribe, then they are fanatic followers of Baruk Kaah and will slay you out of hand. Your only chance is to take advantage of the Furrek tradition of single combat: if you quickly issue a challenge, you'll only have to fight one of them for your freedom. They look big and strong, but it's better than fighting all six.

On the other hand, if these are members of the Ahh-Keht, then they are one of the renegade Edeinos tribes working against Baruk Kaah. Challenging them would be a mistake, but a quiet parley might get you through alive. Just as you come to a decision, you notice a spiral pattern painted on the backs of the warriors' hands.

• *If you want to issue a challenge, go to section* **27.**

• *If you want to attempt to persuade them to let you pass, go to section* **24.**

37

The forest paths continue on. Trails lead to the east and west.

• *If you want to go east, go to section* **6.**

• *If you want to go west, go to section* **21.**

38

Judging from what little terrain you recognized as you were descending, you would guess that your landing approach carried you a couple of miles past the border and into the Living Land after all. This can be a dangerous place; you'd best get back to the Core as quickly as possible. The border lies to both the west and the south. Obscuring the passage to the west is a thick forest, while a series of low hills obscures the passage to the south.

Before you begin plotting your strategy, you should also consider one other factor: reality storms like the one that brought down your plane are rarely isolated phenomena; they come in bursts. You can expect the next storm to hit in approximately two hours. Unless you are out of the realm by that time, things will get very dangerous.

Starting with the next paragraph, put a tick mark on your character sheet each time you finish reading a paragraph. Once you have made a total of 12 such marks, go to section **15**. Jot down that paragraph number so you don't forget.

Standing outside the plane, you check over your remaining equipment and contemplate your next move. While you're thinking, you hear a faint crunch of footsteps in the woods nearby.

You're sure no one could have seen the crash, but you move quietly into the woods to see what's up. In the distance, obscured by trees, you see a lizard-man inhabitant of the Living Land — an Edeinos warrior! It might be worth sneaking up on this potential enemy, or it might be best to just let him move along.

• *If you want to investigate the warrior, go to section* **9.**

• *If you wait for him to pass and then continue your journey, go to section* **14.**

39

You stand at the entrance to the thick forest. The trees form a dense green canopy that shoots up overhead. A heavily wooded trail leads to the northwest and to the southeast. You have no idea which way to go.

Roll a bonus number for your *survival* value of 9.

• *If your total is 9 or less, go to section* **28.**

• *If your total is 10 or more, go to section* **11.**

40

There is a sudden stir of interest among the Edeinos; something you said must have caught their fancy. Is now the best time to ask for safe passage? Or should you warm up to it a little more before coming right out and asking for favors?

If you ask now, they might still say no (they don't look *that* friendly), but time appears to be running out — neither of you can afford to stand out here all day.

• *If you ask for safe passage now, go to section* **33.**

• *If you keep trying to be charming, go to section* **29.**

41

The warriors seem disturbed by your challenge. All their spears rise up to point at you. They advance *en masse*, crackling with spiritual power.

Just before they overwhelm you, one says "The enemy of one Ahh-Keht is the enemy of all Ahh-Keht. You must die!"

Quin is in quite a fix — perhaps if you were playing this character in a real adventure, you could figure out a way to save him. But for now, it's over. Go to section **54.**

42

Searching for signs of the Edeinos' passage will take time, but could be well worth it.

Roll a bonus number for your *tracking* value of 10.

• *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* **34.**

• *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* **50.**

43

The warrior raises his head, sniffing at the breeze. He looks fearful and

mutters "Hossraf," which you believe is the Edeinos word for "storm."

Before you can contemplate another course of action, the warrior races off to the northeast. You're alone again.

Go to section ***14.***

44

Rather than drain yourself of precious Possibilities, you allow the axioms of the Living Land to flow around you, through you. You can feel the energy rapidly ebbing out of the aircraft, until the engine sputters twice, and dies. Now you'll have to glide the plane down to an emergency landing.

Bringing the plane down under these conditions will be difficult, but not terribly so. Roll a bonus number for your *air vehicles* value of 11.

- *If your total is 9 or less, go to section* ***18.***
- *If your total is 10 or more, go to section* ***3.***

45

Fearing the worst over the Living Land, you grit your teeth and head straight into the heart of the storm. As your plane lurches forward, the winds and lightning intensify. You have a bad feeling about this.

The sky soon grows so dark that you can't see more than three feet ahead, and the howling of the wind becomes deafening. Suddenly, your plane jolts and you hear a metallic tearing sound: a lightning bolt caught your tail! You're going down! You'll have to try to dead stick it to the ground.

Bringing the plane down under these conditions will be difficult. Roll a bonus number for your *air vehicles* value of 11.

- *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* ***8.***
- *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* ***5.***

46

Judging from what little terrain you recognized as you were descending, you would guess that your landing approach carried you a couple of miles past the border and into the Living Land. This can be a dangerous place; you'd best get back to the Core as quickly as possible. The border lies to both the west and the south. Obscuring the passage to the west is a thick forest, while a series of low hills obscures the passage to the south.

Before you begin plotting your strategy, you should also consider one other factor: reality storms like the one that forced your landing are rarely isolated phenomena; they often come in bursts. You can expect the next storm to hit in approximately two hours. Unless you are out of the realm by that time, things will get very dangerous.

Starting with the next paragraph, put a tick mark on your character sheet each time you finish reading a paragraph. Once you have made a total of 12 such marks, go to section **15**. Jot down that paragraph number so you don't forget.

Now roll a bonus number for your *Perception* value of 9. This is an unskilled use of *find*, so don't roll again on 20s.

- *If your total is 9 or less, go to section* ***4.***
- *If your total is 10 or more, go to section* ***16.***

47

The Edeinos warrior lies before you, dead or unconscious. You don't have time to worry about him now.

The body might yield clues about tribe of origin, or other valuable items, but time is of the essence. You can already see signs of the approaching storm.

- *If you want to search the body, go to section* ***10.***
- *If you want to get going and not waste valuable time, go to section* ***14.***



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48

The warriors' faces are stonelike. They stare at you blankly, not a glimmer of recognition in their eyes, not a hint of friendliness in their mien. You must have said something wrong....

You have no choice now but to ask for passage and hope your innate abilities as a salesman are enough to carry you through. Clearing your throat, you say, "And now, warriors, I must be moving on — the storm threatens us all. Will you let me pass?"

Roll a bonus number for your *persuasion* value of 10.

• *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* **20.**

• *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* **12.**

49

DO NOT MAKE A TICK MARK FOR THIS PARAGRAPH. The Edeinos warrior attacks you with his spear. His *melee weapons* value is 13.

Roll a bonus number for the warrior (don't forget, he rolls again on 10s). If the total exceeds 12 (your *melee weapons* value used defensively), you've been hit!

• *If he misses you, go to section* **32.**

• *If you are hit,* the spear strikes home! Add the same bonus to 12 (this is the warrior's damage value with his spear). Since you don't know all the rules for assessing damage, use the following:

Total = 10 or less: no damage.
Total = 11-14: one shock point.
Total = 15-17: two shock.
Total = 18+: three shock.

Use your scrap paper to record the shock damage you take. If the total shock damage you've taken so far equals or exceeds your *Toughness* (11), you are knocked out. After each blow, you can spend one Possibility to avoid taking the shock damage from that blow.

• *If you're still up, go to section* **32.**

• *If you're knocked unconscious, go to section* **13.**

50

You spot a faint set of footprints that indicate without doubt that this Edeinos came from the south. Now it's time to begin your journey out of The Living Land.

• *If you want to head west toward the thick forest, go to section* **39.**

• *If you want to go through the rolling hills to the south, go to section* **36.**

51

As you cross into the Living Land, your plane begins to wilt and sputter! the Living Land is a primitive zone, and its simple technical axioms will not allow a machine as complex as your aircraft to function.

In order to fly over the Living Land, you must spend a Possibility. If you wish to preserve your Possibilities against times of greater need in the future, you could try a dead-stick landing — not supremely difficult for one with your abilities.

• *If you spend the Possibility, mark it off your character sheet and go to section* **23.**

• *If you save your points and try to land, go to section* **44.**

52

Suddenly the Edeinos are looking positively hostile, eyeing their spears and your midriff in alternating glances. You must have said something wrong. It's now or never.

"Friends," you say hollowly. "The storm is almost upon us. Let me pass and we shall both benefit."

Roll a bonus number for your *persuasion* value of 10.

• *If your total is 13 or less, go to section* **20.**

• *If your total is 14 or more, go to section* **12.**

53

You speak eloquently of the friendship between all peoples opposed to Baruk Kaah. The Edeinos appear to listen with interest.

Roll a bonus number for your *Charisma* value of 9. Don't roll again on 20s.

• *If your total is 11 or less, go to section* **52.**

• *If your total is 12 or more, go to section* **30.**

54

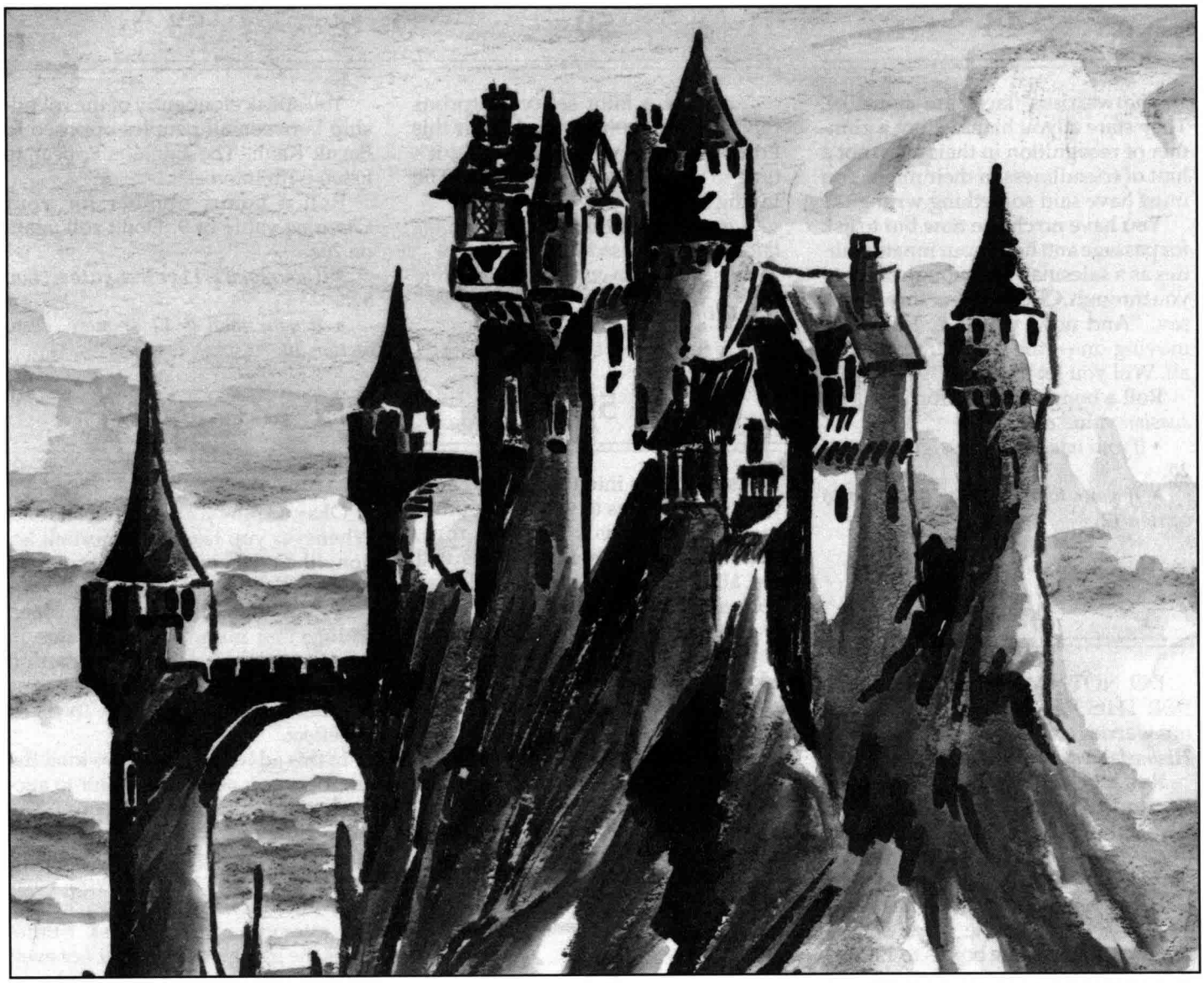
Okay, so now you see how it's done. Whenever you take an important action, like attacking, persuading, etc., you roll the die and check the bonus chart on your character template, adding that number to the value in question. Sometimes, if the action succeeds, you add that same bonus number to a different value to check the effect.

In this adventure, we provided the numbers you needed in order to succeed (the "difficulty number.") The more difficult the task, the higher the number. When you're playing with a gamemaster, she will tell you what your difficulty number is each time you attempt a difficult task (sometimes the gamemaster might not even tell you what you need — she will only let you know if your total is high enough after you roll).

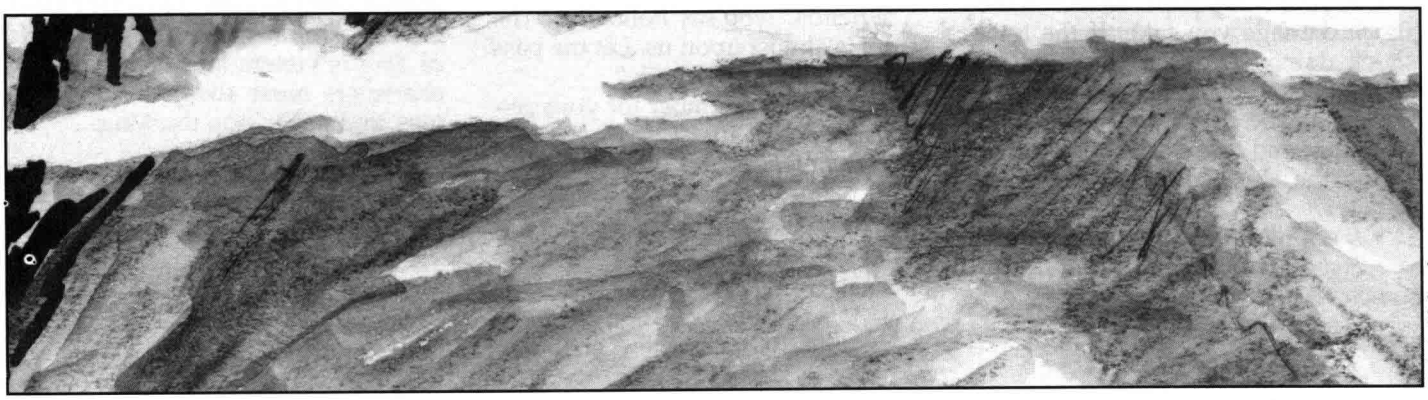
One thing you should keep in mind: when you start playing the game, your character is a real hero, capable of extraordinary feats. However, he is not superhuman, nor immortal. There are some things your character cannot expect to do, and he *can* die. The world of *Torg* is violent and dangerous, so characters must always be on their toes, and never stop thinking.

Good luck!





Gamemaster Section



Valerie Valusek



Chapter One

On Being a Gamemaster

If you're just planning on being a player, you don't need to read any more of this book. As long as you've read the Player Section, you know how to figure skill values, how to roll the die and generate a bonus number, how to generate action and effect totals, how to play drama cards into a pool, and what drama cards can do for you.

And that's all you need to know.

But, who sets the difficulty numbers for the players to beat? Who decides what the villains' abilities are, and how much damage is done when a blow lands or a bullet strikes home? The gamemaster does, and to do those things you will need to read the rest of the Rule Book. If you're planning on being a gamemaster, you might want to read a little of the World Book next, then come back here and start getting familiar with the rules.

Don't try to memorize every word and every modifier the first time through. Just get an idea of the basics — how to read the result tables, how to handle action within a round — and also get an idea of *where* the information is contained. Later, if someone wants to perform a multi-action or cast a spell, you can go back and reread that section.

Tip Sheet for Gamemasters

1. Learn the game by playing it, rather than by trying to read all the rules, hints and source material at once. Familiarize yourself with the basics, and then give it a try.

2. Talk the rules over with your players so they can get a basic understanding of the game without reading all of the material. Having someone explain the rules to you is the easiest way to learn the game.

3. Extend the rules when necessary. However detailed, no set of roleplaying rules can cover everything. Use your common sense, make a quick ruling, and get on with the game. Leave yourself room for change on such quick rulings; "Okay, this is how it works tonight. But I may have a different house rule once I've had some time to think about it."

4. Expect to make an occasional mistake. Admit the mistake to the players and correct it. Do an instant replay of the scene if necessary. Then get on with the game.

5. Prepare for the game. At first we recommend you use published adventures such as "Before the Dawn" in the Adventure Book. Use them as models of how to present characters, situations and story to the players.

6. Ham it up. Okay, so maybe you are not the greatest actor/orator in the history of humankind, but don't let that stop you. Every iota of energy, every ounce of melodrama in you can make the game more entertaining — for you as well as the players.

7. Take it slow! You aren't going to become an expert gamemaster overnight. While challenging, learning to be a gamemaster can be a great deal of fun if you don't take it too seriously or try to do too much at once. All our rules, comments, and world background have been written to provide you with an entertaining way to create stories with your friends. Use what you like, toss out the rest. If you want more hints and information, you can find them in the Adventure Book.



Chapter Two

The Game System and How to Bend It

You should read the Player Section before tackling this chapter. This chapter builds on the concepts presented earlier, and contains additional information and tricks for gamemastering *Torg*.

The Flow of Action

When you are gamemastering an adventure, time is a fairly fluid concept. When the player characters are negotiating with a merchant, the amount of time it takes in the game is fairly close the the amount of time that passes in the real world; but when the characters are driving for hours in a car to get to their next destination, you might say "Okay, you're there," and skip over a large portion of down time. In either of these two cases it's a fairly simple matter to keep track of what everyone's doing, and to control the flow of action.

However, when the players have characters in the middle of a thicket of trouble, they tend to let their excitement get the better of them; things can get pretty chaotic at these times. To help mitigate this and give everyone a chance to get in on the fun, we have broken down the flow of action into *rounds*. Each round represents 10 seconds of "real" time. During a round, characters can engage in combat or perform other activities, playing round after round until the encounter has been completed. You can decide that rounds will be longer than 10 seconds each, if the encounter warrants larger chunks of time.

For each round, do the following:

1. Flip the top card of the drama deck (unless declaring "gamemaster fiat") to determine initiative and special effects for the round, as defined in Chapter Four.

2. The side with initiative rolls for actions. When the players generate totals (see below), they tell them to you, and you ...

3. Announce which actions succeed. If an action needs an effect total, tell the player to get the second total. When you announce which actions succeed, you can give dramatic descriptions appropriate to the situation.

4. Check the appropriate "result table" to find the result (see the next page).

Of course, when you are acting as a "player" for the gamemaster characters, you do not have to announce the intermediate stages, just the final result.

You may find that it speeds up play to tell players your characters' action and effect totals, and ask them to handle the math and tell you the result points.

Generating Totals

The only real gamemaster trick to generating totals is in becoming quick with the math, and this gets easier with practice. Adding large skill and damage values to big bonus numbers may slow you down at first, but you will soon find that the addition is no problem.

Gamemaster Fiat

Of course, the gamemaster can "cheat" whenever he wants. If it makes the story more interesting, it is always a good idea to bend the rules; *gamemaster fiat* is simply a way of allowing the gamemaster to cheat in an open and aboveboard fashion.

You only use gamemaster fiat at the beginning of a round during a **dramatic** situation, as defined in the Player Section and the Adventure Book. Up to three times in each dramatic conflict, you may inform the players you are invoking fiat.

Immediately take four cards from the top of the drama deck, discard three of them, and place your chosen card on the action stack as the flip for that round. This allows you to better tailor the conflict line to the current situation.

For more such gamemastering tricks, see the Adventure Book.

The Result Tables

Once you have determined a difficulty for an action, and a player has generated a total for that action, you must compare the total and the difficulty to find out how well the character has done. The result tables give you that information.

Subtract the *difficulty* from the *total*. If a character equals or betters the difficulty number of an action (in other words, if the answer is positive), she succeeds; otherwise she fails (the answer was negative). *Result points* are the **positive numerical difference between the total and the difficulty number**. A difference of 0 is also called an *S* (minimal success).

Example: Sabrina jumps from a tree onto a moving truck, a feat the gamemaster says has a difficulty of 12. Sabrina generates a total of 15; 15 minus 12 gives 3 result points.

Combat results are explained in Player Chapter Two. More detailed explanation is given in Gamemaster Chapter Six; explanations of *charm, persuasion, trick, taunt*, etc., are given in Gamemaster Chapters Five and Six. The results on the storm table are explained in Chapter Nine. All the charts and tables have been gathered into a pullout section in the Adventure Book, for your convenience.

On all result tables, the "**+2**" result means apply the listed result for every two full result points above 15. For example, 18 result points of damage would be a 4 Wnd KO 5 for a possibility-rated character, while 19 result points would be a 5 Wnd KO 5. There is no change in interaction results for really large rolls; "Enemy +1" is the largest possible result.

General Results

The General Results table (see page 40) is used extensively in the skill section. The *quality of the success* is noted by a word: *minimal, average, good, superior* and *spectacular*. The general table also gives you a feel for the level of success, a tool for describing to the players how well their characters have done. *Minimal* implies that the character just barely succeeded; you might want to describe how narrowly he avoided failure. *Average* is average; no extra description is warranted. *Good* success sometimes merits a more detailed description, particularly if the character faced long odds. A *superior* success deserves special emphasis. For a *spectacular* success, pull out all the stops in your description. Your players will love you for it.

Players will probably appreciate it if you describe the failures as minimally as possible. If the characters really blow an action (having a total which isn't even within 10 of the difficulty), perhaps a bit of colorful explanation is due. Your players expect something bad to happen when their characters perform very poorly, and you might as well oblige them once in a while.

Using the Attribute Scale to its Fullest

The attribute scale in *Torg* is an innovative use of attribute numbering, made necessary by the multiple genres in the game. Most game systems either use a consistent scale for their attributes — in other words, each point of an attribute represents a specific amount of real-world measure — or they have no scale at all. The problem with such systems is that while they work fine in a limited setting (fantasy, horror, etc.) they either fall apart when bigger things (like technological weapons) are introduced, or they require huge numbers to represent the top end of the scale. For example, if a dagger does "one die of damage," how many dice do you roll for the main cannon of the Death Star?

Torg solves this problem by the use of a **logarithmic scale**. A logarithmic scale is one like the Richter scale, or the Decibel scale, where each point represents a greater proportional amount than the point before. For example, a level four earthquake is far more than twice as powerful than a level two earthquake, because each point on the Richter scale is 10 times as large as the point before. This is because earthquakes can range so greatly in size.

Torg's scale is not "each point is a factor of 10"; instead, every *five* points is a factor of 10. This allows finer resolution at the low end (so all humans don't look exactly alike) but still keeps the top end from being impossible to handle (so an aircraft carrier has a weight of only '41').

In addition, the *Torg* scale is consistent from measure to measure, so that a given value always has the same real-world measure, whether it's expressed as time (in seconds), distance (in meters per round), or weight (in kilograms). The Torg Value chart (see page 43) shows you how to convert from values to measures and vice versa. The Benchmark chart (page 43) gives the values of several different measures, so you can reference them quickly during the crush of a game.

The consistent logarithmic scale is a good tool for "on the fly" gamemaster guesstimation. The scale can be used

INTERACTION RESULTS TABLE

Result Points	Intimidate Test	Taunt Trick	Interrogate	Charm Persuade	Maneuver
S	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Loyal	Unskilled
1	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Friendly	Unskilled
2	Unskilled	Unskilled	Enemy	Friendly	Unskilled
3	Unskilled	Unskilled	Hostile	Neutral	Unskilled
4	Unskilled	Unskilled	Hostile	Neutral	Unskilled
5	Stymied	Stymied	Hostile	Neutral	Fatigued
6	Stymied	Stymied	Hostile	Neutral	Fatigued
7	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
8	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
9	Stymied	Stymied	Neutral	Hostile	Fatigued
10	Setback	Setback	Neutral	Hostile	Stymied/ Fatigued
11	Setback	Setback	Neutral	Hostile	Stymied/ Fatigued
12	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy	Stymied/ Fatigued
13	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy	Stymied/ Fatigued
14	Setback	Setback	Friendly	Enemy +1	Stymied/ Fatigued
15	Break	Up/ Setback	Loyal	Enemy +1	Setback/ Fatigued
+2	Player's Call	Player's Call	Loyal	Enemy +1	Player's Call

COMBAT RESULTS TABLE

	Ords	Possibility-rated
S	1	1
1	O 1	1
2	K 1	O 1
3	O 2	K 1
4	O 3	2
5	K 3	O 2
6	Knockdown K/O 4	Knockdown O 2
7	Knockdown K/O 5	Knockdown K 2
8	Wnd K/O 7	Knockdown K 2
9	Wnd K/O 9	Wnd K 3
10	Wnd K/O 10	Wnd K 4
11	2Wnd K/O 11	Wnd O 4
12	2Wnd KO 12	Wnd K 5
13	3Wnd KO 13	2Wnd O 4
14	3Wnd KO 14	2Wnd KO 5
15	4Wnd KO 15	3Wnd KO 5
+2	+1Wnd	+1Wnd

GENERAL AND PUSH RESULTS TABLE

	Success	Speed	Power	Storm
S	Minimal	0	+1(3)	-1
1	Average	+1(4)	+1(2)	-1
2	Average	+1(3)	+1(1)	-2
3	Good	+1(2)	+2(6)	-2
4	Good	+1(1)	+2(3)	-2 Storm x2
5	Good	+2(10)	+2(1)	-3 Storm x2
6	Good	+2(9)	+3(10)	-3 Storm x5
7	Superior	+2(8)	+3(8)	-4 Storm x2
8	Superior	+2(7)	+3(6)	-4 Storm x5
9	Superior	+2(6)	+4(10)	-5 Maelstrom
10	Superior	+2(5)	+4(8)	-6 Maelstrom
11	Superior	+2(4)	+4(6)	-7 Maelstrom
12	Spectac.	+2(3)	+5(10)	-8 Maelstrom
13	Spectac.	+2(2)	+5(8)	Transform (5)
14	Spectac.	+2(1)	+5(6)	Transform (5)
15	Spectac.	+2(0)	+6(10)	Transform (5)
+2			+0(-2)	

Failing

Failing is an optional category that means there is a chance the action could still succeed, even though things are still bad, or maybe even getting worse. A failing result occurs when the character misses a difficulty number by 1 or 2.

If you think the situation is a completely clear cut yes or no, if you cannot think of way the action could continue, then treat "failing" as a failure. But a failing result can be a great dramatic tool; Indiana Jones in the opening of *Raiders of the Lost Ark* had a failing result when he leaped over the pit in the South American temple, and then had to haul himself up the seemingly endless vine. Failing can be great fun if you play it right; certainly it is more fun than having your character fall to his death.

You can treat a failing result as a "complication" (see page 63 of this book) which increases the difficulty of future actions by 1.

to approximate game values from a real world measure for just about anything.

Example: The measure of 60 meters has a game value of 9. The measure of 400 seconds has a game value of 13. The measure of 10,000 kilograms has a game value of 20. So, for instance, if a character has a *Toughness* of 11, he probably weighs between 101 and 150 kilograms.

Converting Measures

Suppose you need to know the value of something that weighs 160 *pounds*, or lasts for 25 *minutes*. Do you have to convert in your head from kilos or seconds? Nope. If you aren't comfortable with the metric system, or if you would like to come up with game values for other measurements, use the conversion chart.

To use the Measure Conversion chart (page 42), simply find the value of the measure you have, regardless of what units it's in. Then, add the listed modifier to find the actual game value (which automatically converts the measure into seconds, meters per round, or kilos). Remember, adding a negative number is like subtracting.

Example: A character runs for 25 minutes straight; on the fly, you require a *Strength* roll against the difficulty of 25 minutes of continued activity in order for the character to remain standing. What is the value of 25 minutes?

On the Value chart, a measure of 25 has a value of 7, and the "minutes" modifier is +9; 7 plus 9 equals a difficulty of 16.

Example: You need to know if a character can lift a couch which you figure weighs around 160 pounds. On the Value chart, a measure of 160 equals a value of 12. Pounds have a –2 modifier, so the game value of the couch is 10 (12 minus 2).

You can also use the Value and Conversion charts as a sort of mini-calculator to transfer between measures, say to find out how many seconds there are in six days, or how many pounds in 700 kilos.

Example: A car is traveling at 55 mph, and you need to know how far the car will travel in one round of combat. Normally you would have to convert mph to kph, then divide by 60 to get kpm and divide by 6 to get kilometers per round. Using the Value chart, do this:

The measure 55 has a value of 9. This is adjusted by +3 (for miles per hour) for a game value of 12. Meters per round has a conversion of 0, so the value of 12 yields a measure of 250 meters; the car moves 250 meters in one round of combat.

If you want to convert from a game value (or a number already expressed in meters, kilos, or seconds) to a real world measure of a different unit, reverse the sign of the modifier.

Example: A skill roll yields a game value of 31, which is supposed to represent a number of days the character can live in the wilderness. To convert this time value to days, subtract the "days" modifier of 25. 31 minus 25 equals 6. A value of 6 has a measure of 15, so the time is equal to about 15 days.

If you need to know the *Toughness* of an object, a good starting point is its weight. Find the game value of the weight, modifying downward if the object is delicate, upward if it is armored or particularly tough to damage. Humans, for example, are quite variable, so their *Toughness* would be +2 to -2 of their weight value.

Difficulty Numbers

Normally, the difficulty of a task is the opposing attribute of the character or thing acted upon (a monster's *dodge* value is the difficulty to hit it in fire combat; the wall's height value is the difficulty to scale the wall). Sometimes, however, you need a difficulty for a task that has no measurable value. The Difficulty Number scale (page 42) gives you those sorts of numbers. Make your best guess as to the difficulty of the task, and find the corresponding

How Can I Handle All These Numbers?

The whole purpose of the chart is to give you something to guess with; pick a number you think is reasonable and go on with the game. Getting the numbers perfect is not the point. If you are off by a point or so, don't worry; being close counts in gamemastering.



MEASURE CONVERSION CHART

Measure is in units of	Value Modifier
Seconds	0
Minutes	+9
Hours	+18
Days	+25
Weeks	+29
Months	+32
Years	+38
Meters	
per round	0
MPH	+3
KMH	+2
Kilos	0
Pounds	-2
Tons	+15
Meters	0
Feet	-3
Kilometers	+15
Miles	+16

DIFFICULTY NUMBER SCALE

Description	#	Modifier
Very Easy	3	-5
Easy	5	-3
Average	8	0
2:1 Against	10	+2
Difficult	12	+4
10:1	13	+5
Heroic	15	+7
100:1	18	+10
1000:1	22	+14
Never Tell Me the Odds	25	+17

CORE EARTH CHARACTER LIMIT CHART

Limited Activity	Limit Based On	Limit Value	Column
Running	Dexterity	10	Speed
Swimming	Dexterity	6	Speed
Long Jumping	Dexterity	3	Speed
Climbing	Strength	2	Speed
Lifting	Strength	9	Power

number under the "#" column. The numbers are scaled for a possibility-rated character with an average attribute; therefore heroes with greater-than-average values will succeed more often than the odds suggest, which is as it should be.

Difficulty Modifiers

The Difficulty Number scale is very handy for judging tasks that have no attribute to set a difficulty by. But what about cases where there is **both** an attribute *and* unusual circumstances? If Quin Sebastian is shooting a gospog (a cross-cosm creature grown from seeds planted in fields of the dead) under normal circumstances, you would use the gospog's *dodge* score. If the fight is occurring in a textile factory in the Empire of the Nile, with all kinds of whirring machinery as additional obstruction, the difficulty for hitting the gospog (and Quin) should be higher. The Difficulty Number scale can help here, too.

Decide how much more difficult than normal, or how much easier, you think the task is: very easy, twice as hard, maybe just a little bit easier than normal; maybe 10 times as hard as normal. Find your guess on the Difficulty Number scale and locate the result under the "Modifier" column. The result is *added* to the attribute difficulty of the task.

Example: Quin is firing at that pesky gospog in the textile factory. The gamemaster figures that firing through all that machinery makes it difficult, but not quite 10 times as difficult to hit the gospog. The Difficulty Scale gives a modifier value of +4. The gospog's *dodge* is increased by 4 to account for the machinery.

Limited Activities, Speed and Power

Real human beings are only capable of so much. Of course so are heroes, trolls, cyberpriests and pulp villains. The rub comes with heroes who are human, or close to human. Your players want to be heroic; at the same time they want the world to make sense, to feel real. This is a tall order, and it requires a little bit of complication. If you directly translate attribute values into game measures of time, distance or weight, you quickly run into problems with humans who can perform ridiculously powerful feats. For characters from Core Earth, use the Character Limit chart on this page. For characters from other cosms, use this chart unless the appropriate sourcebook contradicts it.

The *limit value* is the largest value which may be directly translated on the attribute chart.

Example: Crowfire has a *Dexterity* of 9; looking for the measure of 9 we find that Crowfire can run 60 meters per round. The Yellow Crab, with a *Dexterity* of 10, can run 100 meters per round. Quin, whose *Dexterity* is 11, cannot exceed the human running limit value of 10, so he too runs 100 meters per round.

TORG VALUE CHART

Val.	Meas.	Val.	Meas.	Val.	Meas.
0	1	35	1 E+7	70	1 E+14
1	1.5	36	1.5 E+7	71	1.5 E+14
2	2.5	37	2.5 E+7	72	2.5 E+14
3	4	38	4 E+7	73	4 E+14
4	6	39	6 E+7	74	6 E+14
5	10	40	1 E+8	75	1 E+15
6	15	41	1.5 E+8	76	1.5 E+15
7	25	42	2.5 E+8	77	2.5 E+15
8	40	43	4 E+8	78	4 E+15
9	60	44	6 E+8	79	6 E+15
10	100	45	1 billion	80	1 E+16
11	150	46	1.5 E+9	81	1.5 E+16
12	250	47	2.5 E+9	82	2.5 E+16
13	400	48	4 E+9	83	4 E+16
14	600	49	6 E+9	84	6 E+16
15	1,000	50	1 E+10	85	1 E+17
16	1,500	51	1.5 E+10	86	1.5 E+17
17	2,500	52	2.5 E+10	87	2.5 E+17
18	4,000	53	4 E+10	88	4 E+17
19	6,000	54	6 E+10	89	6 E+17
20	10,000	55	1 E+11	90	1 E+18
21	15,000	56	1.5 E+11	91	1.5 E+18
22	25,000	57	2.5 E+11	92	2.5 E+18
23	40,000	58	4 E+11	93	4 E+18
24	60,000	59	6 E+11	94	6 E+18
25	100,000	60	1 trillion	95	1 E+19
26	150,000	61	1.5 E+12	96	1.5 E+19
27	250,000	62	2.5 E+12	97	2.5 E+19
28	400,000	63	4 E+12	98	4 E+19
29	600,000	64	6 E+12	99	6 E+19
30	1 Million	65	1 E+13	100	1 E+20
31	1.5 E+6	66	1.5 E+13		
32	2.5 E+6	67	2.5 E+13		
33	4 E+6	68	4 E+13		
34	6 E+6	69	6 E+13		

Every five points is a tenfold increase. "E+n" is an engineering notation, meaning move the decimal point n places to the right to get the full number. 2.5 E+11 would be 250,000,000,000 written out in full.

When trying to find the value of measures that fall in between the cracks on the Value Chart, we recommend you treat the listed measure as an upper bound for that value. For instance, a value of 10 has a measure of 100, while a value of 11 has a measure of 150. All measures greater than 100 and less than or equal to 150 have a value of 11.

TORG BENCHMARK CHART

Value	Time	Weight	Distance
0	Second	1 kilo	1 meter
2			Tallest human
3		Human baby	
9	Minute	Human female	
10		Human male	Football Field
11		Lion	City block
12		Brown Bear	
15		Small Car	Kilometer
16		Large Car	Mile
17		Elephant	
18	Hour		
20		Empty Truck	
22		APC	
23			Marathon race
24		Loaded Truck	
25	Day	Blue Whale	
27		Boeing 747	
28		C5A Galaxy	
29	Week	Tramp Freighter	
30		Destroyer	Length of Great Britain
32	Month	Six-flat building	Paris to Moscow
33		Fully loaded train	New York toL.A.
34			New York to London
35			London to Tokyo
38	Year		Circumference of Earth
39		Battleship	
41		Aircraft Carrier	
45		Loaded Oil Tanker	

Pushing

It is possible to exceed human limits under special circumstances. To exceed a limit is an action, called a *push*, with a difficulty number of 8. The acting value is the *Dexterity* (for speed pushes) or *Strength* (for power pushes) of the acting character. Consult the column on the Push Results table corresponding to the type of activity (speed or power) you are pushing. The result points earned from the action give a modifier which is added to the character's appropriate attribute.

Example: The Yellow Crab is trying to sprint for his life from a horde of angry, heavily-armed gangsters. Chris declares that the Crab is *pushing* his speed this round. The Crab generates a *Dexterity* total of 12. This earns four result points on the push table (total of 12 minus difficulty of 8 = 4), for a value modifier of +1. The Crab's running value for that turn is 11 (*Dexterity* of 10, +1 value modifier). He sprints 150 meters that round, successfully outdistancing his pursuers.

If the character's attribute already exceeds the limit value, the full attribute is used to generate result points, but any value modifier earned is added to the limit value instead. In other words, attributes in excess of the human limit value are still useful, but cannot allow a character to perform godlike feats.

Example: Quin, right alongside the Crab, rolls a 14 for a bonus number of 1. His *Dexterity* is 11 so his total is 12 (11 plus 1 bonus); he gets four result points and a value modifier of +1. *However*, the modifier is *not* added to Quin's *Dexterity* value of 11, but to 10, since this is the limit value.

When rolling for a push, any bonus number that is less than one is treated as one (this is like taking an active *dodge*).

Using Skills and Pushing

Skills such as *running* or *climbing* add to the character's movement value only so long as the total does not exceed the limit value.

Example: A character with a *Dexterity* of 8 runs (without pushing) 40 meters per round. If that character had two adds in *running* skill, he would run 100 meters per round (*running* value of 10). If that character had seven points of *running* skill, he would still only run 100 meters per round unless he pushed.

Attributes **or** skill totals that exceed the limit value are useful only for getting more result points on pushes.

Example: Crowfire has a *Dexterity* of 9. When she pushes her run, she adds any modifier earned directly to her *Dexterity*. If she had a three point *running* skill, she would roll for push with a *running* value of 12, but any value modifier earned would be added to 10, the limit value.

Pushing and Fatigue

The number in parentheses following the value modifier on the Push table is the amount of shock damage the character takes from performing the push. The damage is assessed at the end of the round, so a character can accomplish a superhuman feat, and then collapse. This type of damage, known as *fatigue*, is cumulative with shock damage taken in combat.

A player may always elect to take a lesser number of result points from a push in order to avoid fatigue.

Example: *The Crab stared blankly at the four-meter high wall; he was rudely shaken from his reverie as gunfire burst around him.*

Crab's *climbing* score is 9. Chris generates a *climbing* total of 14, for 6 result points. The result modifier is +2(9); rather than have the character take so much shock, Chris lowers his result points to 4. The value modifier is now +1(1). The Crab increases his climbing limit value from 2 to 3, which has a measure of four meters — enough to clear the wall!

Limits for Other Creatures

Other creatures and machines are limited by their attributes as well. A construction crane with a lifting value of 23 has to strain enormously to lift an object that has a weight value of 26. If the creature description does not give limit values, you may calculate the limit values from the table below. "Avg." means the known average attribute for the creature in question; if this is not known, use human numbers or your best guess. In obvious problem circumstances (a sparrow's *running* ability, for example), use your judgment.

Limited Activity	Limit Value
Running	Avg. Dexterity
Flying	Avg. Dexterity
Swimming	Avg. Dexterity -2
Long Jumping	Avg. Dexterity -5
Climbing	Avg. Strength -6
Lifting	Avg. Strength +1

Add +2 to the limit value of the creature's *primary modes of movement* (the ways it travels most often).

Example: The gamemaster assumes that a dolphin's average *Dexterity* is 10; it therefore swims at a limit value of 10 (about 25 mph), since swimming is its primary mode of movement.



The Crab sprinted wildly and leaped, grabbed a handhold, pulled up hard, then powered himself over the wall with a vault, leaving behind the perplexed gangsters.

Optional Rules: Multiple Actions

Although all rules in a roleplaying game are "optional," the game can be run effectively without the multi-action rules. After you have tried a game or two and gotten comfortable with the flow of action, you may want to introduce the following.

The Multi-Action Charts

The Multi-Action Charts are used when you want to sum the action of many identical (or nearly identical) characters into a single die roll, or when a character is trying to have his roll apply to more than one action.

In order to use either of the Multi-Action Charts, each individual action must be able to succeed independently of the others. You could not, for instance, use the Multi-Action Charts to see if a group of characters could lift a rock — it makes no sense for some of them to be able to lift the rock, and not the others. Either they all lift the rock or they all fail.

Many on One

To resolve many characters' actions with one roll, the characters must all have a skill or attribute value within one point of each other. If the values are too different, you must roll separately for each group with similar values.

For each group of similar characters, find the number of characters acting under "# Char." The corresponding bonus modifier is added to the group's bonus number.

To find how many of the characters succeed, use the "How Many Succeed" column. Find the entry corresponding to the amount by which the total exceeded the difficulty number (including the group bonus modifier), then look under "# Char." to find out how many characters succeeded.

In a situation requiring an effect total, use the bonus modifier of the number of characters who actually succeeded as the effect bonus.

Example: Six shocktroopers are gunning for a character, but only four hit. The damage bonus modifier is only +3.

One on Many

If a character is trying several actions with different skill values and/or different difficulties, he rolls the die once to get a bonus number, and adds that bonus number to each skill separately. He then compares each total to the "modified difficulty" of the appropriate action. He may check in any order he wishes.

The difficulties are modified according to the "DN+" column of the "One on Many" chart. The first action checked is at DN+2, the second at DN+4, the third and fourth at DN+6, and so on.

Example: *Quin grabbed the rope while checking the safety on his Uzi. The two shocktroopers on the far side of the ravine didn't look too friendly; to have any chance at escape, Quin knew he'd have to swing and shoot simultaneously.*

The gamemaster tells Paul to use Quin's *Dexterity* for the swing, and *fire combat* for shooting. Swinging across the ravine has a difficulty of 8. The shocktroopers' *dodge* scores are 9.

Paul rolls a bonus of 0; he decides to check the swing first, as he'd prefer not to be hanging over the chasm (or falling in). The modified difficulty of the swing is DN+2, or 10; his *Dexterity*

MANY ON ONE EXAMPLE

#	Bonus Modifier	How Many Succeed
1	—	DN
2	+2	DN+2**
3-4	+3*	DN+4
5-6	+4	DN+6
7-10	+5	DN+8
11-15	+6	DN+10

Four shocktroopers are trying to leap a pit which has a difficulty number of 10. They have *jumping* at 9. The gamemaster rolls a 14 for a bonus of one, increased to four because of the multi-action bonus modifier. They generate a total of 13 (9 plus 1 plus 3). They have beaten the difficulty number by three, which is enough for two of them, but not quite enough for all four. Two shocktroopers make it across, while two fall screaming into the pit.

* Four shocktroopers get a +3 modifier.

** Beating the difficulty number by 3 means that two have succeeded.

MULTI-ACTION CHARTS

Many On One

# Char.	Bonus Modifier	How Many Succeed
1	—	DN
2	+2	DN+2
3-4	+3	DN+4
5-6	+4	DN+6
7-10	+5	DN+8
11-15	+6	DN+10

One On Many

# Char.	*Toughness* Increase	How Many Succeed/ Difficulty Increase
1	—	DN+2
2	+2	DN+4
3-4	+3	DN+6
5-6	+4	DN+8
7-10	+5	DN+10
11-15	+6	DN+12

DN = difficulty number; DN + ? means add the listed amount to the difficulty number.

of 11 is enough to cross the ravine. The first shot difficulty is DN+4, or 13. Quin's *fire combat* total is 14 and he hits the first shocktrooper. The third action (shooting the second shocktrooper) is DN+6 or 15. Quin misses the third shot.

Quin swung across the ravine, his shots catching one trooper as the other dodged. The soldier of fortune landed on the other side, and prepared to defend himself.

If a character is attacking more than one opponent, each opponent's *Toughness* is automatically increased by the amount listed under "Toughness Increase" for the total number of actions taken, even if the character hits fewer opponents than he attacked. Diverting his attention and efforts lowers the damage of any successful attack.

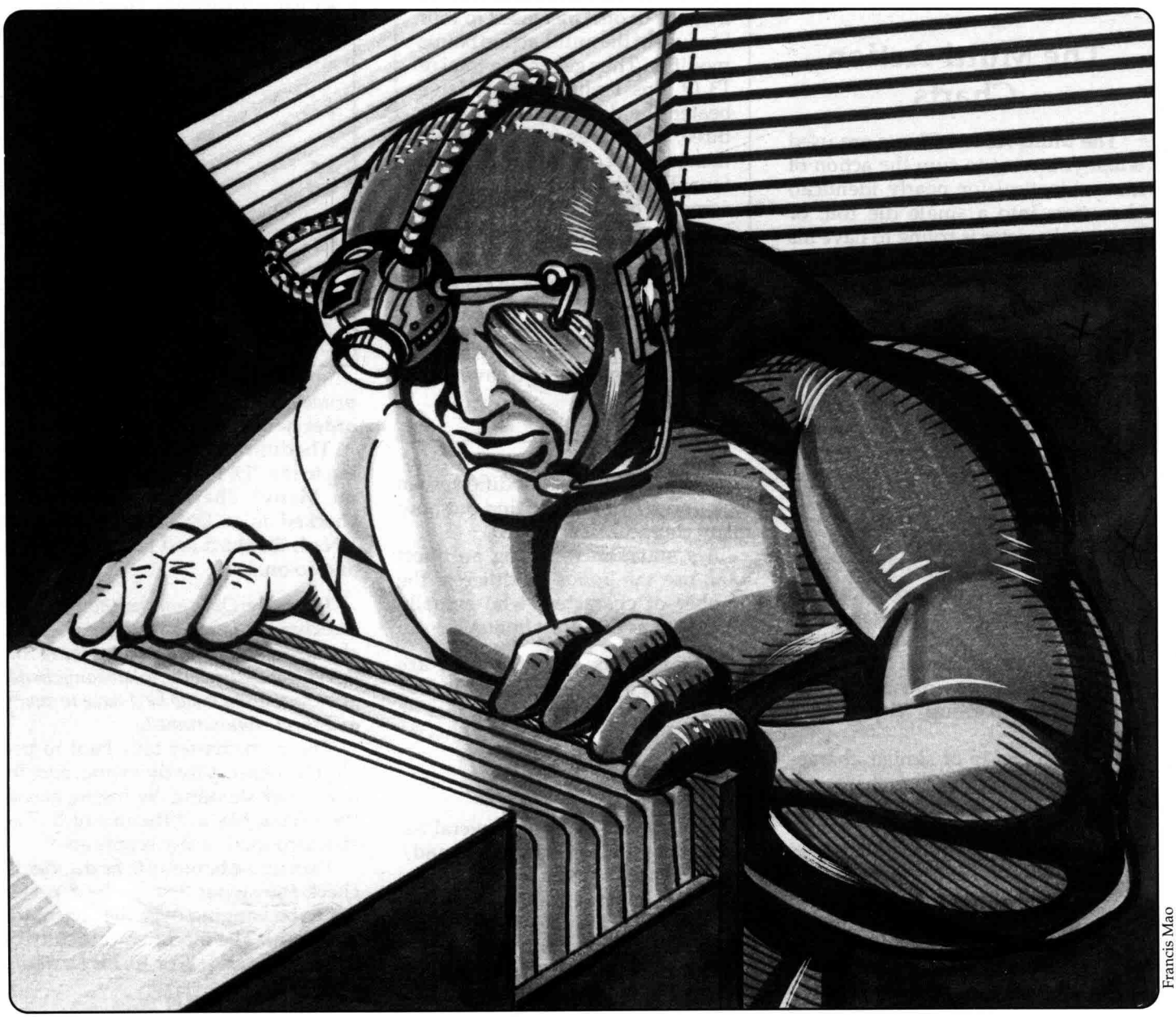
Example: In the above example, the hit shocktrooper's *Toughness* is increased by three, since Quin was attempting three actions.

Quick Method

If a character uses the same skill to attempt several actions, each of which has a difficulty number within one of all others, you can use a shorthand method to determine number of successes. This is most often used when attacking multiple opponents, each of whom has the same defensive skill. This method may **not** be used to attack the same opponent multiple times.

Find the amount by which the skill total exceeded the difficulty of a single action, then look under the "# Char." column to find how many total actions succeed.

Example: Having finally finished off the pesky shocktroopers at the ravine, Quin runs across two more



Francis Mao

who have come to investigate all the shooting. Quin decides he had better drop both at once so they cannot raise an alarm. If Quin beats the difficulty number by two he has hit a shocktrooper; if he beats the difficulty number by four he has hit both shocktroopers at once. In either case, their *Toughness* is increased by two.

Unless dramatic circumstances dictate otherwise, always give player characters the top end of the spread when determining number of successes; if you have a choice of giving them three or four successes, let them succeed four times.

Example: Quin stretches his luck by firing at six shocktroopers, who have a *dodge* of 10. Quin gets an action total of 16. He beats the difficulty by six. Quin hit four of the shocktroopers.

Extending the Chart

If situations arise when you need to find the modifier for a number of actions or groups larger than 15, find the value of the measure closest to your number. That value is the bonus modifier and the *Toughness* modifier. The "how many succeed/difficulty increase" modifier is equal to double that value.

Example: One hundred characters would have a bonus modifier of +10 (the value of 100), a *Toughness* modifier of +10, and all would succeed if they exceed the difficulty number by 20.

Summing Efforts for a Single Action

When characters are combining their efforts to accomplish a single task, and when they must either succeed as a group or fail as a group, use the following procedure.

1. A *lead character* is chosen; this is the character whose skill or action score is best suited for the task.

2. All other characters whose appropriate skill or attribute is within five points of the lead character's skill may try to add their effort to the lead character. Each aiding character makes a *Perception* check against the "coordination difficulty" of the task.

3. The value of the number of characters who successfully add their effort (including the lead character) becomes a bonus modifier for the lead character.

Example: Six characters are trying aid a lead character in lifting a rock. Five of them make their coordination checks; the measure 6 (includes the lead character) has a value of 4. The lead character has a bonus modifier of 4.

Coordination Difficulties

Following is a series of examples to help you set the coordination difficulty number for a task. By using these guidelines in conjunction with the difficulty number scale, you should be able to handle most occasions that arise.

- Task can be broken up into parts which can be worked on independently, such as digging a ditch with minimal interaction between characters: 3.
- Task requires basic coordination of activity, such as lifting a rock: 5.
- Task requires coordination and adjustment based on feedback, such as paddling a canoe in a flat lake or repairing a starship in dock: 8.
- Task requires constant adjustment in a non-stable environment, such as repairing a starship during combat, paddling a canoe in rapids, or modifying different parts of a computer program simultaneously: 12.

Summing the Effect of Gamemaster Characters

What if 200 gamemaster characters are coordinating their efforts in a mystic ritual? Do you have to roll 200 *Perception* checks to come up with the correct answer? Well, yes; but if you are willing to live with an approximation, use the following (this assumes that each character has the same skill or unskilled attribute as the one the lead character is using, at a value which is within five of the lead character's value):

Value of number of characters
+ Average *Perception*
– coordination difficulty
– 2
= bonus modifier for lead character

Example: 200 fledgling wizard gamemaster characters, with an average *Perception* of 9, have been gathered to help a great wizard with a ritual. The difficulty of helping the mage is 9. The value for 201 is 12.

12 (value of 201) +9 (average *Perception*) –9 (coordination difficulty) –2 = 10. The wizard receives a bonus modifier of 10.

The final modifier may never be greater than the value for the number of characters. If an approximation is too large, reduce it to the value of the number of characters.

Avoiding the Tyranny of the Rules

The rules are a framework upon which you and your friends build stories set in the dynamic world of *Torg*. As with most frameworks, the rules work best when they show the least, and when they can bend under stress. If you need to bend the rules to keep a story flowing with a nice dramatic beat, do so. Keeping to the letter of the rules is almost certainly counterproductive.

We wrote the rules so you could play a game in a unique setting, not so we could dictate exactly how you should use that setting. So go have fun.

That's a rule.





Chapter Three

Attributes and Skills

In Chapter Two of the Player Section, you were briefly introduced to attributes and skills. This chapter contains a detailed description of each individual attribute and skill, including notes that allow you to resolve the use of a specific ability during play.

Attributes and Skills

Attributes are abilities or characteristics common to every living thing in the Infiniverse. Thus, a martial artist from the high-tech realm of Nippon and a bear from the California forests both have a *Strength* and a *Dexterity*, though the bear's *Strength* is probably higher than that of the martial artist, and the martial artist probably has a *Dexterity* that exceeds that of the bear. The attributes are *Dexterity*, *Strength*, *Toughness*, *Perception*, *Mind*, *Charisma*, and *Spirit*.

Skills, on the other hand, are special abilities not necessarily common to every living creature. A doctor from high-tech Nippon and a US Army medic from the Core Earth would both possess the *medicine* skill, while a barbarian warrior from the fantasy kingdom of Aysle and a crocodile from the Nile river certainly wouldn't possess this skill. The crocodile and the warrior, however, might each have the *stealth* skill, while the doctor and the medic would not. Most player and gamemaster characters in *Torg* possess several skills.

Attributes and skills are related. Each and every skill in *Torg* is based on a specific attribute which helps the skilled character use that skill. *Dexterity*, for example, helps a character pick locks (*lockpicking*), perform gymnastics (*acrobatics*), and ride animal mounts (*beast riding*), while *Perception* helps a character track quarry (*tracking*), conduct scholarly research (*scholar*), and analyze forensic clues (*evidence analysis*). A skilled character's base attribute value is added to his skill add to yield a *skill value* for that particular skill. Skill values are the numbers that are most frequently used during play.

Example: Kal-toonk of the Living Land has a *survival* skill add of 3 and a *Mind* value of 11. Since *survival* is based on the *Mind* attribute, Kal adds his *Mind* value to his skill add to yield a *survival* value of 14.

Unskilled Use

Just because a character does not have a particular skill does not mean that she cannot use the abilities associated with that skill. When a character wishes to use abilities associated with a skill she does not possess, she uses her base attribute for that skill.

When rolling a bonus for an unskilled ability, possibility-rated characters do not roll again on a 20, only on a 10. Unskilled Ords never roll again. In addition, some skills are prohibited by their very nature from being used unskilled, as noted on the skill list and in the skill descriptions.

Example: Ingen Hatac-Four wants to sneak up on a camp of Edeinos warriors, but she doesn't have the *stealth* skill. In this case, she uses her *Dexterity* attribute value. If she rolls a 20, she does not get another roll, for her use is unskilled.

Round Skills and Macro Skills

There are two general types of skills. *Round skills* are those that are used from round to round, generating totals each time the skill is employed. Most skills are round skills.

Macro skills are special skills or uses of skills that allow one roll to control a character's fate for a great length of time, sometimes days. Examples include *climbing* when used to climb in non-combat situations, and *survival*. Macro skills are noted in their individual descriptions.

Attribute and Skill Descriptions

Dexterity

Dexterity is a measure of a character's quickness, agility, and reflexes. Martial artists from the high-tech realm of Nippon would have high *Dexterity*, as would most gymnasts and escape artists.

Dexterity Related Skills

Acrobatics

This is the skill used by gymnasts and circus acrobats to perform their flips, rolls, and falls. In game play, *acrobatics* has two specific functions.

Vaulting and springing: a character skilled in *acrobatics* has the ability to use the natural scenery to vault and spring over physical obstacles. The difficulty number of such an action depends upon the obstacle.

Vaulting and springing may be performed unskilled.

Falling: a character skilled in *acrobatics* can reduce the damage that he sustains in a fall. The difficulty number depends upon the distance fallen. Successful use of the skill indicates that any wound sustained in the fall is reduced by one level (*heavy wound* becomes a *wound*; *mortal wound* becomes a *heavy wound*, etc).

This facet of *acrobatics* **cannot** be used unskilled.

Beast Riding

This skill is used to ride horses, camels, and other mounts. When a rider first climbs aboard an animal, he generates a *beast riding* total using the mount's *Mind* value as the difficulty number. If this check succeeds, the rider gains control of the mount and may proceed. If the check fails, the beast runs away, bucks, or throws the rider off (at your discretion). The rider must make a similar roll whenever the mount is spooked by gunfire, bomb blasts, etc. The difficulty of a *beast riding* check on an untrained/undomesticated animal is increased by 8.

Beast riding has two additional functions:

Chases: a mounted character uses his or her *beast riding* value to generate the first total during a chase. See Gamemaster Chapter Six.

Forced march: this version of the skill is a *macro skill*. A mounted rider can add one to a beast's movement value with a successful skill check against the mount's *Mind*. This bonus lasts for a maximum of three hours, and is usable only once per day.

Beast riding and all its functions can be used unskilled.

SKILL LIST

CHARISMA
- Charm
- Persuasion
- Taunt

DEXTERITY
- Acrobatics
- Beast riding
- Dodge
- Energy weapons
- Fire combat
- Flight
- **Heavy weapons**
- Lock picking
- Long jumping
- Maneuver
- Melee weapons
- Missile weapons
- Prestidigitation
- Running
- Stealth
- Swimming
- Unarmed combat

SPIRIT
- **Faith**
- **Focus**
- Intimidation
- **Reality**

PERCEPTION
- **Air vehicles**
- **Alteration magic**
- **Divination magic**
- Evidence analysis
- Find
- First aid
- Land vehicles
- Language
- Scholar
- **Space vehicles**
- Tracking
- Trick
- Water vehicles

MIND
- **Apportation magic**
- Artist
- **Conjuration magic**
- **Medicine**
- **Science**
- Survival
- Test of Will
- Willpower

STRENGTH
- Climbing
- Lifting

Skills listed in **boldface** **cannot** be used unskilled.

VAULTING/SPRINGING CHART

Obstacle	Difficulty #
Hopping a Fence	3
Grabbing an overhang and swinging over a pit	8
Vaulting or swinging over a tricky obstacle	12
Bouncing off an awning during a free fall to reach a specific destination	15

FALLING CHART

Distance Fallen	Difficulty #
1 story (15 feet)	3
2 stories (16-30 feet)	8
5 stories (31-100 feet)	12
Over 5 stories	15

Unskilled or Not?

As stated, the rules require you to pay careful attention during play to unskilled use. If a character wants to swing across a ravine on a rope, that is an unskilled use of *acrobatics*. If a character searches a room, that is an unskilled use of *find*.

Certain actions, however, might be interpreted as non-skill related. In other words, you may rule that the use of an attribute is **not always** rolled unskilled, even if there is a skill that could aid the character in performing a task. For example, you might say that swinging across a ravine is a use of *Dexterity*, but the character may use *acrobatics* instead if he has it. In this case, the roll is not made unskilled — there is simply a skill available that will make the action easier. The circumstances will help you make the decision. When in doubt, call it unskilled if the character does not possess the proper skill.

Skills listed as "**cannot** be used unskilled" may never be used unskilled, even if using the more liberal interpretation of unskilled use.

Dodge

This skill gives its user the ability to avoid gunshots, laser bolts, and other missile or ranged attacks. *Dodge* skill can be used in one of two ways. Only one of the options may be selected by a dodging character each round.

Passive dodge: during each round of combat, a skilled character may used his *dodge* value for the difficulty number of all shots aimed at him.

Defend: instead of selecting a passive dodge, a skilled character may defend actively. Characters who choose this option use their *dodge* value to generate a total. When rolling for the total, any bonus number rolled which is less than *1* is treated as *1*. The total is the difficulty number for all shots taken at the defending character.

Example: Prince Stuart of Worth is charging a throng of orc archers. The Prince has a *dodge* value of 12. During each combat round he can either:

1. Passively *dodge*, in which case the difficulty number of all bowshots the orcs aim at him is 12.

2. Defend, in which case he generates a *dodge* total, with bonuses less than one being treated as one. This total is always at least 13 and might be considerably higher.

All types of *dodge* can be used unskilled.

Energy Weapons

This skill measures a character's ability to use all types of energy weapons: lasers, blasters, plasma guns, etc. A character generates an *energy weapons* total to hit when attacking with an energy weapon. *Dodge* is the defensive skill used against *energy weapons*.

Energy weapons can be used unskilled.

Fire Combat

This skill measures a character's ability to shoot guns and firearms of all types, including: pistols, rifles, submachineguns, and shotguns. A character generates a *fire combat* total to hit when attacking with a firearm. *Dodge* is the defensive skill used against *fire combat*.

Fire combat can be used unskilled.

Flight

This skill is a measure of a character's ability to move through the air under her own power. A character generates a *flight* total as the first total during a chase (see Gamemaster Chapter Six) in which she is flying. Since Core Earth humans are incapable of flight, they are not allowed to purchase *flight* skill.

Flight can be used unskilled, but only by those characters capable of flight.

Heavy Weapons

This skill measures a character's ability to set up, fire, and maintain heavy weaponry. Heavy weapons include: howitzers, mortars, cannons, mounted machine guns, and missiles. A character generates a *heavy weapons* total to hit when attacking with a heavy weapon in combat.

Heavy weapons **cannot** be used unskilled.

Lockpicking

This skill gives its user the ability to surreptitiously open locks and safes of all descriptions. The use of the *lockpicking* skill usually requires a set of picks or tools, though a skilled character can automatically build his own set out of hairpins, paper clips, etc. You may decide that certain locks (old safes, electronic keypads, etc.) do not require tools.

You assign each lock a difficulty number. A *lockpicking* total higher than the difficulty number indicates that the user successfully opens or circumvents the lock. Note that this skill is used to open locks of **all** types and descriptions, be they mechanical, electronic, magical, or anything in between.

LOCKPICKING CHART

Sample Locks	Difficulty
Typical Interior Door	3
Padlock	8
Wall Safe/Deadbolt	12
Bank Vault	15

Lockpicking can be used unskilled as long as the user has access to a set of picks or tools. Unskilled characters cannot build their own tools; they must somehow acquire them.

Long Jumping

This is the ability to leap and jump over pits, chasms, and other obstacles. Characters who wish to jump over an obstacle roll to push speed (see Gamemaster Section Chapter Two), and add the value modifier to the jumping limit value. The result is the distance value jumped.

The *long jumping* skill assumes that the jumper had the time and space to

take a running start. Standing jumps subtract two from the distance value jumped. Being able to take off at less than full speed reduces the distance value by one.

Example: *Quin looked down at the pit — six meters across, and far, far deeper. He hesitated long enough to allow an Edeinos warrior to nick him with a hastily hurled spear. He leaped awkwardly.*

Quin has no *jumping* skill, so he uses his raw *Dexterity*. Paul gets a +1 value modifier but loses one from his jumping value for the awkward start; he jumps at a value of 3 (the limit value) +1–1 = 3, the measure of which is only four meters.

Quin stretched out into a rolling leap. His feet sent loose rock tumbling into the depths; then he was falling. A convenient ledge saved his life, knocking the breath from him as the Edeinos clustered at the top of the pit.

Long jumping can be used unskilled.

Maneuver

This skill represents a character's mobility in combat. While its specific use is to tire out opponents, it can also be used to gain tactical advantage and additional cards (see Gamemaster Chapters Four and Six).

Maneuver can be used unskilled.

Melee Weapons

This skill measures a character's ability to use all sorts of melee weapons. Melee weapons include: swords, knives, maces, axes, and hammers; pretty much anything that can be picked up and swung or jabbed at someone. A character generates a *melee weapons* total to hit with a melee weapon in combat. *Melee weapons* also serves as the defensive skill against unarmed or melee attacks, as long the defender is wielding a melee weapon. When defending, *melee weapons* may be used passively, or with a roll for the defend option, in the same way as the *dodge* skill.

Melee weapons can be used unskilled to attack, or defend passively; the **active defense option cannot** be used unskilled.

Missile Weapons

This skill measures a character's ability to use all types of missile weapons, including: bows, throwing knives, throwing axes, and slings. A character generates a *missile weapons* total to hit when attacking with a missile weapon.

Missile weapons can be used unskilled.

Prestidigitation

This is the ability to manipulate small items without attracting attention. Pickpockets are usually highly skilled in this area, as are stage magicians. In play, prestidigitators can lift items off others without being noticed.

Get a *prestidigitation* total with the target's *Perception* or *find* value as the difficulty number. If the prestidigitator earns a *minimal* or *average* success, she successfully gains hold of the item, but is noticed by the target. If she has a *good* or better success, the item has been successfully stolen without alerting the target. All failed prestidigitation attempts automatically alert the target without acquiring the item.

Prestidigitation can be used unskilled.

Running

This is the skill for all foot movement. A character generates a *running* total during a chase (see Gamemaster Chapter Six) in which he is on foot, or when he is pushing his speed.

The difficulty number of a push is 8 for humans, as explained in Gamemaster Chapter Two. Any value modifiers are added to the character's *running* value or the limit value, whichever is **lower**.

In non-combat situations, a push of *running* is a *macro skill*. Characters can run at their movement limit for only a short amount of time. Reduce the limit value by three after 400 meters of running, and by four after 5000 meters (three miles).

Running can be used unskilled.

Stealth

Characters with *stealth* can sneak about or hide without attracting attention. To use *stealth*, the character generates a total against a difficulty number equal to the *Perception* or *find* total of the character whose attention he is trying to avoid. Success means the character remains undetected, failure means he is automatically detected. If you are using the multi-action rules, stealth against more than one person is a multi-action.

Stealth may also be combined with movement, representing attempts to sneak up on someone or sneak past a guard, etc. In this case, the stealthy character must generate a new total each round to avoid detection.

Example: Buck Corben is chased into a room by a group of four guards from the New Empire of the Nile. Buck arrives slightly before the guards and ducks behind a tapestry, hoping to lose them. In this case, Buck must generate a *stealth* total against a difficulty number equal to the guards' *Perception* total (taking into account the multi-action penalties for four targets).

Timed Running

You can find out how long a run took by subtracting the modified limit value from the distance value of the run, then adding five. That value, expressed as a measure of time, is about how long the character took to run that distance.

Example: Quin is trying to cover a mile as fast as he can. He has no *running* skill.

He rolls a macro push of the *running* skill, getting a bonus of two to his *Dexterity* of 11, for five result points. The value modifier is "+2 (10)." He will end the run almost completely exhausted.

Quin's limit value is 10, reduced to 7 because he is running a mile, increased by the "+2" up to 9. A mile has a distance value of 16; 16 minus 9 = 7. Add five for a time value of 12. A time value of 12 is about 250 seconds, or around four minutes.

If this roll is successful, the guards don't notice him. If Buck fails, he is immediately detected.

Now suppose that later in the adventure, Buck is escaping from a prison cell and is trying to sneak down the corridor and past the guard watching the hallway. The gamemaster decides that it will take Buck three rounds to move all the way down the hall, so he must make three *stealth* rolls, one per round of movement within the line of sight of the guard. If any of these rolls fail, he is detected in the round in which he fails his roll.

You should assign modifiers to any and all *stealth* rolls in accordance with the current environmental conditions. Here are some examples:

STEALTH CHART

Condition	Difficulty Modifier
Rain, sleet, etc.	-1
Dawn or dusk, fog, trees, walls, crowd, etc.	-2
Night	-3
Dozing guards	-3
Dense concealment (jungle, crowd in costume)	-5
Very close scrutiny	+1
Open terrain	+2
Broad daylight	+3

Stealth can be used unskilled.

Swimming

This skill is a measure of a character's ability to stay afloat and move in the water. A character generates a *swimming* total during a chase (see Gamemaster Chapter Six) in which she is in water, or when she is trying to cut through the water a little faster (see Gamemaster Chapter Two). You can also use *swimming* as a macro skill and time a swim, as per *running* (use the same value reductions for distance as *running*).

Swimming can be used unskilled; pushing the *swimming* skill **cannot** be done unskilled.

Unarmed Combat

This skill represents proficiency in hand-to-hand fighting of all types: boxing, brawling, wrestling, Oriental martial arts, etc. A character's *unarmed combat* total is used to see if he hits whenever the character is fighting without a weapon; his *Strength* serves as the damage value.

Unarmed combat may be used as a passive or active defense against unarmed attackers or against attackers with melee weapons if the *unarmed combat* skill represents an appropriate martial art.

Unarmed combat can be used unskilled to attack or defend passively. It **cannot** be used unskilled as an active defense.

Strength

Strength is a measure of physical strength and power, though *Strength* does not include the ability to take and absorb damage (that ability is covered by *Toughness*). Weight lifters, wrestlers, and barbarians are examples of characters with high *Strength* values.

Strength Related Skills

Climbing

This skill is used when a character wishes to climb or scale an obstacle, be it rope, ladder, or mountain. A successful skill check indicates that the climber successfully climbed a certain distance. Failure indicates that the character falls at the start of this round of climbing. Characters who miss a *climbing* check can catch themselves and avoid the fall with a successful *Strength* check of difficulty 12.

Damage value for the fall is equal to the character's weight value plus the distance value fallen. No more than 14 (the value of terminal velocity) may be added to weight value. Roll a bonus for the damage value and generate a damage total.

Example: A character who weigh 70 kilos (10 value) falls a distance of 7 meters (5 value). The damage value is 15. The gamemaster rolls a 16 (bonus number of 3); the damage total is 18.

The difficulty number for a *climbing* skill check is based upon the difficulty of the climb. The *results* indicate the actual distance climbed.

CLIMBING CHART

Climb	Difficulty
Ladder	-3
Tree	5
Wall w/handholds, natural rock	8
Smooth stone, metal	15
Darkness	+2
Rain	+5
Ice-covered	+5

All characters climb a base distance of two and a half meters per round — this is the measure of the climbing limit value. The limit value can be pushed using the Speed Push Table (page 40).

In non-combat situations, *climbing* can be used as a macro skill. Assume that characters can climb at their limit value for about a minute. Reduce the limit value by one if they are climbing more than 50 meters, and by two if they are climbing more than 200 meters.

If a character "fails" a macro climb, he falls from a point with a height value two less than the top, which is about midway in the climb. If the character catches himself, he is assumed to limp to the top from there. Climbs in which there is a failure (but in which the character catches himself) add one to the time value of the climb.

Example: Quin has no *climbing* skill add, and so must climb at his base *Strength*. Quin falls while climbing the 1500 meter high mountain, a height



Timed Climbs

If a character makes a macro climb, you can find how long the climb took by the following method: subtract the modified limit value from the distance value climbed, then add five to get the time value; the measure of the time value is how long the character took to climb that distance.

Example: The Yellow Crab is climbing a 1500m high mountain (difficulty number of 8). The height value of the mountain is 16. The Crab's limit value is 2, reduced to 0 because the climb is more than 200 meters. Crab gets a total of nine, for a speed value modifier of one (and four shock points). The time value is 16 (mountain height) minus 1 (modified limit value) plus 5 = 20; the Crab took two and a half hours to climb the mountain.

value of 16. He catches himself, at a height value of 14 (600 meters).

Quin takes (16–0+5 = 21) plus 1 for the fall, for a time value of 22. Quin took six hours to climb the mountain, giving the Yellow Crab plenty of time to appreciate the view from the top.

Climbing can be used unskilled.

Lifting

The *lifting* skill is added to a character's *Strength* to increase the amount she can lift, but only to the limit value of nine. A *Lifting* skill value over nine is useful only for pushes. *Lifting* is used in all ways like *running* and *climbing*. See Gamemaster Section Chapter Two.

Lifting can be used unskilled.

Perception

Perception measures two things: how quick a character is mentally, and how easily he notices things. Scientists and professors generally have good *Perception* values.

Perception Related Skills

Air Vehicles

This skill reflects a character's ability to fly, pilot, or repair aircraft of all types, including: propeller planes, jets, helicopters, hot air balloons, hang gliders, and airships. The pilot's *air vehicles* value generates the first total during any chases in which he is piloting an aircraft, while the aircraft's speed generates the second total (see Gamemaster Chapter Six).

Air vehicles **cannot** be used unskilled.

Alteration Magic

Alteration magic is magic that uses existing matter and energy and changes it into a form more desirable to the caster. A spell that turns a person or object invisible is an example of alteration magic, because it does not create any new matter or energy, it simply "alters" the way in which the person or object is perceived.

The *alteration magic* skill lets you cast alteration magic spells. Its exact use is described in the magic rules, Gamemaster Chapter Ten.

Alteration magic **cannot** be used unskilled.

Divination Magic

Divination magic is used to know about objects, beings or events. It is the magic of knowledge. Rules for its use are found in Gamemaster Chapter Ten.

Divination magic **cannot** be used unskilled.

Evidence Analysis

The *evidence analysis* skill measures a character's ability to analyze physical evidence. A detective might be able to look at a room and guess how many people have been in it recently, for example, or she might be able to look at an object and determine something about where the object was made.

The evidence must first be spotted, either through the *find* skill, player characters roleplaying the search, or by being rather obvious, such as a body in the middle of a room. You must then decide how difficult the information is to analyze.

Familiar objects means objects which are familiar to the character; she has seen the objects before and knows what they are supposed to do. Common use means the objects were put to ordinary use; boots were used for walking, guns used for shooting, etc. Uncommon use means the object was used in an extraordinary way, such as using a gun as a counterweight rather than as a weapon.

ANALYSIS CHART

Physical Evidence	Difficulty
Familiar objects, expected use	8
Familiar objects, uncommon use or unfamiliar objects, common use	10
Uncommon objects, uncommon effect	12
Criminal tried to conceal evidence	+2
Master criminal concealed evidence	+5

If the detective receives *minimal* or *average* success, she can identify all of the objects or physical evidence by generic type: automatic pistol, nylon rope, a poison, blood. If she gets a *good* success, she knows precise information on the origin of the object, substance, or evidence, and specific information on its type: a Colt .45 automatic of rare manufacture; the rope has evidence of microstranding common to Nippon technology; the poison is a hemotoxin derived from venomous reptiles in the Living Land.

If she gets a *superior* success, she knows to what use all of the objects in the room were put. With a *spectacular* success she can accurately reconstruct events from the evidence, fitting in all the evidence to the explanation.

Good players may be able to discover this information through roleplaying and solid induction. You can





Rick Harris

encourage such behavior by feeding them a quality level of information at a time when they are on the right track. In this case, *evidence analysis* can be considered a macro skill.

Evidence analysis can be used unskilled.

Find

This is the ability to find hidden or concealed objects or persons. If the user is trying to find an object, the gamemaster simply sets a difficulty based upon how well the object is hidden (8 - hidden quickly, 12 - hidden with some skill, 15 - very well hidden, 22 - only an expert has more than a prayer of finding it). To find the object, the searcher generates a *find* total against this difficulty number.

Characters can use the *find* skill to search for characters who are using the *stealth* skill to hide or sneak. When using *find* this way, any bonuses rolled which are less than one are treated as one (this is an active *find*, similar to an active *dodge*). The *find* total becomes the difficulty number for the *stealth* attempt, as modified by applicable *stealth* modifiers.

Example: The Gray Ghost (*find* of 12) is looking for the hiding Doctor Mobius (*stealth* of 18). It is daylight, and there is a crowd at the bazaar; *stealth* difficulty modifiers come to +1. The Ghost generates a total of 13, which becomes a 14 with the modifier. The gamemaster's roll for Dr. Mobius gives a *stealth* total of 17, which beats the difficulty number established by the Ghost. Unfortunately for the Ghost, he sees no trace of the elusive doctor.

Find can be used unskilled.

First Aid

This skill measures a character's ability to quickly diagnose and treat traumatic wounds.

Successful first aid stops the bleeding caused by a *mortal wound*, removes all shock damage from the patient, and removes all K- and O- conditions (see Gamemaster Chapter Six for more about wounds).

Each character attempting *first aid* is only allowed one attempt per victim per day. If this attempt fails, he must wait until the next day (though someone else could try to aid the victim today). *First aid* is impossible without some sort of rudimentary medical supplies (makeshift bandages and splints will do). The difficulty number of the *first aid* roll necessary to receive these benefits depends upon how heavily the victim has been wounded.

First aid can be used unskilled.

FIRST AID CHART

Wound Level	Difficulty
Wound, K, O, and/or shock	8
Heavy Wound	12
Mortal	15
Dead	No first aid possible

Land Vehicles

This skill reflects a character's ability to drive, pilot, or repair ground vehicles of all types including: cars, trucks, tractors, tanks, and motorcycles. The driver's *land vehicles* value generates the first total during any chases in which she is piloting a land craft, while the vehicle's speed generates the second total (see Gamemaster Chapter Six).

Land vehicles can be used unskilled.

Language

This skill gives its user the ability to immediately understand a language or dialect that he does not speak and has never heard before. To do so, all he must do is pass a successful skill check. The difficulty number of the skill check depends upon how far removed the language is from the skill user's own.

Minimal success means only a pidgin version of the language can be communicated, *average* success gives the skill user rudimentary understanding of the language at hand, *good* or *superior* results gives the skill user complete understanding of the language, and *spectacular* success allows the user to speak and understand the language with no penalties.

A character may make only one language roll upon encountering a new language, to see whether or not he understands the language. Another roll is not allowed unless the character spends a full month speaking that language with natives, or increases the add for the language skill.

Languages can be used unskilled, but an unskilled check cannot have more than *minimal* success.

LANGUAGE CHART

Situation	Difficulty
Different dialect of own language	3
Language is derived from common language (e.g. Spanish and French)	8
Completely foreign language (e.g. Chinese)	12
Alien language, language from another Cosm	22

Scholar

The *scholar* skill represents a character's academic training or "book-learning" in a specific field of study. Scholars are adept at using research libraries and locating obscure facts.

At the time the *scholar* skill is selected, the skilled character must specify a certain area of expertise. This specialty can only be about as broad as the subjects in which universities typically offer undergraduate degrees (e.g. chemistry, biology, literature, arcane lore, etc). Characters with more than one area of expertise should select the *scholar* skill multiple times.

During play, a scholar can answer any question within her field of expertise with a successful skill check. The difficulty number of the check depends upon the difficulty of the question (Easy 3, Average 8, Difficult 12, Obscure 15, Virtually unknown in the field 25).

Scholar can be used unskilled.

Space Vehicles

This skill reflects a character's ability to fly or pilot spacecraft of all types. The pilot's *space vehicles* value generates the first total during any chase in which he is piloting a spaceship, while the ship's speed generates the second total (see Gamemaster Chapter Six).

Space vehicles **cannot** be used unskilled.

Tracking

This skill gives its user the ability to follow a trail left by another creature or vehicle. To use the skill, the tracker generates a total against a difficulty number of 8 (or the target's *Perception* or *tracking* if she is deliberately trying to conceal a trail). The difficulty number of a *tracking* attempt is always modified by the following factors:

TRACKING CHART

Situation	Modifier
Trail is a day old	+2
Trail is a few days old	+5
Trail is a week old	+8
Tracking during inclement weather	+5
Tracking over a hard surface (e.g. cement)	+10
Tracking through mud or snow	-5
Tracking a vehicle	-5

Minimal success means the tracker loses the trail after a few minutes — no more than 30 — and cannot pick up the trail again. *Average* success means the tracker loses the trail after two or three hours, and cannot pick up the trail again. *Good* success means the tracker loses the trail after two or three hours, but may pick up the trail again. *Superior* tracking can follow a trail for a day, and then may try to pick up the trail again. *Spectacular* tracking can follow the trail for a week before having to try again.

Example: Quin Sebastian is on the trail of a fugitive who escaped from prison a few days ago. Quin's difficulty number is 13 (base of 8 plus 5 for the days-old trail). Quin generates a total of 18, worth a *good* success on his tracking attempt. He can then follow the fugitive's movements for the first two hours after she escaped from prison. At the end of this time, he must make another skill check to see if he can follow the trail.

Tracking can be used unskilled.



Trick

This skill is used as a special combat action. See Gamemaster Chapter Six for more information.

Trick can be used unskilled.

Water Vehicles

This skill reflects a character's ability to steer, pilot, and repair waterborne craft of all types, including: sailboats, motorboats, submarines, and surface ships. The pilot's *water vehicles* value generates the first total during any chases in which she is piloting a water vehicle, while the watercraft's speed generates the second total (see Gamemaster Chapter Six).

Water vehicles can be used unskilled.

Mind

Mind represents the character's force of will and his ability to concentrate. Characters with high *Mind* values can be found in any profession.

Mind Related Skills

Apportation Magic

Apportation magic is the magic of motion, the magic which physically moves an object or being from one place to another. A flying carpet uses *apportation magic*, as do magical haste and slowing processes, levitation, and spells that affect accuracy (fineness of movement). Complete description of *apportation magic* is in Gamemaster Chapter Ten.

Apportation magic **cannot** be used unskilled.

Artist

This skill gives its user the ability to create a work of art. At the time the skill is purchased, the user must specify an artistic field of expertise (painting, drawing, sculpture, writing, dance, acting, etc). To create a work, the artist makes a skill check against a difficulty number of 8 for simple works, 12 for more complex works, 15 for elaborate works, and 22 for extremely intricate works. Quality of success determines the quality of the work. The amount of time taken to create the work is left to your discretion, though minimums are suggested.

Artist can be used unskilled.

ARTIST CHART

Success	Work Quality
Minimal	Good beginner's effort (no minimum time)
Average	Journeyman effort (minimum one hour)
Good	Professional effort (one day)
Superior	Expert craftsmanship (one week)
Spectacular	Masterpiece (one month)

Conjuration Magic

Conjuration magic achieves its effect through the creation of new matter or materials. A spell that allows a wizard to throw a fireball at an enemy requires *conjuration magic* if the mage has no source of fire, since the wizard must create the fire energy out of thin air to cast the spell (it would require *apportation magic* also, to get it to move). Complete information on how to use *conjuration magic* can be found in Gamemaster Chapter Ten.

Conjuration magic **cannot** be used unskilled.

Medicine

Medicine skill is used to help a damaged character recover. Its application can represent traditional medical treatment, acupuncture, herbal medicine, or other similar treatment for the sick or injured.

Using *medicine* requires a successful skill check. The difficulty number of this skill check depends upon how badly the patient is wounded.

If the *medicine* skill succeeds, the patient adds the result points of the check to the bonus number rolled during his recovery check (see Player Chapter Two). Only one *medicine* roll may be made per day on a character, regardless of how many characters have the *medicine* skill.

MEDICINE CHART

Wound Level	Difficulty #
Wound	8
Heavy wound	12
Mortal	15

Example: Quin takes a *heavy wound* in a confrontation with a mummy in the New Empire of the Nile. He visits Dr. Throckton in Cairo, who has a *medicine* skill of 11. Throckton rolls a 6 on the first day, giving Quin no benefit. Quin fails his recovery check. The next day Dr. Throckton rolls a 20, for a total of 18; this gives Quin a +6 to the bonus generated in his next recovery roll.

Medicine **cannot** be used unskilled.

Science

This skill represents an understanding of scientific facts and principles, and the ability to apply them. During play, *science* skill is used to analyze items in order to gain knowledge of their workings, and to build items.

SCIENCE CHART

Complexity	Difficulty #
Simple	8
Average	12
Complex	15
Prototype	18
From cosm with lower tech axiom	-5
From cosm with higher tech axiom	+10
Consists of many integrated systems	+5
Consists of hundreds of integrated systems	+10

Minimal success tells the character what the device is supposed to do. *Average* success lets the character operate the device unskilled (unless the device operates the same way as does a device with which the scientist has a skill). *Good* and better successes let the scientist operate the device without the unskilled penalty, though only his raw attribute is used. This applies only if the device provides its own *Dexterity* or *Strength* attribute in some way; otherwise the scientist still must use it unskilled. *Superior* success indicates the character understands the device well enough to repair it, if proper tools and tech levels are available. *Spectacular* success gives the scientist the knowledge necessary to design a similar device if the proper resources are available.

Science skill can also be used to answer individual questions of scientific interest as per the *scholar* skill.

Science **cannot** be used unskilled

Survival

This skill is most often used as a macro skill that gives the user the ability to survive under wilderness conditions and in hostile environments. Survival includes finding shelter, procuring food and water, and avoiding disease, sunstroke, or other environmental hazards exclusive of creature encounters.

Each general type of wilderness environment has a difficulty number listed on the Terrain Chart. The first day a character spends in the hostile environment, she makes a *survival* skill check. If she succeeds, the result points earned indicate the number of days she can remain in the environment before making another such check.

Failing any of these skill checks increases the character's wound total by one level. Characters who fail a *survival* check must make another *survival* check the day after their failure.

Example: Crowfire is in the mountains for a week. The first day, she makes a survival skill check against a difficulty number of 8. She receives 3 result points, so she does not need to make a *survival* check for three more days. Three days later, she fails this second roll and takes a wound. The next day she must make another skill check. She receives 4 result points, so she can remain on the mountain for the rest of her stay without taking any more wounds.

TERRAIN CHART

Wilderness Type	Difficulty #
Woods	3
High Mountains	8
Desert	12
Polar Regions	15

Survival can also be used to perform acts such as hunting, finding trails, etc.

Survival can be used unskilled.

Test

Test is short for *Test of Wills;* this skill is used as a special combat action. See Gamemaster Chapter Six for more information.

Test of wills can be used unskilled.

Willpower

This skill helps characters resist the effects of *charm* and *persuasion*. It is considered a passive defense, and can be rolled for actively in the same way as *dodge*.

Willpower can be used unskilled, both passively and actively.

Charisma

Charisma measures the force of a character's personality: how likeable she is, and how attractive. A good salesman might have a high *Charisma*, as would a worldly *bon vivant*.

Charisma Related Skills

Charm

This skill represents the ability to change the attitudes of acquaintances and onlookers. Characters with a high *charm* value can turn enemies into friends and friends into devoted followers. Characters generate a *charm* total against the *willpower* or *Mind* value of the target character. Successful *charm* improves the attitude of the target character toward the charming character. A complete description of how *charm* works can be found in Gamemaster Chapter Five.

Charm can be used unskilled.

Persuasion

Persuasion is the ability to convince or sway an acquaintance or onlooker. A timely *persuasion* roll might allow a character to convince a bystander to lend him some money or equipment, or he might be able to convince a villain to delay the character's execution. A character generates a *persuasion* total against the *willpower* or *Mind* of the target character. A player character may not use *persuasion* on another player character.

The ease of persuading a gamemaster character to lend resources or share information depends upon her attitude toward the character. Complete guidelines on how *persuasion* works can be found in Gamemaster Chapter Five.

Persuasion can be used unskilled.

Taunt

This skill is a special combat action; see Gamemaster Chapter Six.

Taunt can be used unskilled.

Spirit

Spirit represents a character's resolve and resistance to fear, and his store of spiritual energy. Characters with high *Spirit* values appear in just about every profession.



Faith

The *faith* skill provides the power for miracles. The beneficiary of a miracle is the one whose *faith* is used to power that miracle. See Gamemaster Chapter Eleven for details.

Faith **cannot** be used unskilled.

Focus

The *focus* skill is used by priests and other spiritual figures to perform miracles. See Gamemaster Chapter Eleven for details.

Focus **cannot** be used unskilled.

Intimidation

Using *intimidation* produces fear and uncertainty in one's enemies. The user generates an *intimidation* total against the target's *intimidation* or *Spirit*. The exact effects of a successful *intimidation* are covered in Gamemaster Chapter Five.

Intimidation can be used unskilled.

Reality

This is a unique ability which carries a character's reality with him into other cosms (see Gamemaster Chapter Eight). Reality responds favorably to those with the *reality* skill, as opposed to Ords, who do not have the skill. Without *reality*, a character cannot store Possibilties. *Reality* is also the skill that a character uses in a "reality storm," an extremely drastic form of conflict. How to fight a storm battle is described in Gamemaster Chapter Nine.

Reality **cannot** be used unskilled.

Narrowing the Scope of Skills (Optional)

The skills are intended to be very broad, to cut down on the number of skills of which a player, and you, must keep track. As gamemaster, if you decide that you and your players want finer differentiation of skills at the expense of extra bookkeeping, you can narrow the scope of the skills.

For each skill which covers a number of types of equipment, such as *melee weapons*, the character chooses a *primary* and a *secondary item*. The primary item receives the full adds for the skill, the secondary item has one less add; all other items covered by that skill have no adds, but avoid the unskilled use penalty.

Example: The gamemaster in Paul's campaign decides that he wants to narrow the scope of the vehicle skills. Quin Sebastian has *air vehicles*, which covers everything from helicopters to jet fighters to hot air balloons. Paul chooses helicopter piloting as his primary aircraft skill, and jet fighter repair as his secondary choice. Quin has an *air vehicles* value of 11 when flying helicopters, 10 when repairing jet aircraft and 9 when flying or repairing other air vehicles.

If using this optional rule, characters may purchase a skill several times in order to have more than one primary and secondary item or ability.

Skill Specialization (Optional)

Again, this is the sort of rule which adds detail while muddying the bookkeeping, and is entirely optional. It can be used independently of narrowed scope.

Characters from fiction sometimes have a type of weapon with which they are particularly familiar, or of which they are quite fond, such as James Bond and Walther PPKs or Green Arrow and bows. Sometimes characters have a *particular* vehicle or mount, such as the Lone Ranger and Silver, with which they are particularly familiar.

Type Specialization

A character may choose one *type* of equipment (or animal or whatever), and specialize in that equipment. Think of type as "make" or "brand" or "species." The player spends one Possibility to specialize in a type; that character's skill value is one higher when using that type of equipment, though the skill add is **not** increased for purposes of buying future adds. A character may specialize in only one type of equipment per skill. If you are using the optional narrowed scope rules, you must specialize in your primary skill.

Example: Paul wants Quin to have a type specialization with *air vehicles*. His gamemaster is using narrowed scope as well (as in the above example) so Quin specializes in helicopters, paying one Possibility to increase his skill to 12, though his adds remain at 2.

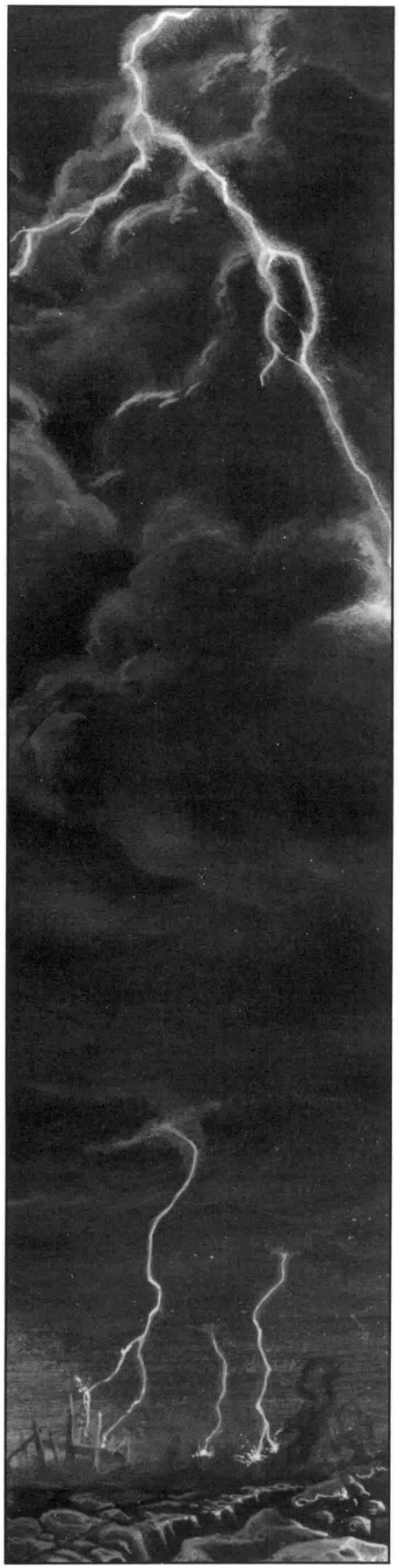
Trademark Specialization

A character may further choose one *trademark* item, or animal, in which to specialize by spending (an additional) *three* Possibilities. The skill value for that single item is increased by an additional two, though adds are not increased for purposes of buying future adds.

The item cannot be replaced. If it is permanently lost or destroyed, the specialization is lost, and must be bought again for another such item. Only one "trademark" item may be specialized per skill, and if the character has a type specialization as well, the trademark must be of that type.

Example: Paul also wants Quin to have a trademark air vehicle. Since he has a type specialization in helicopters, he must choose a helicopter as his trademark. Paul discusses this with the gamemaster, and *The Blue Meanie*, Quin's stolen police chopper, is born. When piloting the *Meanie*, Quin has a skill value of 14. With other helicopters he pilots at 12.

Quin could also have a trademark pistol, his pet service revolver. Narrowed scope and type specialization are not *required* for trademark specialization.



Chapter Four

Using the Drama Deck

The drama deck is a pack of cards that help the gamemaster and players create an exciting story by introducing dramatic surprise and storytelling elements into an adventure.

Getting Cards into Play

At the beginning of a *Torg* session, shuffle the deck of drama cards and deal four to each player. Leave the deck face down in front of you.

During the course of the game, cards come into play in one of two ways: "randomly" from the drama deck, and "played" from a hand.

Random use occurs at the beginning of each round in which dice are rolled to resolve a conflict. In this case, the *conflict line* and the *dramatic skill resolution box* are the important parts of the card.

When a player takes a card from her hand or pool and "activates" it, it is a *played* use of a card. In this case, the *play results area* is the important part of the card.

Adventure Text

The line above the conflict line contains some pithy saying or dramatic quotation. These are for flavor purposes and have no real affect on play. You can use them to give you ideas about what is happening this round — the villains are hard-pressed ("They're on the run!"), etc.

The Conflict Lines

A movie that keeps us guessing as to what's going to happen next is a movie that engages us. Indiana Jones in *Raiders of the Lost Ark* dispatches six Nazis from a truck without raising a sweat, so we're caught off guard when a determined sergeant tosses him through the windshield. We're on the edge of our seats because we don't know what's going to happen next. Suddenly the battle has turned against the hero.

The drama deck simulates that surprise by determining how the villains and heroes in a conflict are doing each round. Sometimes the villains will have an advantage, sometimes the heroes will. The deck helps you set conflict up like a movie sword fight — first Robin Hood drives the Sheriff of Nottingham across the courtyard, then the sheriff knocks a candle stand down on top of Robin. Up and down, back and forth they go, swords flashing, until one of them makes the last, desperate thrust. But nobody knows who has the advantage that round until a card is flipped over.

This flow is determined by the *conflict lines* at the top of each card. The conflict lines are geared toward combat, but they can set the pace for any situation in which one side is working against another. Such situations include chases, or verbal interaction in a tense situation. There may be times when you, as gamemaster, would rather have the players think and roleplay their way out of a situation, in which case you would forgo the cards and/or the dice.

If you are using cards for a conflict, flip the top card from the drama deck



Valerie Valusek

at the beginning of each round, and place it on top of the action stack. The conflict lines on the card affect the round's outcome — conflict lines on any other card in play have no effect. When the encounter that generated the conflict is over, the cards from the action stack are placed in the discard pile.

Conflict lines are divided into two separate categories: *standard* and *dramatic*. The standard is marked with an **S** and the dramatic with a **D**. The lines from the *standard* encounter are read when the pace of the story should zip along — for example, when the heroes take out some shocktroopers in order to steal their uniforms. The dramatic lines are read for really big moments — blowing up Death Stars, storming castles and so forth. As gamemaster you decide when an encounter is standard and when it is dramatic. The big finish to an adventure is a dramatic encounter. There may be a dramatic encounter (but no more than one) in each act.

On the standard conflict line, the heroes have all the advantages, and the villains are loaded with penalties. The dramatic conflict lines are heavily weighted in favor of the villains. Because of this, players should be encouraged to spend the adventure gathering cards that give them an advantage in climactic situations.

Conflict Line Advantages

The advantages a side can have from a conflict line include *flurry*, *inspiration*, and *up*.

Flurry

Flurry gives every character on the affected side two rounds of action before their opponents can respond. Let all characters on the side with the *flurry* act once, then let each one act a second time.

Inspiration

Inspiration removes the effects of shock and KO damage on the affected characters as though they had received successful first aid. In addition, at the moment hero *inspiration* goes into effect, each player may draw one card and add it to her hand.

Inspiration only reduces current damage; any damage taken later in the fight is applied normally. *Inspiration* may be played more than once in a fight.

Up

Up gives each character in the affected faction an additional roll. Add the additional roll to the first roll normally (you may roll again if a 10 or 20 comes up, etc.). A character may also use a Possibility for a third roll, if he wishes. An *up* result may **not** be countered by a Possibility.

Example: Quin is involved in a firefight with a group of acolytes from the

Cyberpapacy. The action card this round says "H Up."

Paul (Quin's player) rolls a 13; the *up* result allows him another roll — a 4. Quin's die roll is now a 17. Paul spends a Possibility and rolls again, getting a 14. Quin's final die roll is 31.

Up cancels the effects of a *stymie*, detailed below. If the two are ever in effect at the same time (see Chapter Five for how this can happen), neither result applies.

Conflict Line Disadvantages

The negative results on the conflict line are *break, confused, fatigued, setback* and *stymied*.

Break

A *break* result only affects characters on the villain side. During a *break* round, characters on the villain side who have previously taken damage will flee the battle (or concede the conflict) if they fail to harm the opposition by the end of the round. This flight/surrender takes place at the end of the broken villain's round.

Confused

Confused results only affect the heroes. In a *confused* round, no player may activate a card from his pool, although they may gain new cards and play cards into their pools normally (see below).

Fatigued

Fatigued causes each character in the affected faction to take two points of shock damage. We use the word fatigue because it is a common result of conflict, but the shock points can also be from causes such as fear, stress, or the delayed effects of wounds.

Setback

Setback can trigger a specific event which the gamemaster has planned. If the gamemaster has no *setback* event planned, this result prevents the affected faction from taking action this round that would harm an opponent. See below for more details about *setback*.

Stymied

Each member of a faction that is *stymied* loses one chance to roll the die again for an action; as soon as one condition occurs that would allow an additional roll, the *stymie* result is negated for that character, and that additional roll is lost. Cards that add to values or bonus numbers may still be played.

Stymie cancels the effects of an *up*, detailed above. If the two are ever in effect at the same time (see Chapter Five for how this can happen), neither result applies.

Example: Crowfire and Quin are suffering from an "H Stymie" result. Winter rolls a 20, but gets no additional roll. She now elects to spend a Possibility and rolls again as usual. Paul rolls a 12 and wants to get an additional roll; he spends his one allowed Possibility to cancel the *stymie*, then plays a *hero* card for an extra roll.

Using Conflict Lines in the Story

The penalties and bonuses that appear for the villains and heroes each round can be used to inspire you to a more varied description of the conflict's resolution. For example, although the card says "V Flurry," you can, if you wish, describe a specific way the villain is letting loose his physical force. Does he suddenly go mad from watching the heroes destroy his meticulously built machine, and launch himself into combat without regard for his own life? Does he suddenly put on a dazzling display of swordsmanship? Let your imagination run wild.

Remember, if you don't want to add color to the round you don't have to. The game mechanic advantage of the villain flurry (two actions for the villain that round) makes what is happening quite clear.

Setbacks

A setback on the conflict line is a good tool for the prepared gamemaster, a chance to make the life of your player characters even more difficult in a tense situation. We suggest you plan possible setbacks for encounters when you design your adventure, but if you feel comfortable with winging it, go ahead. Setbacks include sudden and unexpected turns of events, disastrous coincidences, and failures of people or items outside the characters' control.

Example: The gamemaster sets up an encounter along a narrow path leading up the side of a mountain. The heroes will be following Dr. Mobius' trail into an ambush set by a group of the High Lord's henchmen. The gamemaster notes that if the *setback* conflict line is drawn, a character from the side receiving the penalty loses his footing and slips off the trail. While the character can grab onto a scrub bush growing out of the side of the mountain, he will hang nearly helpless, thousands of feet above certain doom, out of combat and in desperate need of aid.

The number of possible hero setbacks is quite large. Here are a few general suggestions for how to use them:

- Any gamemaster characters allied with the heroes lose their nerve for some reason until the heroes coax them back.
- The heroes' opposition gets reinforcements.
- Equipment or abilities foreign to the cosm fail for that round.
- The gamemaster characters come up with a new fact/astounding-but-believable lie to confound the players.
- The environment causes problems — a rope begins to fray, steampipes burst, a smashed lantern starts a fire, a bystander wanders into the line of fire, the accidental flicking of a switch begins a bomb's countdown — it could even be something as big as an earthquake, as long as it fits the situation and makes things tough for the heroes.



Example: *Quin waited nervously as the majordomo announced him to the Duke of London. Who would have thought that having tea could be such a harrowing experience? But it would be their first meeting, and if Quin wanted those knights to help him storm the troll stronghold, it was vital he make a good impression.*

Paul decides Quin had better try to *charm* the Duke before attempting to *persuade* him. The gamemaster decides that this is a situation worthy of the drama deck and flips over the first card into the action stack. He announces that it's a standard conflict. The card gives Quin the initiative.

He makes his *charm* roll and is successful enough to make another roll if he so desires. Paul wants to make sure the Duke really likes Quin, so he says he's going to try to *charm* the Duke even further. The gamemaster flips over the next card. A *hero setback* comes up!

The tea was so hot that Quin nearly lost his grip on the cup when he picked it up. In order to avoid spilling the tea all over himself like an uncultured fool, he gritted his teeth and gently put the cup down. Had the Duke deliberately made the tea this hot, as some sort of test? Quin smiled up into the impassive face.

The gamemaster declares that the effort distracts Quin enough that he cannot *charm* the Duke any further.

After you have some experience, you will find dozens of plot complications which can be introduced through a setback card. An effective technique is to set up a setback which could happen in any of several encounters, and give hints to the players that this might happen. If the heroes' underground complex is near a fault line, have tremors ripple through the tunnels now and again — then let the quake rip after a setback card is flipped onto the action stack.

Special Villain Actions

Taunt, test of wills, trick and *intimidate* are possible villain instructions, on the dramatic conflict line only. Use the table below to refresh your memory when one of these results occurs.

While these options have effects which are explained in Chapter Six of this book, they have an additional effect when they appear on the conflict line: if the villains successfully use the appropriate skill when that option appears on the conflict line, the gamemaster takes one card of her choice from the card pool of the affected character. If the villain gets a *superior* success, two cards are taken from the pool; on a *spectacular* success three cards are taken.

The villain does not have to use the listed skill when the opportunity presents itself; she may attack or perform whatever action the gamemaster believes makes the most sense for that villain at that time. Keep in mind that, for instance, a mummy would be unlikely to use *taunt*, shocktroopers rarely *trick*, gospog might try to *intimidate*, but they won't be very good at it, etc.

VILLAIN ACTION CHART

Villain Instruction	Attribute
Taunt	Charisma
Test of Wills	Mind
Trick	Perception
Intimidation	Spirit
Maneuver	Dexterity

Approved Actions

The "Act" line below the conflict line lists which of the possible actions are "approved actions" for the round. Success at an *approved action* gains the player a card from the drama deck; he may then play into his pool normally.

The approved action line is meant to encourage players to use tactics other than hacking away at their opponents; however, it is important that you allow such actions only in appropriate circumstances.

As a rule of thumb, a villain may not be *tested, maneuvered* against or *intimidated* if the player character cannot see the villain. *Test* and *intimidation* often involve eye contact, though it can be a physical or verbal contest in specific circumstances. *Maneuver* is meant to reflect quick movements that cause the opponent to react, tiring him out.

Use your judgment, but be aware that just because an act appears on the "approved" line does not mean it is always appropriate to the situation. For more about the effects of *trick, test,* and *taunt,* etc., in combat, see Gamemaster Chapter Six.

Dramatic Skill Resolution

The only time two uses from a single card affect the game at the same time is when a card is placed on the action stack during a conflict, and dramatic skill resolution is also in effect. Use both the upper and middle parts of the card in this case.

In most situations, you will want to resolve a skill use in a single roll; most of the skills are set up with that assumption. But there are times when it is desirable for the sake of drama to stretch out the skill resolution, to introduce tension that is not possible in a single roll.

For example, disarming a bomb falls under the province of the *science* skill, and could be done in a single roll. This misses the point, though, of disarming a bomb in a story; if that bomb were an important element in a movie, a considerable amount of screen time could be devoted to defusing it. For this reason, at such moments we prefer to use dramatic skill resolution.

A *dramatic skill resolution* breaks down the use of a single skill into four steps, labeled A through D. As gamemaster you decide, preferably in advance, what each step represents when performing the task. You can assign more than one letter to the same portion of the task. You also need to define what the difficulty of the skill use is. Each step of a dramatic skill resolution has that difficulty.

Example: The Yellow Crab has been pushed outside of a troop transport flying at 7,000 feet, and must climb back in to help his friend Quin. The gamemaster declares that steps A and B both involve climbing back onto the wing while avoiding the propellor, step C is traversing the length of the wing to the jump door, and D is get-

ting back in the plane. This is a dramatic skill check of *acrobatics*. The gamemaster sets the difficulty of each check at 10.

Example: When defusing a bomb, step A is disconnecting motion sensors that would set the bomb off prematurely, B is locating the timing device in the maze of wires, C is locating the explosive primers, and D is cutting the wires between the timer and the primers. This is a dramatic skill check of *science*. The gamemaster sets the difficulty of each check at 12.

In a round, a character may only attempt the steps that are listed on the top card of the action stack. To succeed at a dramatic skill resolution, a character must succeed at steps A,B, C and D in that order. Succeeding at each step requires a skill check.

Example: The Yellow Crab has succeeded in crawling onto the wing in the face of howling winds (steps A and B) and now must traverse the length of the wing (step C). The gamemaster flips a card with "AB" in the skill box. The poor Crab can make no progress this round, unless he makes a "last ditch effort" (see this page).

If the card shows more than one step for which the character is eligible, he may try to do them all at once using the One on Many Multi-Action Chart (see Gamemaster Chapter Two). Ignore the *Toughness* Increase column in this case.

Example: Quin is beginning to defuse the bomb, and the gamemaster declares dramatic skill resolution; he sets the difficulty of each step at 11.

The first card on the action stack lists ABD, and Paul gambles, announcing that he will try steps A and B with one roll. He cannot attempt C or D because C is not on the card (but see "last ditch effort").

The multi-action chart shows that the difficulty increase for one action is +2, and two actions is +4; Quin needs a total of 15 or higher on his *science* roll in order to do both A and B. If he gets a 13 or higher, he accomplishes A but not B.

Bad Things Can Happen

Not only can a dramatic action take time, but things can make a character's life harder along the way. These include *possible setback, complication,* and *critical problem*. Each of these effects occurs when listed, if the character fails his skill roll for that round. If he succeeds, he does not gain a step, but there is no penalty.

Possible Setback

Failing when a *possible setback* appears causes the character to lose a step. If he had been on step C, something causes the character to slip back to step B; step C must be repeated.

Complication

A *complication* makes life more difficult. Failing the skill check during a *complication* round adds 1 to the difficulty of all further skill checks for this action.

Example: The Crab is defusing a bomb, and has accomplished steps A and B. The next round, the card says "Complication."

The difficulty of the check is 11, and Crab gets a total of 10! The gamemaster rules that Crab's sweaty fingers could not hold onto his pliers, which have now fallen into the innards of the bomb. The difficulty of further checks (for steps C and D) are increased by 1, to 12, to account for the complication — the loss of the tool.

Critical Problem

Failing the skill check during a *critical problem* round is real trouble; now the character must use another skill to accomplish the task, or attack the problem from a new angle (which would mean starting over from step A). The player is responsible for figuring out the new skill or course of action; if it does not sound convincing, he must try a different tack next round.

Skill Use as an Approved Action

Whenever the character does **not** have the opportunity to gain a skill step, making his skill roll counts as an approved action. If the skill total exceeds the difficulty number, the player may draw a card and play a card to his pool as though he had succeeded at an approved action. This represents the fact that even when temporarily stymied, the heroes of fiction are usually still working toward the final goal.

If a character **succeeds** at getting a skill step, he may of course play a card into his pool, but it is **not** an approved action and he may not draw another. This may seem perverse, but the intent is to keep the tension high — success is its own reward, and failure leads to eventual success in a dramatic skill resolution.

Last Ditch Effort

It is always possible that time will run out before the last step has been accomplished; if a character is on step C when the timer reaches 0, for instance, he needs a way to take a final try at the problem.

During any round of a dramatic skill resolution, the player may declare a *last ditch effort* to resolve the skill use; any unfinished steps are resolved all at once with the usual multi-action penalty. The difficulty number is additionally increased by 4, to account for the desperate circumstances of the last ditch effort. If the last ditch effort fails, and there is still time remaining, treat it as a failure during a *critical problem*.

Example: The Yellow Crab is trapped in a chamber with a bomb which he must defuse. The Crab has *science* at 14, and has successfully completed the first two steps, but he still has to root about in the bomb's interior to locate the primers, and cut the wires. With one round left before detonation, the card flip reveals an AB, neither of which the Crab needs. Time for a last ditch effort.



The difficulty is 12 (the base difficulty for this bomb) +4 (the multi-action penalty for two actions) +4 (the additional penalty for last ditch effort). The crab needs a total of 20 to succeed.

Other Characters

If you deem it appropriate, other characters may aid the lead character during a dramatic skill resolution. To do this, use the coordination rules in Gamemaster Chapter Two, page 47.

Working the Timing Out

Timing dramatic skill resolution can be tricky. If disaster is looming on the horizon (as it almost always is), how much time should your player characters have, in order to have a chance at accomplishing their goal? Use the following as a guideline.

To have a good chance of having the sequence A,B,C, and D appear in order requires 14 cards to be flipped if the character is going do the steps one at a time, or about 10 cards if the character is skilled enough to attempt two when the opportunity presents itself. If your characters have high skill levels (larger than the difficulty number), good cards, and no other pressing business, five flips is fine; otherwise we recommend giving them seven to 10 flips before disaster strikes.

Play Results

Play results are found, upside down, at the bottom of the cards. While the cards are described in brief in Player Chapter Two, they are discussed in more detail below.

Play results have no effect when turned up by the gamemaster onto the action stack. They can only take effect from a character's hand (during non-round interaction) or card pool (during "combat" rounds). A card in a pool does not have to take effect until the player wishes to use it (but see subplots, *alertness*, and *connection* below). Ignore the conflict line and dramatic skill box on cards played into or from a hand or pool.

When a card from a hand or pool is played, it is placed in the discard pile.

Here are more detailed descriptions of the cards:

Action

The *action* card adds a +3 bonus to all actions taken by the character this round, including flurries and haste actions.

Alertness

Alertness is a special card, marked in gamemaster colors, so you will be reminded of its presence. The card assures that a hero searching or examining an area will find or notice something (information, an item, an ambush) as long as it is there to be found, whether he makes his *find* roll or not. After a player puts the card in his pool, you activate the card whenever the character misses something of importance.

Example: If the Yellow Crab were having an especially bad day when he arrived at the scene of a murder, he might have missed his *find* roll to discover the Sumerian dagger stashed in the garbage can beside the desk.

Chris, frantic to find a lead of some kind, drops the *alertness* card on the table. Because there is something to find in the room, the gamemaster takes the card, puts it in the discard pile and mentions that the Crab spots a glint of gold in the garbage can — a rather peculiar sight.

If there had been nothing to find, the card would have remained out until the Crab missed a *find* roll, at which point the card would be taken and a clue given.

Attribute Value: Adrenalin, Willpower, Presence

There are three types of attribute value cards, each of which increases any one of the appropriate attribute values by 3. *Adrenalin* increases the physical attributes *Dexterity*, *Strength* or *Toughness*, *willpower* increases the attributes *Perception* or *Mind*, and *presence* increases *Charisma* or *Spirit*. The player chooses which value to increase with each card. One card may not affect more than one attribute.

The effect of attribute cards lasts an entire round — if the character has a haste or a flurry, the benefit lasts for all actions taken that round. The benefit does not extend to values which are not generated by the character's attribute. For instance the damage value of a gun could not be increased by an *adrenalin* card. The damage value of a bow could be.

Connection

A *connection* is another special gamemaster-tinted card. It lets a player character know people in the area who might offer him help. This ability reflects the fact that characters have a "past" that reaches back beyond the point where the player began using

Card Pools

The players' card pools obviously help the players, but they help the gamemaster at least as much. The *Torg* scale is very severe — a five point difference between opponents is usually an easy victory for the character with superior values. Card pools allow the players to trade time for success, and to overcome large differences in attribute values. You can therefore use nastier opponents, against whom your player characters would otherwise have little chance.

The cards also help build a natural flow of action for an encounter. The player characters are often at a disadvantage at the beginning of a dramatic encounter, just battling to survive. But as the encounter wears on, the players have more and better options, until they can finally overwhelm the bad guys. In an encounter where the heroes have the edge anyway, the cards help speed play.

the character in stories. Thus, if Quin passes through a small town in Austria, he may know someone there who can hide him for a few days even if Austria has never been a setting of the current campaign. It is assumed that he met the person a long time ago, before the Possibility Wars began. It is up to you to decide who the contact (or contacts) is, and how helpful she will be. The players are free, and encouraged, to provide suggestions; you are equally free to override any you consider damaging to the story.

Try to provide the player characters with a connection as soon as makes sense for the story. If the heroes are trapped in a tomb and the *connection* card is played, you may not have the opportunity to introduce a friendly gamemaster character at that time; simply do so as soon as you can.

Coup de Grace

This result increases all effect totals by 3. *Coup de grace* always increases the second total if an action has two totals; it never increases the first total, and has no effect if the first total does not exceed its difficulty number.

Drama

The *drama* card, like a *hero* card, may be spent as a Possibility. This Possibility may be spent in addition to the Possibility a character may normally spend. Villains may negate a *drama* card used for an extra roll by spending a Possibility themselves.

If the adventure is completed and a player still holds a *drama* card, that player receives three Possibilities for his character. Thus the character is rewarded for surviving the adventure while taking the more difficult path of not using the Possibility during play.

Escape

When this card is played, the heroes can avoid an encounter. The card must be the first card played into a player's pool when rounds begin. The card may then be played at any time during the scene.

Example: *Quin steered the boat down the Nile at breakneck speed, Dr. Mobius's thugs in hot pursuit; suddenly there was a raucous sputter, and the motor on his boat conked out!*

Paul had placed the *escape* card as his first pool card, just in case. Now he plays it to avoid being captured by the bad guys. The gamemaster might declare that Quin was able to fix the motor without effort, making it even better than before.

Quin opened the engine casing, glared at the parts, then whacked them with a ball-peen hammer. The motor roared to life, leaving the henchmen behind in a spray of water.

The restriction on having to play the *escape* card first is meant to help you. If you see an *escape* card on the table, then you know that the Storm Knights must be able to get away from this encounter, should they choose to play the card. Thus, you can start to think of a way in which the party can escape. The escape does not have to be easy, or even immediate. The players may get off easily, or they may barely get away — they might even get captured for awhile! But, before anything bad can happen, they do escape.

Glory

Glory cards can only be played in rare circumstances. If a character rolls a 60 or more on an action that has a major impact on a dramatic scene, his player may play this card. The award for **all characters** in the adventure is increased by 3 Possibilities. Playing a *glory* card also helps the Storm Knights spread tales of their deeds in such a way as to inspire the listener. This makes it easier for the heroes to infuse Ords with possibility energy. See Gamemaster Chapter Nine for details.

Haste

The *haste* card grants the character an additional action. The action is taken immediately after the player plays the card. A player may play a *haste* card out of turn, during another player's turn, or during the villain's turn, as well as during her turn in a round.

Hero

The *hero* card can be played to gain an extra Possibility for any action. The Possibility from the card can be used in addition to Possibilities that a character can normally spend. Villains may negate a *hero* card used for an additional roll, just as they can a regular Possibility.

Idea

Idea lets players get some help when stuck on a puzzle or mystery within an adventure. When the card is played the player poses a specific problem dealing with the adventure and you give an answer. This reflects the fact that the character has deeper knowledge of the world's workings than the player has, and simulates fictional characters who "get the right idea" at the right time.

You might simply give the answer to the problem, or you might give a list of solutions that the characters have to pursue.

Example: Yellow Crab is at the scene of a murder. On the table before him is the murder weapon, an ancient dagger of Sumerian origin. Earlier in the game, at a formal ball, the Yellow Crab met Mr. Hadish No'dab, a gamemaster character who collects ancient Sumerian art. The player controlling the Yellow Crab, however, has forgotten all about Mr. No'dab and is completely stuck as to which direction to go with the clue. In desperation he plays an *idea*.

The gamemaster reminds the Crab's player of the meeting with the art dealer, and suggests that the Cairo Museum of Art (which the player didn't even know existed, but the Crab certainly did) might be a possible lead.

Leadership

A *leadership* card allows the player to play up to two cards from her hand or pool directly into another player's hand or pool, and then to immediately discard and/or refill her hand to four cards (disregarding cards in the pool). You should ask the player to explain



what her character is doing that provides leadership for the other character(s).

Master Plan

This card lets a player pick up any card that has just been discarded, in exchange for the *master plan* card, which is placed on the discard pile. The card may be played any time, but only the top card of the discard pile may be taken, not the top card of the action stack.

Monologue

This card allows a character to stop all hostile action while she makes a dramatic speech (this counts as her action for the round). If the conflict in question is openly violent, the odds of anyone listening to reason are small, but the card will still have the effect of cancelling all other actions for the round. The effect of the card lasts a round or more. There is only one *monologue* card in the deck.

Opponent Fails

This card negates any one successful action taken against the player's character. If a villain shoots at this character and hits, the player can use the card to make the shot miss, or hit a button, or be deflected by some other stroke of luck.

It is important to note that the card in no way safeguards a character from his own failure; that's what all those bonus cards are for.

Example: Dr. Mobius's manservant Guringa pushes Quin into a volcano. Paul may play a an *opponent fails* to avoid having Quin pushed into the volcano. If Quin does fall into the volcano, the card will not help Quin grab the ledge on the way down. Other cards, such as *hero* or *drama*, are necessary for that.

An *opponent fails* card may be played after a successful action, before the next roll of the game is made.

Second Chance

This lets a character immediately retry an action after he has failed the first time; all consequences of the failure are ignored. You must enforce the "immediately" — the second chance must be taken before another player rolls or any other cards are played into the pool.

Seize Initiative

This card allows the players to either keep the card currently on the action stack for one more round (if it is beneficial to them), or flip another card up for this round (if the one you just flipped is bad for them). Once you flip the next card, *seize initiative* may only be used to flip again, not to go back to the previous card.

Supporter

This card lets a player add 3 to another character's total. This card may be played after the other character rolls the die but **before** you announce the final result. The supporting character's player should explain how his support can benefit the acting character.

Rally

The *rally* card lets all Storm Knight players replenish their hands in the middle of a conflict. Regardless of how many cards they have on the table, each player may fill his *hand* to four cards.

This can be especially important during a dramatic conflict, when the cards are weighted against the heroes and they've run out of cards giving them an advantage. Unless you know that the players are going to have a comparatively easy time of it, you should resist the temptation to steal this card away with a successful *taunt*, *test*, etc.

Subplot Cards

The subplot cards are different from the other cards in the drama deck. Once in play they stay in the pool for the rest of the adventure. Despite the game mechanics, they are most important as tools to jump-start your imagination and that of the players. They are marked in gamemaster colors to remind you that they are in play.

Although every adventure has a major story that every character is involved with, it is possible that there will be several smaller story lines involving only specific characters. The large objective is called the adventure's *plot*. The smaller story lines are called *subplots*.

For example, if the characters have been hired to find and remove a stelae that the Edeinos have planted near Philadelphia, the plot is how they deal with the difficulties encountered along the way. While working their way through the story, the characters may meet someone with whom one of the player characters becomes romantically involved. This romance, a subplot, may hinder or help the task of removing the stelae, but it never overshadows the main plot.

The subplot cards give players a chance to introduce elements that will broaden the role of their characters in the story. By making the subplots into cards that each player has the option to play or not, no player is forced to participate in a subplot that he does not want. The player decides for himself what entanglements he wishes to take for his character.

Before an adventure begins, you should outline to yourself which of the subplots are easily incorporated into the adventure you have created. (The subplots of published adventures will already be outlined). When a player plays a subplot into his pool, he may either claim it or immediately discard it and gain one Possibility.

If a player plays a subplot and wants to keep it, and if you have a subplot prepared for that card (or if, during the course of the adventure you have seen how to work it in to the story) the player's character takes on that subplot. If the subplot simply will not work in that in the adventure, the player is awarded the Possibility and the card must be discarded.

The player must keep in mind that he does not necessarily know how the subplot will affect him or whom it will involve. Thus, when Paul plays a *romance* card after Quin meets a jungle princess of the Nile Empire, it does not mean he will become involved romantically with the princess — the gamemaster might have a romance prepared with one of the princess's slaves.



All that is required is that once you approve a subplot card, you work in elements dealing with that subplot.

A subplot card is left face up in the player's pool for the rest of the adventure, but does not count against his limit of four cards for his hand. Subplot cards may not be traded. A player may only have one subplot per adventure.

A character who has a subplot face up gains an additional Possibility at the end of each act, to reward the player for taking on the exciting, but sometimes detrimental, effects of the subplot. If a player takes on a subplot and then consistently ignores the story elements of that subplot, you should reduce the award his character receives at the end of the adventure.

Types of Subplots

Martyr

The martyr card is the only subplot card with an additional rules mechanic. A character whose player has this card out may, at any time, sacrifice his life and **automatically produce a victorious condition in the face of disaster**. Suppose that the Yellow Crab and Quin arrive just a moment too late to prevent Professor Samson from firing his Disintegration Cannon at New Delhi. Chris has the *martyr* card, and he declares that the Crab races for the cannon's power system and flings himself into it as the cannon charges up its deadly ray. In a storm of sparks the machinery is destroyed and the Crab killed. The city of New Delhi, however, is saved without a single roll having been made.

The *martyr* card hangs a peculiar shadow over the character whose player took the subplot, for everyone knows that the character is so noble in intent that his own life is less important than the defeat of evil.

It is important to remember that a character with the *martyr* card does not *have* to sacrifice himself at a climactic moment. It is simply an option when all else fails. However, the character does have his Possibility award reduced at the end of the adventure if he does not martyr himself.

Mistaken Identity

With this subplot the character is thought to be someone else by one or more gamemaster characters, or else believes another character to be someone she isn't. The former is usually more fun to play. The mistake may be because of physical similarity or misinformation ("It will be the first man who walks through the door and says 'good-morning! Fine day, eh?'") The subplot may be comic (a primitive tribe in the Nile Empire thinking the player character is a god returned from heaven), or frightening (an assassin cult is after the character because they believe he killed their leader).

Nemesis

There is, somewhere in the adventure, someone against whom the character has a grudge, or who has a grudge against the character. The conflict may stretch back to their childhood, or may start when the player character bests the gamemaster character during their first meeting. You should make sure that the nemesis and the player character have a few scenes alone together, including (and most importantly) a final showdown. The showdown does not have to culminate in a huge, knock-down battle, but there should be a satisfying resolution. The nemesis might not settle for less than the hero's death, though the player character might want to merely imprison the villain. The villain might seem to be killed (falling out of a zeppelin or into a snake pit) only to reappear later (see "The Campaign Card" on page 68), but he should be out of the hero's hair for several adventures.

Personal Stake

When the *personal stake* subplot is played, the character becomes emotionally tied to the major plot at hand. The woman his group has been hired to rescue may turn out to be someone he loves, or a long-lost relative. The villain may turn out to be the man who killed the character's family or scarred him for life. The city the Disintegrator Cannon is aimed at might be the character's home town. Whatever it is, it gives the character a bit more oomph when facing challenges encountered during the adventure.

Romance

The player character becomes romantically involved with a gamemaster character. The romance may be one



Bob Dvorak

sided, with the gamemaster character in love with the player character or a love-struck player character scorned by a gamemaster character. They may be in love with each other, but separated by social standing or jealous spouses. Remember that a complicated romance is more dramatic than a romance with no problems, because a perfect romance isn't very interesting to anyone but the two people involved.

There are **two** *romance* cards in the deck. If both are in play it might mean that both player characters are involved with the same gamemaster character (causing some tension), or that there are two romantic interests available.

Suspicion

This subplot casts a pall of guilt over a character. The character might be suspected of a murder in the past, a recent theft, or simply be regarded as somebody worth watching with a careful eye. The suspicion may be well-founded or it might only be the result of rumor. The people who suspect the character might even be other player characters.

True Identity

This subplot is the opposite of *mistaken identity*. The character actually **is** somebody who matters to one or more gamemaster characters, but nobody knows it, or else the player character knows the true identity of someone important. The character with the *true identity* may be completely unaware of his true identity, or may be hiding behind a false identity.

Examples of true identities are the heir to the throne who was spirited away at birth, the son (or daughter) of the villain the heroes are pursuing, the man who was prophesied generations ago to kill the beast in the mountains, and the master villain masquerading with a double identity.

The Campaign Card

In most cases a subplot lasts from when it is played to the end of the adventure. For example, a *nemesis* is established for a player character at some point in the story, and by the story's end the nemesis is defeated by that character.

The player of a character with a subplot may want to retain the subplot for his character. To do this he, or another player, plays the *campaign* card while the subplot card is active (face up in the player's pool). A player must agree to have his subplot become a campaign element, even if another player lays down the *campaign* card. The gamemaster must also approve the subplot as a campaign.

Thus, if Chris lays down the *campaign* card, and Paul and the gamemaster agree, Quin's affair with the jungle princess's servant continues through adventures to come. She may not be involved in all adventures (he's a busy fellow, trotting all over the globe and such), but when she is involved in an adventure, Quin automatically starts with a *romance* subplot noted on his character template. She may be in trouble, she may be being courted by somebody else, but the gamemaster will have her there, waiting with a subplot. This, of course, gives Quin extra Possibilities at the end of each act. He'll need them.

A *campaign* card is used only in campaign games, which are a string of related adventures using the same heroes. Campaign games are played on a regular basis; if you are not running a campaign, then the *campaign* card has no effect. The *campaign* card, if discarded or disapproved, is worth one Possibility, as any other subplot.

The Circumstances of Subplots

Depending on circumstances, several of the subplots could be quite similar. If the true love of a character is kidnapped by the villain, it might be a *romance* with a twist, or a *personal stake*, or the *nemesis* pulling another stunt. If a hero is thought to have stolen the Queen's jewels, is it *suspicion* or *mistaken identity*?

There are two reasons for leaving a degree of overlap between the subplots. The first is that the subplots are more flexible this way. If there is a theft involved in the adventure and you want one of the characters to be suspected of the crime, there are two subplots by which this suspicion may be introduced (*suspicion* or *mistaken identity*). However, the **circumstances** may vary between the two subplots. Is the hero mistaken for Reginald Davenport, international jewel thief, the man whom the police suspect stole the jewels? Or does the detective investigating the case suspect the hero on a hunch? In one case there is an actual, well-known individual who is involved in the subplot, and in the other the hero has to clear his name.

In other words, it makes a great deal of difference if the villain who kidnaps a woman is a *nemesis* or if the woman kidnapped is the hero's *romance*. Not only would an encounter between the hero and the villain be played very differently, but the motivation for the two subplots would differ greatly as well. In one case the hero would want to prevent the fiend from ever performing evil actions again, and in the other he would want to rescue his true love at all costs.

Keeping the Hands Secret

Each player keeps his hand a secret from you and the other players — just as in any card game. This way he has the chance to surprise the group with what he plays; it also means that each player is in full control of his own cards. If a player doesn't want to be the *martyr* he doesn't have to. If he wants to save *drama* cards, they're his to save. Players may reveal their cards whenever they want to — but to speed up game play, encourage them to reveal only when playing cards into their pool.

Replenishing Hands

At the end of a scene all players must pick up all cards from their pools (except subplots, *alertness*, and *connection*). Multiple cards **must** be discarded

if the hand is greater than four cards; one card **may** be discarded if the hand is at four or fewer cards. Once all discards are made, a player can rebuild her hand back up to four cards.

When the final encounter of the adventure is over, hands are **not** refilled to four cards. This is to prevent drama cards from being drawn at the last minute, giving the player Possibility points which she did not earn. Cards are not saved from adventure to adventure, though they are saved from act to act, even if you quit for the night (you can write their type or ID number on the character template).

Trading Cards

The players may trade cards in their pools between themselves any time during play. You must enforce the one-for-one exchange of cards, or else play balance can be seriously affected. As trading cards is one of the players' tactical advantages in the game, don't inhibit trading as long as the game doesn't slow down. If action is taking place in non-rounds, players may trade between their hands, but once rounds begin trades may only be made between pools.

Combat Between Two Player Characters

Although it's hard to fathom — there's more than enough to do in *Torg* with the Earth being invaded — every once in a while some heroes will see fit to fight each other. Since both sides are heroes, the conflict line advantage or penalty applies to both of them. Characters act in order of *Dexterity* (ties decided by a die roll). They play cards into their pools and use them as they ordinarily would.

When to Use the Deck (and When Not to)

Because the drama deck serves so many functions, it is important to understand when cards come in to play and when they don't. Basically, **the cards come into play when you want them to come into play.**

Using conflict lines and dramatic skill resolution is always at your discretion. They are tools to help you enjoy the flow of the action. In most conflicts (fights, chases, interaction where a hero is trying to get somebody to do something which the subject would rather not do) you will turn over a card. At that point the game time-scale switches to rounds, the conflict lines set the rhythm, and card pools begin.

But let's say the characters have just met a band of ruffians. The players don't know that these gamemaster characters are bad guys, and simply want to buy some food from them. You don't want to tip the players off that something could go wrong (you've decided that the ruffians had a bad day and just want to be left alone, so how the characters behave in the encounter will determine what the ruffians do) so you don't flip a card over when the bargaining session begins. This means you're "roleplaying it out."

Roleplaying it out means that you and the characters simply talk to each other as if you were the characters in a story. You are like actors making up a script on the spot. No dice need be rolled because if you know what the gamemaster characters want, you should be able to judge their reaction to the player characters.

If the characters do something that you think would upset the thugs enough to get them into a fight, flip a card and have the bad guys draw their weapons. Or, if the villains are intrigued by the heroes' offer but want something more substantial, make the bargaining tighter by flipping a card to control the flow. This might confuse the players (they're just trying to buy some food after all), but would put them on edge, making the bargaining all the more interesting.

Remember, it is up to you to decide when to use the conflict lines. When you do, it means that an open conflict has begun (though not necessarily a violent one).

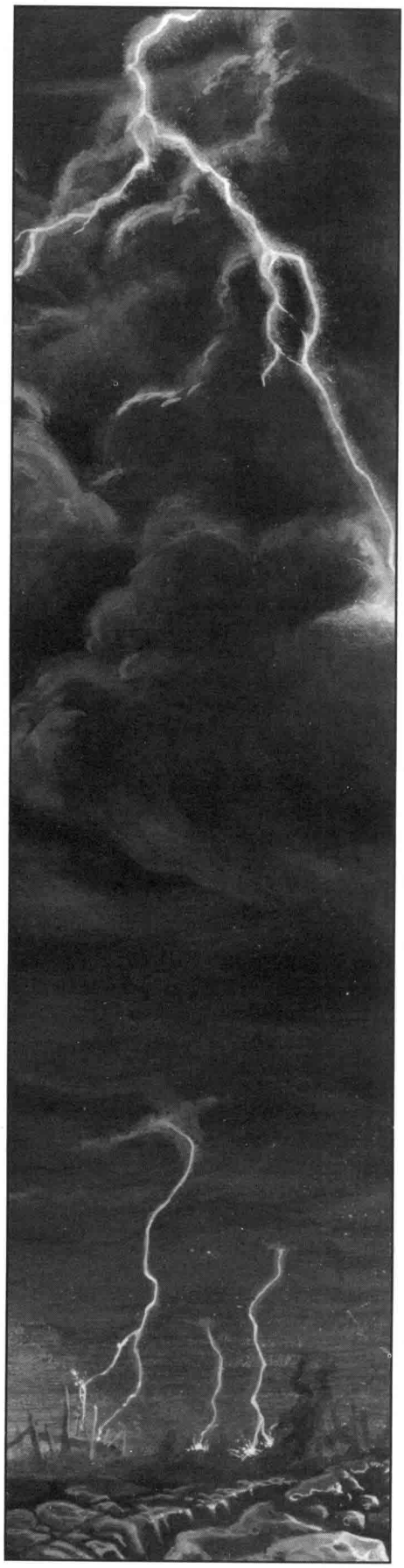
Not Using The Cards

Torg can be played without the cards. We strongly recommend you use them, because we feel they add important elements to the game and the story. If you are a traditional roleplaying gamemaster, you may feel uncomfortable with the cards. If you don't use them, *Torg* plays much like any other roleplaying game. When the cards are not used, initiative is determined by the roll of dice rather than by the conflict lines.

You and one player each roll a die. For a standard encounter the player adds 5 to his die roll; in a dramatic combat you add 5 to your roll. The higher roll wins the initiative.

Be warned that without the cards the player characters will be doing far less spectacular deeds, and the teamwork possible with card play is lost.

It is also possible to play using only portions of the cards. You may wish to use conflict lines, at first, only to determine initiative. Later, you can add in the positive and negative results. You may decide not to use player cards until your players become more familiar with the system. You may decide not to use dramatic skill resolution at all. The choice is yours.



Chapter Five

Character Interaction

There are a variety of methods by which player characters and gamemaster characters can interact. The simplest is "roleplaying" — you and the players simply speak to each other, in character.

The problem is that a character might be far more (or less) charming than the player portraying that character. Or, you might find that while you're a terrific gamemaster, your bargaining skills aren't what they need to be in a medieval setting. Therefore, it's important to have rules about how the *characters* can and can't interact.

Character interaction is very important in *Torg* — probably more important than in any other roleplaying game. There are specific ways each type of interaction can affect people, some of them quite powerful, and it is important that you be familiar with the various tactics players (and you) can use. These include *charm, persuasion, intimidation, trick, test of wills,* and *taunt*. The latter three are discussed in detail in the next chapter; this chapter concerns *charm, persuasion,* and *intimidation*.

Charm

Charm is used to make another character or creature friendlier to the character putting on the charm. Sometimes it works, sometimes it makes things worse. *Charm* is a *Charisma* skill.

The difficulty number for a *charm* attempt is the *willpower* value of the target. If the target does not have *willpower,* use the target's *Mind* instead. The other factors involved are the target's attitude toward the charmer, and the charmers attitude toward the target (which are not necessarily the same). There are five basic attitudes that characters can have toward each other: *enemy, hostile, neutral, friendly* and *loyal*.

An *enemy* is a character who seeks to destroy the other character. The destruction need not be physical and immediate, but each misery and defeat an enemy can inflict on his opponent fulfills a personal goal.

A character with a *hostile* attitude toward another has contempt for or feels threatened by that character. The character may be intensely jealous, or the two characters may belong to rival factions; the hostility may stem from long-held prejudice or recent events. A character who "uses" another, without any real interest in that character, is also considered *hostile*. The difference between *enemy* and *hostile* is that hostile characters will avoid direct confrontation more often than not — enemies usually attack.

A character who is *neutral* has no reason to like or dislike another. People who are *neutral* may seem friendly or standoffish, but they have no emotional investment in the character toward whom they are *neutral*. The flip side is that such characters aren't out to exploit those toward whom they are *neutral*. 'Live and let live' is a good motto for the *neutral* attitude.

Characters who have a *friendly* attitude toward another have reason to believe the other to be worthwhile in some sense — they may share common goals or values, enjoy each other's company, or believe that there is something intrinsically valuable about each other. Friends support each other in small ways — sometimes large ways if needed. *Friendly* characters genuinely care about the feelings and welfare of their friends, and try to enhance those feelings.

Loyal characters are strongly committed to the characters who have earned their loyalty. They go to considerable lengths to guarantee the safety and well-being of the characters to whom they are loyal. Although they

are still motivated to keep themselves alive, some loyalties transcend even self-preservation.

The Interaction Results Table (under Charm/Persuade) on page 40 lists the attitudes, along with the result needed to *charm* a character with that attitude.

Example: Quin is trying to *charm* a princess with a *Mind* of 10. A total of 10 is enough to *charm* her if she is *loyal* to Quin; it takes a total of 11-12 if she is *friendly*, 13-16 if she is *neutral*, and so on.

Conditions for Charm

Charm takes time; it is not a combat skill that can be done in a 10-second round. The more time spent being charming, and the more leisurely the approach, the more chance for success.

A *charm* attempt requires five minutes at the minimum. If a character tries to *charm* another over several scenes, using *charm* only once per scene, each roll for *charm* has its bonus increased by 3. If a player declares a once-per-scene *charm*, she may not attempt to *charm* the same target in that scene.

When a character tries to *charm* another, the characters' attitudes must be determined. Players may choose the attitude they want their character to adopt toward the target, announcing their choice to you. Once they choose an attitude, see that they act in accordance with their choice. For instance, if the player declares that her character is *friendly*, but acts in a truly selfish or manipulative manner, point out that this is *hostile* behavior. If the player amends her action, there is no penalty. If she does not, feel free to treat the player character's attitude as *hostile*.

The base attitude of gamemaster characters is up to you, depending on the story you have created.

The Temporary Effects of Charm

A successful *charm* **temporarily** increases a character's attitude by one level, although his *base attitude* (the original attitude of the character) remains the same. Any subsequent *charm* attempts still use the **base attitude** to determine the level of success needed.

To continue charming a character in a single scene (another *charm* attempt may always be made in a future scene), the charmer must receive a result which is at least one level **higher** than the base attitude of the target. This is a *continuing success*.

Example: The Yellow Crab tries to warm the heart of Sofia Delour, a lounge singer and mob doll in Cairo. Sofia's original attitude toward the Crab is *hostile*; her *willpower* is 10.

With a *Charisma* of 8 and a handy *presence* card, the Crab gets a total of 17, good for a *hostile* result. This temporarily improves Sofia's attitude to *neutral*. However, the *charm* must stop here as the Crab did not get a result of *enemy* or better.

A player may "press the issue" by attempting another *charm* after a failure or non-continuing success, but this is risky. See below.

The Permanent Effect of Charm

A charmed character's base attitude toward the one who charmed him is **improved** at the end of an adventure if the following two conditions are true:

1. The last *charm* left the target with an attitude of *friendly* or better.

2. The base attitude of the character **doing** the charming is equal to or better than the base attitude of the one **being** charmed.

The second condition exists because people, or other social beings, may put up a good front, but true intentions have a way of leaking through and being perceived. This may not have any effect in the short run — the smooth, evil mastermind may be able to temporarily *charm* and/or *persuade* our hero, but getting him to change his feelings permanently is difficult indeed. Once free from the smooth-tongued charmer, the hero is most likely going to shake his head and try to figure out why the heck he ever believed such a slime in the first place.

Example: The Yellow Crab's attitude toward Sofia is *neutral*, while her base attitude is *hostile*. This fulfills condition two. The Yellow Crab charmed Sofia to *neutral*, which is not enough for condition one. Sofia's base attitude does not improve. If the Crab had managed to *charm* Sofia to *friendly*, her **base attitude** would have become *neutral* at the end of the adventure. If she shows up in future adventures, she might be more inclined to help.

Pressing the Issue

When a character fails a *charm*, or gets the minimal level of success necessary, no further *charm* attempts may be made in that scene unless the character *presses the issue*. This means trying to *charm* one more time.

If this extra *charm* roll is successful (at any level) the target's attitude improves by one more step, and no further *charm* attempts may be made in that scene, nor may the issue be pressed further.

The danger is in failure. If a character fails while pressing the issue, all temporary steps are **lost,** and the target character's **base attitude** is **lowered** by one step.

Example: The Crab, having charmed a *hostile* Sofia to *neutral* by achieving a *hostile* result, must stop charming. Chris decides to press the issue.

He rolls for one last *charm* attempt, but fails miserably. Sofia's attitude (base and temporary) is now *enemy*.

Persuasion

Persuasion is used to get another character or creature to agree to do a certain thing or accept a certain course of action. The difficulty number for persuading someone is their *willpower* or *Mind* value. Only one *persuasion* attempt may be made on a character about any one issue or suggestion, unless you decide there is a good story-



related reason to allow another attempt.

Example: At a trading camp, an allied human tribesman is enraged at an imagined insult, and decides to mop the floor with Quin Sebastian. Quin doesn't really want to fight the lug, nor does he want to get smashed by him. The gamemaster describes scenes of broken crockery and flying wares, Quin dodging in and out amid the tents while trying to *persuade* the tribesman not to use him for bear bait. She gives Quin three chances at *persuasion*, with a round or two between each attempt, in order to make the scene interesting.

Persuasion takes into account the target's attitude, much as *charm* does. See *charm* above for descriptions of the attitudes. The Interaction Results Table (on page 40) lists the attitudes, along with the result needed to *persuade* a character with that attitude.

Conditions of Persuasion

The attitudes of the characters involved must be determined. If *charm* has been used prior to the *persuasion* attempt, the attitudes are the temporary attitudes which resulted from the *charm*. Otherwise, use the base attitudes.

Persuasion *can* be done in a single combat round.

Persuasion Success

There are three types of success for a *persuasion* attempt: *negotiated agreement*, *yes*, and *vow*.

A persuader whose result is **equal to the target character's current attitude** gets a *negotiated agreement*. *Negotiated agreement* is the **best possible result** against characters who are currently *hostile* or *enemy*. *Negotiated agreement* means the target agrees to the persuader's request only in exchange for something of roughly equal value; the payoff must be immediate unless the reward is great and the target has genuine reason to believe he will receive the reward. If the proposition requires no real effort on the part of the target character, and there is no likely negative consequence for complying with the request, *negotiated agreement* may be treated as a *yes* result.

A persuader whose result is **one better than the target character's current attitude** gets a *yes* result. A *yes* result is the best possible result on a commercial negotiation, or against characters who are currently *neutral*. A *yes* result means the target character agrees to the proposition as stated by the persuader, with no strings attached. A *yes* result is only possible if the outcome of the proposition has some value to the target; that is, the target must believe there is some self-interest to be served by going along with the persuader's suggestion — if not right now, then soon. The self-interest can be anything from direct monetary reward, to recognition, to knowledge that he is doing the right thing (as he sees it).

A persuader whose result is **two levels better than the target character's current attitude** gets a *vow* result. A *vow* will only be taken by someone whose current attitude is *friendly* or *loyal*. A character who makes a *vow* will follow through on the suggestion made by the persuader with all possible effort and speed. A *vow* is only possible when the target character agrees with the fundamental aim of the course of action suggested by the persuader. If a *vow* is taken on a course of action suggested by someone with an attitude of *hostile* or *enemy*, the target may reject the vow after considering the source.

Persuasion Modifiers

It is not possible to *persuade* a character to do something that is completely against his nature or ethical principles. One of the prime tricks of evil characters is to misrepresent a situation and the choices so that *persuasion* is possible, i. e. producing false evidence against a hero as part of a *persuasion* attempt to make a target take harmful action against the hero.

Even in situation where *persuasion* is possible, there are modifiers:

- If the situation involves moderate risk, such as the chance of loss of considerable money, prestige, or a real chance of physical danger, the difficulty number is +3.
- If the situation involves high risk, such as the virtual certainty of physical harm to oneself or loved ones, the difficulty is +5.

Haggling

Some situations permit haggling, such as street fairs, car dealers, and medieval markets. Others, such as exclusive shops or huge mass merchandizing chains, where the seller does not have the authority to set the price, do not allow haggling.

Essentially, when the buyer and the seller do not agree on a price, but are willing to negotiate, then haggling can take place. Haggling is a form of *persuasion* in which the aim of each character is to get the other to give a *yes* result to the character's suggested price. However, the "current attitude" of the merchant or buyer has little to do with how he feels about the other — it depends mostly on the price offered as compared with the usual market price for that item.

BASE PRICE / ATTITUDE CHART

Offer	Negotiator's Attitude is
Bargain	Friendly
+/-1	Neutral
+/-2	Hostile
+/-3	Enemy

The offers and asking prices are given in **value points away from the value of the base price**; the +/-1 level include all prices that differ from the base price by equal to or less than a point. *Bargain* indicates that the price asked or offered is actually lower/higher than the average market price. +/-3 is the most an offer can differ from the base price.



Example: The usual market price for a stereo is 250 dollars. This measure has a value of 12. If the offer was 101-250 dollars (value of 11-12), the merchant's attitude would be *neutral.* If the offer was 61-100 dollars, the merchant would be *hostile,* at 41-60 he would be *enemy;* the offer could not be less than 41. If the offer was 251+ dollars, the merchant would be *friendly.*

The buyer's offer determines the seller's attitude, and the seller's suggested price determines the buyer's attitude.

Example: The average price of a biplane in the Nile Empire is 3000 gold royals; Quin offers to buy one for 2500, and the merchant is asking 7500. A measure of 3000 has a value of 18, the value of 2500 is 17, and the value of 7500 is 20.

The **offer** is one point away from the value of the **base price** so the merchant's attitude is *neutral.* The **asking price** is two points away from the value of the base price, so Quin's attitude is *hostile.*

Haggling takes place in alternating rounds, usually using the drama deck to determine initiative and advantages. When it is the buyer's turn, he makes a *persuasion* roll to try to get the merchant to say *yes* to the offer. When it is the merchant's turn, he makes a *persuasion* roll to try to get the buyer to say *yes* to the asking price.

A *vow* or *yes* result means the price is accepted and the deal concluded. *Negotiated agreement* means the other haggler's next offer must be a full value point closer to the persuader's offer if the differences in prices are more than a point, or half the numerical difference if they are within a point.

Failure results in the price holding firm; the **haggler** must up his offer at his next opportunity in order to roll again. The increase must be a full point in the direction of the other if possible, or else meet the difference halfway. If a haggler fails and then is forced to *negotiate* as well, he must change his next offer by **two** such steps.



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Example: Quin and the merchant are haggling for the biplane in the previous example. Quin's *persuasion* is 10; the merchant's is 9 (but his *willpower* is 11). The card flip gives the merchant the initiative.

The merchant gets 6 result points, but that's a failure because Quin was *hostile* to the merchant's asking price. Now it's Quin's turn.

Quin's *persuasion* gets 4 result points. Since the merchant was *neutral* to Quin's offer, that's a *negotiated success.*

The merchant's next asking price must be closer to Quin's offer twice, once for the *negotiated success*, and once for the merchant's previous failure. Each decrease must be by a full point if possible. The original asking price was 7500 (value of 20) so the merchant lowers his price to 6000 (value of 19) and then to 4000 (value of 18). Quin is now *neutral* to this offer; the merchant gets 5 result points — *negotiated success.*

Now Quin must up his offer. Since 2500 (value of 17) is is within one point of 4000 (value of 18), Quin must meet the merchant halfway, and offer 3250. The merchant is now *friendly;* Quin gets 4 result points and the bargain is struck.

If a round of haggling goes by where neither party succeeds in their *persuasion* attempt nor improves their offer, the deal is broken off, and no further negotiation is possible.

Please take note: player characters with cards and Possibilities can, if they desire, take Ord merchants to the cleaners. If you plan on introducing a hard-bargaining merchant-prince gamemaster character, make sure he's possibility-rated.

Clearing the Mind

Player characters and other possibility-rated characters are not immune to the effects of *charm* and *persuasion*. They are generally tougher to dazzle and confuse than Ords, and they have one additional advantage: the chance to *clear their minds.*

To do this, the character makes a *Perception* check; the difficulty number is his own *Mind*. If the result points are equal to or greater than the result points of the latest *charm* or *persuasion* attempt against him, the *charm* or *persuasion* is negated. If an *enemy* character made the suggestion, add 3 to the bonus number for clearing the mind.

If a character clears his mind, he is safe from the effects of *charm* and *persuasion* by his opponent for the rest of the act.

Example: After several successful *charms* on her part, the Yellow Crab finds himself smitten (*friendly*) with Sofia Delour, a situation he finds enjoyable until he remembers that she is a mob doll. She suggests that "my penthouse suite has the best view in Cairo ... especially at sunrise." The gamemaster rolls a *persuasion* against the Crab, getting 9 result points, more than enough for a *yes*.

Chris is afraid this might be a trap, and announces that the Crab tries to clear his mind. The Crab's *Perception* is 12 and his *Mind* is 9. After cards and Possibilities are used, the Crab gets a total of 21, for 12 result points. This exceeds the 9 points of the *persuasion*, and the Crab is free to act as he pleases.

Intimidation

Intimidation based on the *Spirit*, and the target is the other character's *Spirit* or *intimidation* skill value. While frequently used in combat (see Chapter Six), *intimidation* may also be used to *awe* or interrogate other characters.

Awe

Awe is used to freeze a character, to prevent any hostile action against the awesome character for as long as the awesome character takes no hostile action. *Awe* may only be attempted once per target character. In effect, it is a combat use of *intimidation* in a non-combat situation. See Chapter Six for details on *intimidation*.

Interrogation

In order to submit to *interrogation*, a character must believe himself to be at a significant disadvantage; characters who have been captured, or are at the mercy of their opponents, are good examples. Some characters are arrogant or self-assured enough to prevent most forms of interrogation from succeeding; major villains and player characters fall into this category. *Interrogation* requires at least three minutes to be successful.

The Interaction ResultsTable (under Charm/Persuade) on page 40 lists the interrogated character's attitude toward **whoever the interrogators are trying to find out about**, along with the result necessary for the character to give information. As you can see, the worse the subject's attitude toward what the interrogators are trying to find out about, the easier it is to pry information from him. A character is always considered *loyal* to himself.

Example: The player characters are interrogating a suspect about the involvement of Kanawa Corporation in a recent assassination attempt. The characters don't yet realize that the suspect is the assassin, who is *friendly* toward Kanawa. His *intimidation* value is 11.

To get a result of *friendly* on the Interrogation table takes 12 result points. The characters would need an *intimidation* total of 23 in order to force information about Kanawa out of the assassin.

If the suspect had no connection to Kanawa, it would only take a total of 18 (7 result points for a *neutral* effect) in order to get him to tell whatever he knows about the corporation.



Chapter Six

Combat and Chases

Combat in *Torg* is the combat of adventure fiction. Bullets and arrows fly, providing danger — but far less frequently do they provide death, at least for player characters. The chance of death, however, is always present in combat, and probably more frequently than in fiction, where the author controls the rolls of the dice.

You should avoid building stories which are only a framework for a gauntlet of combats. If combat is all there is to a story, players will grow bored with all the meaningless mayhem. If combats are too frequent, you will eventually be faced with a choice: to let characters live a short life span, or "cheat" and intervene to keep the player characters alive. If player characters die frequently, there is little chance of players investing energy in development, and ultimately in the game. And if you have to intervene often to keep characters alive, you eliminate the risk associated with combat, making it trivial violence rather than heroic battle. Real heroes must take real risks.

The Combat Round

A combat round represents 10 seconds of game time. There are nine types of actions you can take in combat: *attack, defense, intimidation, maneuver, movement, simple action, taunt, test of wills,* or a *trick.* **In general, a character may only roll the die for one type of action in a round.** The exceptions to this are listed under the multi-action rules in Gamemaster Chapter Two, and in the explanations of *flurry* and *haste* in Gamemaster Chapter Four.

An *attack* action is an action your character takes to damage a target. An attack action always requires a character to generate a total.

A *defense* action is use of a defensive skill such as *dodge*. A character **rolls** only when making **active use** of a defensive skill. All bonus numbers for active use of defensive skills have a minimum of 1.

Intimidation is a combat use of the *intimidation* skill. *Intimidation* can cause an opponent to lose a round, or worse.

Maneuver is aggressive movement designed to tire an opponent or throw her off balance. *Maneuver* is a *Dexterity* skill used against an opponent's *Dexterity* or *maneuver*.

A character generates a total on *movement* when trying to increase his speed; otherwise the character may move up to his movement limit without rolling the die.

A *simple action* is one such as shouting commands, loading a weapon, drawing a weapon, or similar easy task. Simple actions require no roll to perform. For an an action to be simple, it must meet two criteria:

1. The action must not be covered in the rules as any other type of action.

2. You must believe the action has very little chance of failure in this situation, a difficulty of 0 or less. If normal people can succeed at this action 95 percent of the time or more, then it is a simple action.

Taunt is a *Charisma* based skill, targeted against the opponent's *taunt* or *Charisma*. Taunting is an attempt to anger your opponent or otherwise cause her to mentally lose her balance in combat.

Test of wills is a character's attempt to break the will of his opponent. *Test* is a *Mind* skill and is targeted against the opponent's *test* or *Mind*.

Trick is an attempt to gain an advantage by setting up a feint, a trap, or a condition of which an opponent in unaware. *Trick* is a *Perception* skill and is used against an opponent's *trick* or *Perception*.

Initiative

As explained in Gamemaster Chapter Four, initiative is determined by flipping a card from the drama deck onto the action stack. Characters on the side with initiative act in descending order of *Dexterity*, high *Dexterity* to low *Dexterity*. Once all characters on the side with initiative have acted, the characters on the other side act, again in descending order of *Dexterity*. Once all characters who wish to and are capable of acting have acted, the round is over. A new round is started by flipping another card.

The Combat Results Table

The Combat Results Table (on page 40) lists the effect that a blow has on an opponent. The amount by which the damage total exceeds the opponent's *Toughness* is expressed in result points, and a corresponding combat result is read depending on whether the target is an Ord or a possibility-rated character. There are three types of damage and one special result from combat.

Shock damage is expressed in points, which are cumulative. If the total shock damage taken equals or exceeds the character's *Toughness*, the character falls unconscious. Shock damage is very short-lived. Every minute (six rounds) that passes eliminates one shock point from each living character.

The *knockout condition* is expressed as a letter, either a *K* or an *O*. When a character takes a K, he should record that on his template. If a character with a K on his template later takes an O, that's a KO, which knocks the character unconscious. Any Os taken before a K result have no effect, and are not recorded. A *K/O* result means that if the character has no knockout condition already, he takes a K. If he already has a K, he takes an O instead.

An O is short-lived; after a minute it disappears. A K condition lasts for half an hour, representing a more serious jolt to the nervous system. If a character already has a K result, and takes another, the shock damage for **that blow only** is increased by two. The additional K has no further effect.

Example: Quin Sebastian has already taken a K, and gets hit for a K 3. Quin takes 5 shock points.

Knockdown causes a character to spend his next action getting up, although he is not completely helpless — he may take a defensive or movement action (only).

Wounds are damage which last until healed, and which can prove fatal. There are four wound levels: *wounded*, *heavily wounded* (corresponds to two *wounds*), *mortally wounded* (corresponds to three *wounds*), and *dead* (four or more *wounds*). Wound levels are cumulative, so a *wound* followed by a *wound* is the same as taking a *heavy wound*, etc. The number of wound levels taken in a blow precedes the abbreviation "Wnd" on the combat result table. A character who reaches *heavy wound* in a round must pass his next action due to the pain (treat as a *knockdown*).

A character who is *mortally wounded* must take a point of shock damage each round until:

1. He receives medical attention or first aid to stop the effects of a *mortal wound*.
2. He takes shock damage in excess of his *Toughness*, in which case he dies.

A mortally wounded character may spend a Possibility to eliminate the point of shock damage each round, thus prolonging his life.

Stun Damage

Some types of attack do "stun" damage rather than regular damage. This includes blows from clubs, rubber bullets, fistfights, and knockout gas.

Stun damage does shock and KO damage just as regular blows; however, stun damage does not wound as frequently or severely.

When checking for damage from a stun-type weapon, ignore a *knockdown* result, treat a *wound* result as a *knockdown*, and any #Wnd result has the number reduced by one.

Example: The Yellow Crab is hit by a stun ray for 14 result points of damage. Normally this would be a 2 Wnd KO 5; because it is stun damage, it is reduced to Wnd KO 5.

Example: Quin is struck by a club for a Wnd K 3. It is treated as a knockdown K 3.

Healing

The rules for healing are covered more thoroughly in Player Section Chapter Two. Keep in mind the following:

1. There are six rounds to a minute, so one shock and all O conditions are removed after six card flips of the action stack.
2. *First aid* is useful for preventing *mortal wounds* from becoming fatal, and removes all shock and O conditions.
3. *Medicine* helps the wounded character heal himself, but cannot automatically heal wounds — only shock, K/O, and the imminent danger of death from a *mortal wound*.

Keeping Track of Damage

The wound levels are noted on the character templates. When a player character is wounded, the player should circle the appropriate wound level. Knockout conditions are noted by the K and O section of the template; again the player should circle the appropriate condition. Shock damage is recorded in the appropriate box.

You should record the wound levels of all characters you control, preferably on the same sheet as the other gamemaster character information.

Ranged Attacks

Ranged attacks are those made with weapons that fire projectiles of some kind (guns, bows) and thrown weapons (knives, spears). Projectile weapon ranges are listed in Gamemaster Chapter Twelve and are expressed as *short*, *medium* and *long*. As the range of a projectile weapon increases, its effectiveness decreases.

Ranged Attack Modifiers

Point-blank attacks are attacks at less than *short* range. The minimum bonus number for a point-blank attack is 1, as with active use of passive skills.

Short range has no modifiers.

Medium range has a -3 bonus number modifier.

Long range has a -5 bonus number modifier.

Weapons capable of automatic and burst fire are assumed to be firing in bursts. Subtract 3 from the **damage total** if such a weapon is fired single-shot. If the weapon is being fired at full automatic, add 3 to the **bonus number**. (A Thompson submachinegun can only fire at full automatic.)

A single-shot weapon may be fired multiple times in one round (using up more ammo, see below); this increases the **damage total** by 3.

Ammunition

Keeping exact track of every bullet, arrow and burst is a bookkeeping chore we do not recommend. It may be accurate, but we certainly don't think it's fun.

If you and your players are willing to play fast and loose with ammunition rules, let ammunition be a rare problem. If a *setback* card appears during play, inform your most trigger-happy players that they are running short on ammo.

Give the affected player from 5 to 10 combat rounds worth of ammunition, those who have been conserving ammo from 15 to 25 rounds, and start keeping track from that point. Make the shortness of ammunition work as a dramatic event, making each shot a decision.

If you and your player want a more exact measure, a fair approximation is to note on the party sheet how many combat rounds of ammunition each party member has. The equipment lists tell the number of combat rounds of ammunition that are in a single clip. For single-fire weapons the combat rounds of ammunition is the number of bullets carried.

Each combat round the party member uses his weapon, put a tick mark by the ammunition number. If the character is firing at more than one target, put as many ticks as shots taken; if the character fires multiple times at the same target, chalk off three rounds worth of ammo. If firing at full automatic, chalk off **seven** rounds worth of ammo. If a burst-fire weapon is fired single-shot, put one tick every three rounds.

Doing this accounting gives you a measure of ammunition we feel is accurate enough for a storytelling game.

If you are using ammunition rules, your players will also need to reload weapons. Loading a musket requires two rounds. Loading a revolver or rifle which must be loaded shell by shell, bullet by bullet, requires a round. Clip-loaded weapons require a simple action to reload — they may be loaded and fired in the same round. Drawing an arrow is a simple action, and can be done in conjunction with an attack. Loading a light crossbow takes a round, and loading a heavy crossbow requires two rounds.

Weapon Damage

When a character attacks another unarmed, the damage value is the attacker's *Strength* value. When the attacker uses a melee or missile weapon (strength-powered weapons) the weapons have adds to the damage value in much the same way as skills add to attributes. The *maximum value* for a weapon (as listed in Gamemaster Chapter Twelve) is the maximum damage value possible for the weapon.

Example: If Grod the ogre (*Strength* 17) picks up a short bow, it has 5 adds to damage and a damage maximum of 19. Grod does 19 damage with the short bow (plus bonus number) even though his damage value should be 24, because the puny human weapon cannot transmit all of his *Strength*.

Other races have weapons which are tailored to their race; their maximum damage values are usually within three points of the racial maximum for *Strength* plus the damage adds of the particular weapon.

Example: Grod's Ogre Club give 7 adds and has a damage maximum of 25 (Ogre maximum of 17 plus 7 adds plus 1).

Weapons that provide their own power (most firearms, heavy weapons) are given an innate damage value. They do not add to a character's attributes in any way.

Attack Options

During combat rounds, characters have various options they may exercise when performing an *attack* action. This section is optional, but you will find it useful for judging player requests such as "I aim for the eyes," or "I want to go on all-out attack."

Aiming

A character may spend one round *aiming*. This may only be done with firearms and missile weapons, and requires the attacker to remain motionless and be undisturbed for that round. Next round, his attack value is increased by 3.

Vital Blow

A *vital blow* is an attack aimed at a vital spot (such as "aiming for the eye"). The **acting value** for the hit is **decreased** by 8 because of the control needed for the blow, while the **damage value** is **increased** by 4 due to the critical nature of the target. If a character is facing an unknown creature, he cannot take a vital blow if he does not know what parts are vital.

A vital blow may also be used to disarm an opponent who is using a hand-held weapon. The opponent's *Strength* score (*melee weapon* score if the defender is using a melee weapon) is used as the difficulty for the second total, rather than *Toughness*. If successful, the defender is disarmed.



All-Out Attack

All-out attack is a furious, deliberate attack for maximum effect which sacrifices defense to increase damage. This may only be done in unarmed combat or melee combat. An all-out attack **increases the acting value** of the attack by 3, and **increases the damage value** by 1. In addition, an all-out attack leaves the attacker vulnerable to counterattack; all blows aimed at the character doing the all-out attack have their bonus numbers increased by 3 for both action and effect.

An attacker may combine a vital blow with an all-out attack, resulting in a -5 attack value and a +5 damage value, with a +3 bonus to all attacks made on the character.

Sweep Attack

A *sweep attack* may only be made in unarmed combat, or with a melee weapon. A sweep attack lowers the damage value by 5 in order to boost the attack value by 5, as the attacker is making broad, sweeping attacks to maximize the area covered by an attack.

Opportunity Attack

A character taking an opportunity attack is waiting for a target to present itself later in the round. In effect, the character passes her action when it is her turn. As each target presents itself, she must either decide to attack then or wait for another target. If she waits, any target characters "passed over" may act and attack as they normally would. Opportunity attacks have a -3 bonus modifier for action and effect.

Location Attack

A location attack is an opportunity attack in which a character waits for the first target to present itself **at a location**, and then attacks it. Her attack is "held over" until the target appears, or until the end of the round. The character must specify a single location, such as a doorway, for a location attack. The location attack occurs as soon as the target presents itself. There is no penalty for a location attack.

Defense Options

A defensive skill may be used either passively or actively. A passive defense uses the defensive skill value as the difficulty number to hit the defending character. An actively defending character generates a total with her defensive skill. Any bonus number which is less than 1 becomes 1. The total is then the difficulty number to hit the character.

The *melee weapons* skill may be used as a defensive skill against melee and unarmed attacks. The *unarmed combat* skill may be used as the defensive skill against unarmed attacks, and melee attacks in the case of certain martial arts.

A character may declare an active defense at the moment of attack, presuming she has not already used her action that round.

Aggressive Defense

A character with either *unarmed* or *melee weapon* skill may use an *aggressive defense*. When using aggressive defense, the character may roll for an active defense, but the defense **total** is decreased by 2 (the minimum bonus is still 1). The character may **also** attack, but the attack value is decreased by 4. This is a special case of the mixed multi-action rule in Gamemaster Chapter Two.

Armor

Armor absorbs much of the punishment meant for characters. Armor increases the character's *Toughness* for purposes of resisting damage, up to a maximum value as listed in the equipment section (Gamemaster Chapter Twelve). The amount of increase is called the *armor add*. The maximum value is necessary for realism, to prevent wrapping a battleship in leather to make it tougher, when the leather would be completely ineffective against the attack forms against which a battleship is armored. Armor can also have a strength minimum required to wear it, which is particularly true of armor meant for large nonhumans.

Terrain as Cover

Terrain which grants cover will often have an armor add. Use the chart below to judge the value of the terrain a character is in.

COVER VALUE CHART

Type of Cover	Example	Add/Max.
Soft	Bush, car door	+3/15
Medium	Logs, brick wall	+10/25
Hard	Steel, stone wall	+15/40

Concealment

Concealment makes hitting a target more difficult. Partial concealment — up to half of the body concealed — or a body prone increases the difficulty to hit by 3. Medium concealment, with less than a quarter of the target exposed, increases the difficulty by 5. High concealment, such as an arrow slit, increases the difficulty by 10.

If an attack that would normally hit a target misses due to a cover modifier, you may rule that the attack hits, but the defender receives the armor adds listed above.

Situational Modifiers

Blindside

A blindside attack comes from a direction which is unexpected or which the defender cannot protect well. Hitting a character from behind is a blindside attack. Blindside attacks increase the attack bonus by 3.

Complete Surprise and Normal Surprise

There are two types of surprise: "complete" and "normal." *Complete* surprise is only possible when the target is unaware of the attacker's

ACTION SUMMARY

Tactic	Attribute
Intimidate	Spirit
Taunt	Charisma
Test	Mind
Trick	Perception

presence, and is not expecting any attack at all. Characters who routinely operate in dangerous environments where conflict is expected, such as policemen and soldiers, cannot be caught completely by surprise while on duty.

Complete surprise allows the attackers to play two cards into their card pool prior to combat, or (if the defenders are the player characters), prevents the defenders from adding any cards to their pools for the first two rounds.

Normal surprise occurs when the defenders may be expecting an attack, but do not know the time or exact location of the attack, such as an ambush of a patrol. Normal surprise allows the attackers to play one card into their pool prior to combat, or prevents them from adding a card into their pool for the first round.

Intimidation, Taunt, Test, and Trick

Intimidation, *taunt*, *test*, and *trick* are interactive skills that can be used in combat to slow or stop an opponent. Use the Interactive Results Table on page 40. It lists the number of result points achieved, and the effect of the action.

Taking the Action

Performing one of these actions is like any other: a total is generated and compared to the corresponding value of the target. The target uses the similar skill to defend, or the base attribute if he does not have the skill, as summarized above.

When using any of these tactics, the player should tell you what effect he would like to have before rolling for the action.

Example: The Crab is fighting an Edeinos warrior. Chris says the Crab is *tricking* the Edeinos by throwing sand in its face — if he succeeds, the opponent should be blinded so the Crab can make his escape.

Example: Crowfire *taunts* an opponent. Winter suggests that if the *taunt* is successful, the opponent rushes forward with a roar, heedless of the steep cliff behind Crowfire. If she can succeed at an *acrobatics* roll, the opponent hurtles off the cliff.

Effects

As shown on the Interactive Results Table, these skills can have the following effects: *unskilled, stymied, setback, break, up/setback* and *player's call*. Of course, these effects are suffered only by the target, not his whole faction.

Unskilled

The target character acts as though unskilled in her next round. If the target was already unskilled, there is no additional effect.



Alan Jude Summa

Stymied

As described in Gamemaster Chapter Four, when an opponent is *stymied*, she loses **one** additional roll to which she would otherwise be entitled. This includes *hero* and *drama* cards (for player characters), Possibilities, and natural additional rolls on 10s and 20s.

If an opponent is suffering from a *stymie* when an *up* result occurs on the conflict line, the two effects cancel. The opponent is neither *up* nor *stymied*.

Setback

Setback is as described in Gamemaster Chapter Four. If you decide the situation warrants it, the setbacks may have different effects for *test* and *trick*. A setback caused by a *trick* may give the opponent's next attacker +5 to his bonus, whereas a setback caused by a *test* might cause the opponent to take no harmful action that round.

Break

When an opponent *breaks*, she will flee if she does not successfully attack that round. This is exactly the same as the *break* result described in Gamemaster Chapter Four.

Up/Setback

Not only is the opponent set back, but the attacker is *up* at his next opportunity as well, as defined in Gamemaster Chapter Four.

Player's Call

When a *player's call* result is earned, whatever effect the player declared before rolling is what happens, perhaps with minor modifications if you think the situation warrants. The opponent is blinded, or topples off the cliff, etc. This result is, obviously, extremely powerful; use your judgment as to what should and shouldn't be allowed, but try to err in the players' favor.

Active Defense

All four of these skills may be used actively as defensive skills, against an attacker's use of the same skill. A character may even defend another character with this active defense; the active defense becomes the difficulty number for the attempt by the enemy. This sort of defensive use assumes that the defending character is using his skill to warn the target character of the enemy's intentions and actions.

Example: Crowfire is using the *taunt* skill defensively for Quin, who is being taunted by a Ravagon. She warns Quin of the creatures treachery, even hurling a *taunt* of her own at the winged enemy. Crowfire's *taunt* total becomes the Ravagon's difficulty number for taunting Quin, rather than Quin's *taunt*. Should the Ravagon still *taunt* successfully, Quin bears the consequences, not Crowfire.

Parenthetical Skill Values

Some gamemaster characters may have *parenthetical skill values*. These are used for **defense only**, but may be used for passive or active defense. If a character has a non-parenthetical value as well, then he can use that skill as an attack.

Example: A mummy has *taunt*(17). This is its defensive value. As it has no non-parenthetical value listed, in order to launch a *taunt* attack it must use its base attribute, in this case *Charisma*.

Maneuver

Maneuver is used in a manner similar to the skill above; it is a *Dexterity* skill rolled against the opponent's *maneuver* or *Dexterity*. *Maneuver* is used to exhaust an opponent, getting him to waste energy, putting him at a severe disadvantage over the length of the fight. The possible results of a *maneuver* are *unskilled, fatigued, stymied/fatigued, setback/fatigued* and *player's call*.

Gamemaster Hints

Using interactive skills in combat can be tricky. There will be many times when it just doesn't seem right to you to allow a player to *taunt* the mummy or whatever. In these situations, use your judgment. If it doesn't seem right — it probably isn't. Make the player think of something else. Here are some guidelines:

Intimidation requires very little action on the part of the attacker. One can be intimidated by another's mere physical presence. However, to be intimidated implies some degree of intellect on the part of the target — it would be difficult to *intimidate* a giant slug, for instance.

Test of wills should require some active attempt on the attacker's part. *Test* is more nebulous than *intimidate* and so can be used more often, but its use is more restrictive. The attacker must lock eyes with the target, or speak so that he can be understood, etc.

Taunt obviously requires that the target understand the taunt or insult in some way. Even a dog can be *taunted* in the right circumstances, but you cannot insult something that cannot understand you. Also, certain creatures known for icy calm (oracles, zombies and other undead) are probably bad subjects for *taunt*.

Trick is also quite nebulous, but requires activity on the attacker's part. Verbal *tricks* (also known as "cons") require the target's understanding. Physical *tricks*, such as sand in the eyes, can be performed on just about anything.

For more hints about running these skills, see the Adventure Book.



Fatigued is as the conflict line result described in Chapter Four, except that only the target takes the shock damage, not his whole faction. *Fatigue* can be combined with *stymied* and *setback*. All these results are as described above.

Maneuver may be used actively as a defensive skill, against another character's *maneuver* attempt. A character may use a *maneuver* in active defense even if she is not the character targeted by the *maneuver*; she harries the harrier, possibly causing the attacker to fail.

Explosives

Explosive attacks always hit targets within range of the explosion. Explosive attacks have three ranges, as given in the equipment section (Chapter Twelve): short, medium and long. Attacks at short range use their full damage value. For targets at medium range the damage value is reduced by 3. For attacks at long range the damage value is reduced by 5.

Movement

A character can walk 10 meters in a round, and run at the value of his or her movement limit. If a creature has a different movement limit than a human character, and you feel that its walking speed should be something other than 10 meters, subtract five from its movement value to find its walking score.

Example: A giant has a movement value of 14 . 14 minus 5 = 9. The giant has a walking value of 9, for a measure of 60 meters per round without even trying.

Characters who are walking in combat suffer no penalty to their action total. Characters moving faster than a walk have the difficulty numbers of any attacks they make increased by 3 while they are moving.

Characters who are running are also harder to hit; add a difficulty modifier for fast-moving targets.

Chases

Chases occur frequently in adventure fiction, and require special rules to reflect the back-and-forth nature of two opponents who are evenly matched in speed. As gamemaster, you need to know two things during a chase: where the combatants are in relation to one another, and where they are in relation to the rest of the world.

Chases require two totals. A character's appropriate skill value is used to generate the first total; the second total comes from the speed value of the character, or the animal or vehicle she is riding/driving.

The first total is generated simultaneously by each opponent in the chase; the character with the higher total may choose to either close with or avoid the opponent.

Example: Quin is being chased by a jeep full of Nile Empire shocktroopers; they are about 40 meters behind him. His driving skill is 10, the shocktrooper's is 9. Paul and the gamemaster roll, and Quin ends up with a higher total than the shocktrooper driver. Paul declares that Quin will avoid; regardless of the distances travelled (even if the shocktroopers' vehicle is faster), the shocktroopers cannot close with Quin this round; his driving skill keeps them at bay.

To find the distance traveled by each opponent (which is independent of who won the first skill comparison), the **bonus number** is used to obtain a value modifier on the Push Results table (see page 40) for the person's or vehicle's speed value. The bonus number is used directly because the acting value and the difficulty are the same number in this case: the speed value of the vehicle. The amount of distance moved by each opponent is recorded, regardless of who won the skill comparison.

Example: Quin's truck in the previous example has a speed value of 8. His bonus was 4, for a value modifier of +1. The truck travels at a speed of 9, or 60 meters this round (if the gamemaster is keeping track on a map, he advances the truck 60 meters); the shocktroopers' bonus was 3, for a +1 value modifier. Their jeep has a speed value of 9, plus 1 equals 10; the jeep travels 100 meters this round.

If the slower participant in a chase won the skill check, he is assumed to have evaded, tricked or otherwise outmaneuvered his opponent. Both vehicles travel the full distance generated by their speed, but the **relative** distance is not changed. In the above example, the shocktroopers' jeep moves 100 meters, but does not get any closer to Quin.

A slow driver can only evade, however, if there is some lateral movement possible: i.e., the chase is taking place in open desert, there are side streets or railroad switches, etc.

If opponent's speeds are the same in a round, the winner of the skill roll can open or close the distance, by an amount equal to the difference between the top end and the bottom end of the particular movement value.

Example: Quin and the shocktroopers are both traveling at speed 9 this round, after applying value modifiers (Quin won the skill roll). Since the value of 9 represents a measure of between 41 and 60 meters per round, Quin can increase the distance between them by about 20 meters this round (60 minus 41).

Vehicle Fatigue

Push Result Table modifiers are accompanied by a fatigue result in parentheses. Since vehicles have a *Toughness*, they can also suffer fatigue. When a vehicle's shock damage equals its *Toughness*, it "falls unconscious" — stalls and refuses to start, loses a wheel, etc.





Chapter Seven

The Possibility Wars and the High Lords

The first six chapters of this section have dealt mainly with the rules of the game — the nuts and bolts. Many of the concepts that follow — magic, miracles, equipment and so on — require some knowledge of the basis of the game, the reality that explains why things work the way they do. While this chapter and the two that follow do contain game rules, they also provide background that will help you better understand the world of *Torg*.

Cosms

A *cosm* is an entire universe which was, at the time of its creation, physically separate from every other cosm (meaning that there is no purely physical way to travel from cosm to cosm). Most cosms are separated in other ways as well. Most cosms have realities which are at least a little different from one another; some are drastically different.

Possibility Energy

Each cosm is imbued with a form of energy that allows the limits of reality to be expanded, or that allows events to be changed in exceptional ways. This energy is called *possibility energy*. Possibility energy is a unique force which can only be tapped through the interaction of living beings and unliving objects according to an arcane set of laws (see Gamemaster Chapter Eight).

Possibility energy may be harnessed directly though the will of the being who possesses the energy, as well as through other strange, more mechanical means; a character who can tap and store possibility energy can perform feats and survive dangers far beyond those possible for normal beings. With knowledge and skill, possibility energy can even be used to alter reality itself. Only a small number of beings are blessed with the ability to store significant amounts of possibility energy and tap what they have stored; far fewer are those who have mastered its secrets.

Stored possibility energy is given the shorthand name of "Possibilities," as the stored energy gives its possessor a great range of possible actions.

Maelstrom Bridges

How it happened is not known, but it was inevitable: an entity in one cosm discovered the existence of other cosms. Whether this being was wizard or technician, scientist or priest, mad or sane, male or female; on these points the legends disagree. They do agree that this being also discovered the concept of the *Maelstrom Bridge*: an extra-dimensional force capable of bridging the gap from one cosm to another.

When the two cosms were linked, another, accidental, discovery was made: the clash of two realities created a violent flux of energy, dubbed a *reality storm*. The bridge was destroyed along with much around it.

Theory and experiment eventually yielded the reason for the storm: as the two realities came into conflict, raw possibility energy was unleashed by the "Everlaws" of the cosmverse (see Gamemaster Chapter Eight); this energy would ultimately explode into

the violence of a reality storm as nature attempted to reconcile the existence of two separate cosms in one place.

The energy released was vast and potent. If there was a way to harness that energy, incredible power could be had.

Possibility Raiders

A way was found. With the use of a Darkness Device (see page 86), the cosm-bridgers soon became Possibility Raiders, invading cosm after cosm to drain worlds of their possibility energy. They grew in power, and when a Raider's lieutenant discovered his own Darkness Device, he would soon try to invade a new cosm and become an independent Raider in turn.

These Possibility Raiders who controlled Darkness Devices became known as *High Lords*. A High Lord, with his Darkness Device helping him to strip the possibility energy from an invaded cosm, could shape the cosm to his liking, tinker with its reality, alter even the contours of the land itself. Others traveled with and served the High Lord for the usual reasons — lust for power, a love of destruction, a desire to inflict pain on others, a desire to live longer than nature intends. A few joined the Possibility Raiders with less villainous motives, but they were either subverted or shunted aside by the more ambitious.

Realms

Prior to an invasion, a High Lord infiltrates agents into the target cosm, crossing the gap between cosms with *dimthreads*, miniature, short-lived versions of the full-fledged Maelstrom Bridge. These agents prepare the area where a High Lord is planning to invade by placing stelae (see below).

When a High Lord invades a cosm, a Maelstrom Bridge tears through time, space, and reality to connect the two cosms. The area bounded by the stelae ultimately becomes the High Lord's realm. The *realm* is that part of the invaded cosm whose laws are changed by the High Lord. When an entire cosm becomes subjugated to a High Lord, the High Lord essentially owns two cosms.

Stelae

Stelae are arcane artifacts produced by a Darkness Device (some legends say that the first stelae arrived with a Darkness Device, others claim that the device brought with it the methods for constructing the stelae); in each cosm, a stelae manifests itself in a different way, so that in the Living Land they may resemble mummified animal carcasses, whereas in the Nile Empire they resemble stone obelisks. Whatever the physical manifestation, the stelae are used for essentially the same purpose in every cosm.

A High Lord uses stelae in three ways. The first use is to seal off a realm from the rest of the invaded cosm, acting as a protective boundary which prevents the full possibility energy of a cosm from reacting to the invading reality. Without this protection, the possibility energy of the invaded cosm would be far greater than that of the realm, which is limited to the amount of energy provided by the "possibility pipeline" of the Maelstrom Bridge connecting the realm to the invading cosm.

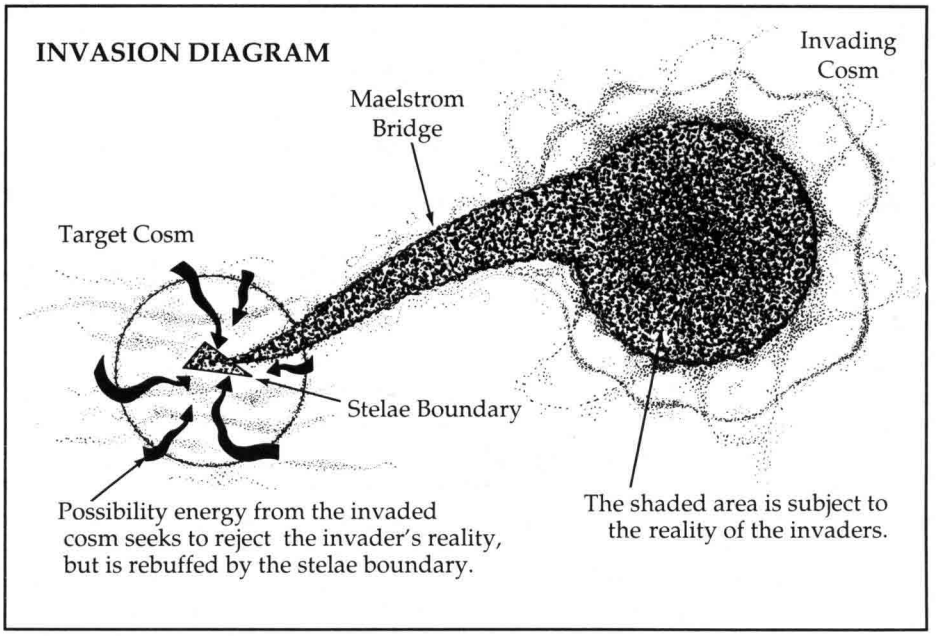
The second use of stelae is to absorb the possibility energy that is drained from living beings by the process of the invasion. When living beings inhabit a realm filled with an alien reality, a small amount of possibility energy within them is drained away; the stelae absorb this energy and transmit it through the network of stelae to the Darkness Device, where it is stored for use by the High Lord.

The third use of stelae is as a transmission point for the powers of a Darkness Device (see page 88). These powers can be used to aid a High Lord or other being allied with the Possibility Raiders.

Strong empirical evidence suggests that the maximum range to which stelae can transmit or absorb energy is 300 miles (500 kilometers). High Lords bent on efficient conquest try to extend their holdings by placing the stelae in a triangular pattern; triangles which have sides 300 miles long are the most efficient. Terrain and strategic considerations usually force the High Lords to use a less efficient pattern.

Stelae are difficult to produce, and the process varies with each cosm. The process of stelae creation seems to be such that a High Lord is hard-pressed to manufacture 18 a month, and six is the more usual pace. Prior to an invasion, a High Lord gears up production

INVASION DIAGRAM



of stelae until he has about twice what he believes he will need for the initial landing of the Maelstrom Bridge. This buys the Raiders some maneuvering room, and the ability to use the stelae to build defensive positions, such as placing a stelae within a bound area as a "second line of defense" in case Storm Knights find and destroy a boundary stelae.

No single stelae may connect to more than six other stelae. A stelae placed so that it would try to connect to seven or more others would simply not connect. Within that limit, stelae always attempt to connect to all stelae within 300 miles, as long as that connection would not cross other connections.

Planting Stelae

Planting stelae usually involves a complicated ritual or process, depending on whether the realm has spiritual, magical or technological leanings. The process can take from 15 minutes to two hours, depending on the cosm.

Once the stelae is planted, it immediately becomes part of the existing network (subject to the limitations mentioned above), shielding the invading laws from those of the target cosm, and transmitting and absorbing energy.

Conquering Reality

A High Lord's ultimate goal is to subjugate the native reality to his own. The resulting surges of possibility energy caused by the conflict — the same energy that destroyed the first Maelstrom Bridges — are tapped by the stelae and the Darkness Device, providing the High Lord with the power he craves.

In order to capture an area, two conditions must be met: the unliving reality of the High Lord's cosm must be successfully introduced within the stelae boundaries, and living beings who live in that reality, or living beings who are prepared to accept that reality, must be present. For a standard stelae area, it is estimated that 25,000 beings must be from the invading reality, or must be natives ready to accept the new reality.

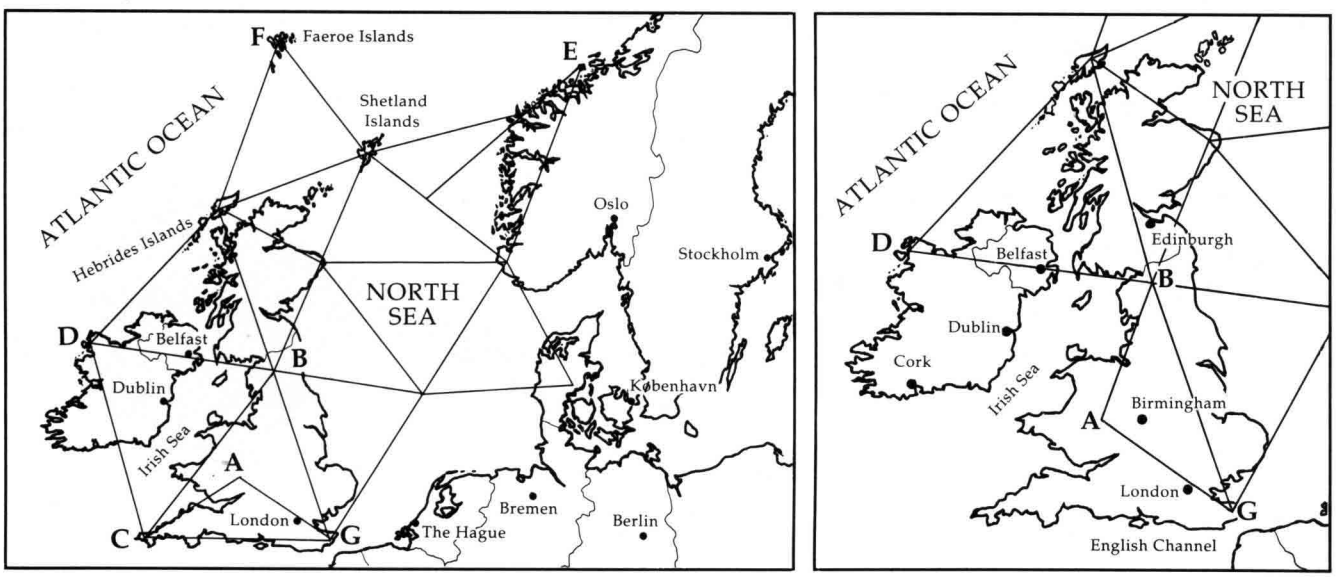
If the High Lord chooses a direct approach, armies or vast migrations of people from the invading cosm cross into the bounded realm as soon as the stelae are placed. Other High Lords are more devious, sending a greater number of agents to recruit natives prior to or just after the Bridge appears. These agents are often trained in rituals or processes for transforming converts, so they can help support the new reality.

In the course of the Possibility Wars, Storm Knights will attempt to sway populations in order to reduce the number of believers in a realm below the critical 25,000. They will also try to find and destroy bounding stelae. A third tactic is to act as a catalyst for a reality storm which can transform the current reality into something else.

Draining Possibilities

The Everlaw's reaction to the invasion keeps the possibility energy flowing to the High Lords, and living beings

Stelae Placement



In the above diagram, note that when stelae A is placed, it does not immediately connect to stelae B, since that would cause a seventh connection. It also does not connect to stelae D, since that would cross an existing connection between B and C. E and F do not connect since they are more than 300 miles apart.

Placing a stelae at A makes some sense; if stelae C were destroyed, all connections to C would be broken. A new connection would then form between A and B, and A and G, preserving part of central England for the invaders.

whose reality differs from the High Lord's reality are the catalysts for the reaction. Significant quantities of possibility energy may be drained as long as at least 10 percent of the population in a stelae-bounded area remain untransformed. Below that threshold the cost of extracting the possibility energy is greater than the energy obtained.

Thus, the High Lords must strike a balance between sufficient numbers of believers to confirm the invading reality, and sufficient numbers of disbelievers to provide the energy which is the ultimate goal of the invasion.

Mixed, Dominant and Pure Areas

When one cosm overlays another, such as when a High Lord drops a Maelstrom Bridge into an area bounded by stelae, the realities of the two cosms come into conflict. The Everlaws of One and Two interact, producing three different environments: *mixed*, *dominant*, and *pure*.

Mixed

A *mixed* reality contains two — and no more than two — realities which are in equal balance. Each reality works equally well, each is equally likely to disintegrate under pressure from the other. Mixed areas are the slowest to transform characters; characters in mixed areas can exist for years with little danger of transforming.

Mixed areas are unstable and naturally violent, filled with reality storms that tend to push the area itself toward one reality or another. Mixed areas will be transformed in this way within three to nine months, with 80 percent of the areas transforming within six months. A mixed area that was only recently tilted toward one reality can be returned to mixed if enough possibility energy from the other reality is added to the area.

Mixed zones often occur when new stelae are placed to bound an area. For a while, until the invading reality is confirmed by the presence of enough followers, the area is mixed between the two realities.

If additional realities intrude (through another invasion or through a suppressed reality gaining in power, etc.) into a mixed area, all but two of the realities are immediately suppressed; which reality is suppressed appears to be entirely a matter of chance.

Dominant

In a *dominant* area two realities coexist, but one reality is far stronger than the other; the dominant reality *suppresses* the other. Tasks which require the use of skills, items or abilities from the suppressed reality are called *suppressed tasks*. Such tasks cause "contradiction checks" as explained in Gamemaster Chapter Eight.

Given time, the suppressed reality will slowly unravel under pressure from the dominant reality: machines break down more quickly, ideas are harder to come by, magic fails more often than before, and the gods go silent. Characters whose reality is suppressed can still function by their own axioms, but life gets pretty tough after awhile.

If a dominant area is transformed through loss of the minimum necessary population of believers, it becomes a mixed reality. If energy is added to the dominant side, the area becomes pure for that side.

A dominant reality is the most stable type; an area where the Living Land is dominant will tend to stay that way, unless somehow jarred to become pure Living Land or mixed Living Land/Core Earth. Dominant areas are "spongy," bending and absorbing shock from the reality conflict. They can withstand the conflict far better than pure or mixed areas can.

Most cosms consist of approximately equal areas of dominant and pure realities. The greater the possibility energy potential of the cosm, the greater the percentage of dominant as opposed to pure areas. Core Earth is a prime example, having a high overall level of possibility energy, and containing far more dominant areas than pure.

While this may seem counterintuitive, it is actually the case that the greater the possibility energy of a cosm, the more able the cosm is to bend and mold to another reality, rather than breaking entirely. In addition, a large amount of possibility energy implies that other realities may exist more freely in the area by tapping that energy themselves.

Pure

A *pure* reality is one in which there is only **one** reality. Those who come from other cosms find themselves completely limited to the reality of the pure area. Ords cannot cause a contradiction there, and possibility-rated characters must build a reality bubble in order to cause a contradiction (see Gamemaster Chapter Eight). Pure areas expend a great deal of their available possibility energy keeping the reality pure. Pure areas therefore fiercely resist incursions from other cosms; however, if a pure area is tilted, for instance by the passage of a reality storm, it tends to flip directly to a dominated reality of the opposite type, or even a pure reality of the opposite type. Pure realities are tough to crack, but disintegrate completely if broken.

Draining Possibility Energy

A pure area drains possibility energy from characters faster than any other type, producing the most short-term benefit; dominant areas drain more slowly, but a dominant area can sustain the reaction for far longer, allowing more energy to be drained over time. As a rule of thumb, pure areas drain three units of possibility energy for every two units which can be extracted from a dominant area, but a dominant area provides energy five times longer than a pure.

Mixed areas are often useless to High Lords, as no energy can be drained from them; they can also be dangerous spawning grounds for opposition Storm Knights. While the High Lords are usually willing to wait for reality storms to tip the balance, they occasionally try to hasten the demise of a particularly troublesome mixed area.



Transformation

Eventually, an Ord in an alien pure or dominant area will be transformed into a close approximation of a "proper" denizen of that area. This transformation completely drains the character of possibility energy, as every iota of energy he possesses is used to survive the transformation. If a transformed character is later forced to transform again, he is destroyed.

Transformed characters must be refilled with possibility energy if they are to survive another transformation, a fact which Storm Knights bent on destroying stelae and liberating areas from alien axioms must factor into their strategy and tactics (see Gamemaster Chapter Nine).

The table below gives the number of people who will transform in a given area after a set period of time. We recommend that if you have gamemaster characters roaming across the realms, keep these percentages in mind, but decide if and when an important gamemaster character transforms based on its impact on the story line. If you really want to roll to determine whether or not she transforms, use the roll numbers given on the table below. If the roll is equal to or greater than the roll number, the character transforms. When rolling, roll again on 10s and 20s as you would for a possibility-rated character.

Once transformed, the character no longer provides energy for the High Lord. However, transformed beings may be recruited as minions. They may also aid the High Lord unwittingly as they move into other areas that the High Lords wishes to conquer, helping fulfill the need for supporters of the High Lord's reality.

TRANSFORMATION TABLE

Time	Pure Area Transform	Roll #	Dominant Area Transform	Roll #
1 second	1 / E7	105	2/ E8	130
1 minute	5 / E6	90	9/ E7	100
1 hour	3 / E4	60	5/ E5	77
1 day	7/1000	40	1/ E4	72
1 week	5/100	26	9/1000	38
1 month	20/100	18	4/100	28
3 months	50/100	12	11/100	19
6 months	75/100	6	25/100	17
1 year	93/100	3	37/100	14
18 months	98/100	2	50/100	12
2 years	100/100	—	60/100	9
3 years	100/100	—	75/100	6
4 years	100/100	—	84/100	4
5 years	100/100	—	90/100	3

The "E " notation is shorthand for large numbers. "E7" would be 10,000,000, which is 10 to the seventh power, or a one followed by seven zeroes.

The Darkness Device

In every cosm, legends surround the appearance of a Darkness Device; as far as can be told, they are never native to the cosm in which they are found.

The most popular legends hold that an immensely powerful being, often identified only as the Nameless One, sent the devices blindly through the extradimensional cracks of the cosmverse in which it has been imprisoned for uncountable time. The Nameless One hopes the devices will travel to inhabited cosms, to be found and used by some ambitious beings. Created from a need to destroy, filled with a hunger for destruction, the Darkness Devices look for those who can magnify the destruction within them. If the destruction wrought by the Device and its user is great enough, the Nameless One (so the legends say) will be drawn to the destruction, and be freed from its prison to journey to the new cosm.

The Darkness Device absorbs and stores possibility energy stolen from other sources. Once understood, the Darkness Device can confer great power upon the user, who must be a possibility-rated being. The Darkness Device is reputed to be able to sense intent of or perhaps even read the thoughts of those who would use it. Those whose destructive urges could prove useful to the Device's creator find they have a relatively easy time of figuring out how the device works. Others may never understand the operation of a Darkness Device. A High Lord is a being who has attuned and mastered many of the intricacies of a Darkness Device. Therefore, almost by definition, a High Lord is a being who causes great destruction.

A Darkness Device can only be moved by invoking one of its powers. Unless under the effect of the power, it is immobile. Darkness Devices are also the most indestructible objects ever discovered; no force yet wielded by a mortal has ever harmed a Darkness Device sufficiently to affect its operation. A Darkness Device can easily survive a cataclysm which would annihilate a sun.

Only one being may be attuned to a Darkness Device at one time. When the original user dies, another may take his place. The only other way a connection with a Darkness Device may be cut is if the user is caught in the maelstrom of a reality storm. The severity of the maelstrom, with its constantly shifting swirls of possibility energy, is sufficient to disrupt the connection.

This disruption is only temporary; if the High Lord is not transformed as



Rick Harris

a result of the maelstrom, the connection is reestablished the instant the High Lord emerges from the maelstrom.

Darkness Device

DEX: 0 PER: 20
STR:0 MIN: 40
TOU: 200 CHA: 25
SPI: 40

Possibility Potential
Always

Natural Tools
Powers that vary per cosm

Equipment
None

Skills

Find	25
Language	27
Trick	21
Test	41
Charm	26
Persuasion	30
Taunt	26
Faith	50
Focus	41
Intimidation	41
Reality	50
Willpower	41

Device Skills

The Darkness Device can use its skills in self defense. The device can directly use its skills only on someone within 100 meters of the device; this is one of the reasons Darkness Devices can lie hidden for millennia. Until a living being comes within range, the Darkness Device can do nothing to further its mission except wait.

Device Powers

No two Darkness Devices are identical in the powers they possess; it is probable that Darkness Devices can absorb or even create new powers, in order to initiate an act of destruction that would signal their creator. Every Darkness Device yet discovered is known to have the following abilities:

• To transfer possibility energy to the attuned High Lord, or to another being of the High Lord's choice. The being must voluntarily accept the Possibilities. The rate of transfer varies, usually in the range of two to four Possibilities an hour. A Darkness Device can transfer possibility energy to anyone within 50 kilometers (30 miles) of itself or 10,000 meters (six miles) of any connected stelae.

• To spend extra Possibilities on actions for the High Lord. These Possibilities are spent in the same way as for a possibility-rated character. For example, the Darkness Device is limited to spending one Possibility to remove damage, even though the Possibilities in a single Device run to the thousands. The High Lord may add his own Possibilities to the number spent by the Device, so a High Lord could spend two Possibilities to remove damage. A Darkness Device can spend possibility energy for a High Lord anywhere within 50 kilometers (30 miles) of itself or 10,000 meters (six miles) of a connected stelae.

• A Darkness Device can automatically communicate with any being to whom the High Lord has given possibility energy, as long as the being is within an area bounded by the stelae of the cosm, or is within 100 kilometers (60 miles) of the boundary. The Darkness Device may transfer one of its skills to this character, but no more than one skill may be "lent out" at one time. Such a transfer is instantaneous, but the grant requires that the recipient spend a Possibility. The only skill which may not be transferred is the Darkness Device's *reality* skill. It is not impossible, but the Darkness Device will not part with the skill, for it would then forever lose its other powers, which spring from its ability to mold possibility energy.

• For each stelae laid so as to form a new bounded area of maximum size (an area which the High Lord has never bound, not one which he is merely reclaiming), the Darkness Device will do one of the following:

— Scan the entire area bounded by the stelae, and temporarily mark every possibility-rated character in the realm with a *soulstain*. The stain fades after several days (five percent chance of fading per day), but during this time these characters may be tracked by Ravagons (see below) and their locations known precisely by the attuned High Lord.

— Energize three ritually prepared stelae so they may be used for boundaries. A stelae manufactured by a High Lord has no power until it has been energized by a Darkness Device.

— Reverse the aging process of a character of the High Lord's choice (including himself) for a period of approximately three years (meaning that for the next three years the character will age backward). This ability fluctuates, sometimes granting much more life, sometimes much less, depending on the machinations of the device.

— Transfer the Darkness Device from one point in the cosm to any other point in the cosm, including across a Bridge to the home cosm or invaded realm.

— Bump one axiom level up or down by one point, or make an alteration to a world rule of the cosm (see Gamemaster Chapter Eight). The bump does not take effect immediately; instead, the Darkness Device begins to filter and correct all of the possibility energy it drains in order to produce the new reality. It can take a few weeks to several months for the change to manifest itself, but within a decade a High Lord can create huge changes in the reality he chooses to inhabit. A High Lord can speed up this process if he is willing to burn out some stelae by reversing the flow of energy to "broadcast" the new reality. Usually a High Lord must sacrifice an in-place stelae for each point by which he is bumping the axioms, or for each world rule he is altering.

• For each new cosm invaded and subjugated, the Darkness Device can either increase an attribute of the High Lord's choice by one to seven points, depending on the possibility energy of the cosm, or grant the High Lord three to 15 additional skill adds, again depending on the possibility energy of the cosm. This is the only method by which a High Lord may increase his skills and attributes.

Torg

To become *Torg* is every High Lord's ultimate goal. To become Torg means to fully merge with a Darkness Device, to mesh oneself with one's cosm to the point where one can be aware of and affect anything in the cosm. This awareness is voluntary and selective, saving the sanity of the High Lord, but by this power the High Lord can, for a brief time, wield powers rivaling the greater gods. Being Torg frees a High Lord from the entropy of time, granting real immortality; being Torg gives a High Lord a taste of the infinite, and removes some of the restrictions on use placed on or by the Darkness Device. The powers within a Darkness Device may now be used as follows, as long as the Torg has possibility energy to power them:

- The Torg receives possibility energy directly, at double the normal rate, anywhere in his cosm.
- The Torg may spend two Possibilities to remove damage, anywhere in his cosm.
- The Torg possesses all the skills of the Darkness Device, including its *reality* skill.
- The Torg may scan and soulstain, energize stelae, reverse the aging process, move the Darkness Device, and bump axiom levels without the restriction of capturing new areas. Axiom change is still a slow process.
- The Torg's attributes and skills increase with each cosm conquered.

To become Torg requires tremendous resources and an equal amount of arrogance. To become Torg is a dangerous process, one which might fail as easily as it might succeed.

First, the High Lord must accumulate a phenomenal amount of possibility energy. The cosm of Core Earth contains the necessary Possibilities, being unusually strong in this regard. Unseen, untapped, nearly unreachable, to absorb this energy means tinkering with a Darkness Device, increasing its capacity, and risking its destruction. Absorbing this much energy also risks the stelae which are planted; if too many of them burn out at once, the native cosm will pour in unrestrained across hundreds of miles of invaded territory, causing a reality storm larger than any ever seen, sufficient to destroy the realm, sufficient to destroy the maelstrom bridge, sufficient perhaps to kill the High Lord.

Second, to become Torg it is necessary to develop a method of sorting Possibilities, of selecting and separating the desirable from the undesirable. Sorting Possibilties is a tricky business, and being possibility-rated is necessary, but not enough. To sort through Possibilities, to see where each might lead and to gather the correct ones, requires creativity, imagination and insight. These are qualities which are often muted in a being who is connected to the needful, destructive hunger of a Darkness Device. Only when all of his Possibilities are sorted, ordered and placed in a specified pattern can a High Lord construct the reality of a mortal being reborn as the Torg.

Finally, an incredible amount of physical energy is required. The energy is fired through the Possibility pattern mentioned above, burning along the latticework of the almost-real and perhaps-true to create an eternal reality. Such energy must be released all at once at several points along the latticework. The energy required is more than a billion times the firepower stored in all the nuclear arsenals of Earth.

The Gaunt Man came to Earth to become Torg; he has plans for all three steps. All his plans are now in motion, a precise clockwork of destruction and death. No one has ever come so close to becoming Torg. See the World Book to see how the Storm Knights might stop the Gaunt Man. See the Adventure Book to understand the consequences of their failure.

The Minions

As powerful as they are, the High Lords are not capable of conquering realities by themselves. They require armies to seize ground and hold the axioms, agents and creatures who can deal with the Storm Knights who arise to oppose them, and competent subordinates who can keep the reality-crushing process running smoothly.

Each High Lord will have many unique minions drawn from his own cosm, but there are some minions common to all High Lords.

Gospog

The Possibility Raiders quickly found they had a pressing need for expendable troops to push forward their boundaries against determined opposition. The Gaunt Man invented the solution in his cosm of Orrorsh: the *gospog*.

Gospog are the result of dark spiritual power and peculiar technology; they are grown from seeds planted in prepared fields of corpses taken from the invaded cosm. Each field must be planted with the seeds five times. After each planting is harvested, the next planting begins. Each successive planting yields far fewer gospog, but with each successive planting the gospog are far more powerful.

The table below lists the planting, the weeks it takes to grow each planting, when the planting appears from the time the field is started, and the yield of each planting. The yield is also limited by the number of corpses which have been prepared; a High Lord can never get more gospog from a planting than the number of bodies which have been prepared. A common gospog field has 10,000 corpses.

GOSPOG CHART

Plant.	Weeks	Ready by End of Week	Yield
First	1	1	10,000
Second	3	4	1,000
Third	5	9	100
Fourth	7	16	10
Fifth	11	25	1

Gospog of the first planting vary little from cosm to cosm. They grow to resemble the bodies which line the field, being part flesh but largely plant (particularly in the veins and ligaments). Several seeds can take the shape of a single body, or combine



features from several bodies as the plant matures.

Gospog of the first planting all have the same same skills; they are a High Lord's generic soldier, useful in many cosms.

Beginning with the second planting, the gospog vary according to cosm; the second planting in a fantasy cosm will not much resemble the planting in the New Empire of the Nile. See the World Book for examples of gospog.

Beginning with the fourth planting, gospog may vary even within a cosm. How much they vary depends partly on how ordered the High Lord is trying to keep his cosm. See the World Book.

Gospog of the First Planting

DEX: 8 PER: 7
STR:8 MIN: 7
TOU: 8 CHA: 7
SPI: 7

Possibility Potential
None

Natural Tools
Armor—defense value 10

Equipment
None

Skills

Energy Weapons	9
Fire Combat	9
Melee Weapons	9
Missile Weapons	9
Unarmed Combat	9
Climbing	9
Find	10
Tracking	8
Willpower	10

Ravagons

Ravagons are an ancient, powerful race from a world long ago drained by the Gaunt Man. They had the potential for fierce opposition, and the Gaunt Man chose to subvert and coax them to his side rather than expend considerable energy to obliterate them. Since that time the Ravagons have served the Gaunt Man, and other High Lords who have maintained cordial relations with this most powerful Possibility Raider. Those High Lords the Gaunt Man chose to help him invade Earth have all received Ravagons to aid in battle and to hunt down Storm Knights wherever they may appear.

Ravagons can acquire other skills, but all Ravagons used by the High Lords have at least these skills at this level. Ravagons usually have from five to 10 Possibilities, but important leaders and wily veterans may have considerably more.

Ravagons

DEX: 9 PER: 10
STR:14 MIN: 8
TOU:10 CHA: 8
SPI: 8

Possibility Potential
Always

Natural Tools
Armor—defense value 13
Talons—damage value 16
Wings—speed value 13

Equipment
None

Skills

Flight	15
Maneuver	15
Stealth	12
Unarmed Combat	11
Find	12
Language	11
Tracking	11
Trick	12
Test	9 (12)
Taunt	9 (12)
Intimidation	11
Reality	10

Lieutenants

The High Lords differ in approach when it comes to selecting lieutenants. Possibility-rated characters are the most effective, but their ambitions can include becoming a High Lord, which can be unsettling or even dangerous to the current High Lord. The Gaunt Man uses the most possibility-rated lieutenants, while Doctor Mobius (High Lord of the New Empire of the Nile) uses the fewest. The average High Lord has four to eight powerful possibility-rated lieutenants; the Gaunt Man has at least a dozen.

All of the High Lords also find it useful to have powerful Ords as lieutenants. They typically have 15 to 20 Ord lieutenants, who conduct important operations within the realm or cosm, where possession of the *reality* skill is not as important. Doctor Mobius, who appoints "lieutenants" who serve him only indirectly, has over 100 Ord lieutenants.

The attributes and skills of the lieutenants vary too widely to give an average lieutenant. However, lieutenants are usually the best the High Lord could find for whatever task required the lieutenant. The High Lords go through considerable trouble to assure the loyalty of their lieutenants, although the Gaunt Man is so secure in his own power that his lieutenants are not as carefully held in check.



Chapter Eight

Everlaws and Axioms

"May your scales be more resplendent than the moon, Baruk Kaah, Saar of Edeinos, you who know all under the moon. I humbly remind you that while this world is yours to command, there are still divine laws which even you may not break, nor even bend for long."

—the advisor Plassurid, shortly before being eaten

The Everlaws have existed for as long as anyone in any cosm has been recording history; they are believed to be universal truths that hold from cosm to cosm, no matter what the differences between the cosms. The two confirmed Everlaws are the basis of the technique developed by the Possibility Raiders for draining worlds of their possibility energy.

The Everlaw of One

There are thousands upon millions of possible futures for every world which exists. Some possible futures differ from one another only in minutiae, others may have fundamental differences. But only one of those possible futures may become reality, due to the Everlaw of One. The Everlaw of One states that **only one possibility from a set of two or more contradictory possibilities can become a reality at one time**. In other words, a world in which you are going to die and stay alive at the same time is not allowed. Either you live or you don't.

The Everlaw of One acts to eliminate contradictions, keeping reality "on the straight and narrow." The Everlaw of One strips away possibility energy from the cosm, then uses that energy to put things right by changing one or more of the contradictory elements. If by some chance two possible futures began to coexist, and you one day found yourself simultaneously dead and alive (somewhat difficult to imagine), the Everlaw of One would change one of the conditions; soon you would either be dead or alive. While you might have a definite preference, the Everlaw chooses the outcome which requires the least amount of change, and the least expenditure of energy.

The Everlaw of Two

A cosm spawns an amazing variety of animals, living beings, landforms, plants, minerals and astral bodies. But a fundamental relationship exists between the *living* in a cosm and the *unliving* elements which constitute that cosm. The Everlaw of Two states that **the living and the unliving are linked by the rules of their cosm,** and this link causes possibility energy to flow between the living and the unliving. **The living may use the possibility energy to create and change their world.** Possibility energy is only generated when the living and unliving interact through the "axioms" of that world.

The Everlaw of Two is weaker than the Everlaw of One, and can be interrupted by the arcane devices of the High Lords. To do this, the invader overlays a new set of rules on top of the proper unliving axioms, so that the invading axioms take precedence.

The living being is still connected to his unliving axiom, and sends it possibility energy. But when the unliving seeks to return that energy, the flow is interrupted and the energy stolen by the stelae, eventually draining the entity completely.

Axioms and the Rules of Seven Worlds

Each of the cosms (and their associated realms) is a different dimension, a different *reality* if you will, and each cosm works by different rules. But there is an underlying structure in all cosms: each is built on *axioms*, natural laws that define the limits of a cosm and the way the cosm works within those limits. Cosms which have different axioms, even cosms which differ by a small amount in a single axiom, have difficulties coexisting; reality is just different enough between the cosms for the Everlaw of One to treat them as manifestations of a single reality, and it tries to resolve and remove the difference. This explains why devices from one cosm do not always work properly in another.

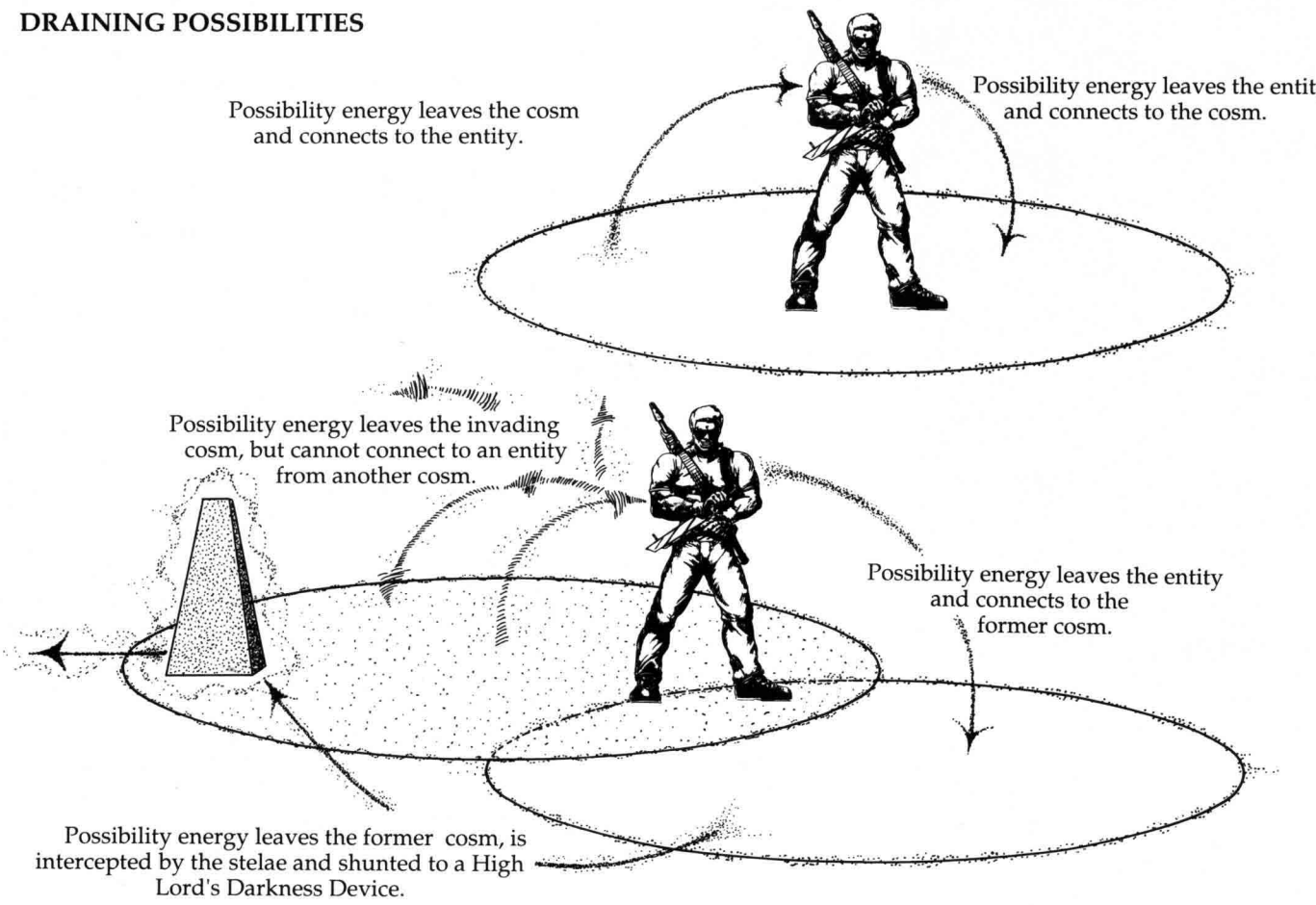
What the Axioms are

Axioms define the limit of what is possible within each cosm. There are four areas governed by axioms: *Magical*, *Social*, *Spiritual*, and *Technological*. Each axiom limits the interaction between the living and the unliving portions of a cosm, and measures the extent to which the living can manipulate the unliving in each of the four areas. Tractors are an example of using technology to change a world; the concept of credit is a social tool. The potency of magic and spiritual miracles are similarly limited by their axioms.

A low axiom level may be the result of natural laws or, more commonly, of a weak link between the living and unliving in this aspect of the world. However weak the link, though, the unliving world may still affect the living. For instance, a being from a cosm with a *Tech* axiom of 6 couldn't operate a Luger in his home cosm without creating a contradictory reality, but he would still get hurt falling off a cliff or getting shot by a bullet. The same holds true when a character native to Core Earth confronts magic; he may not be able to use it, but magic works on him.

The axioms are ranked on a numeric scale from 0-33 and are explained on the following pages.

DRAINING POSSIBILITIES



Magic

The *Magic* axiom limits the effectiveness of magic in a world. A world whose magical axiom is not sufficiently developed for a "fireball" prevents a fireball from working in that world. The following is a guideline for axiom levels and their effect in a world.

0 — No magic is possible in this world, including manifestations common on Core Earth, such as "feelings of *deja vu*," flashes of insight (ESP) or sightings of the supernatural.

2 — Magic is extremely difficult and of limited usefulness. Magic is available only through rituals, knowledge of which require a lifetime of study. After all that effort, only minor divination effects are possible and effects are unpredictable.

3 — Years of study are required to master rituals. While the effects are still completely unpredictable, the divination may extend for several days and many miles.

5 — Innate, minor apportation abilities are available to most people. Magic can now send and receive thoughts, and perceive visions of the future or past. Magic at this level is undependable and erratic, but the variability is confined to type, i.e. error in divination causes a divination effect, not an apportation effect.

7 — Natural processes may be accelerated or slowed drastically. Alteration magic is available as complicated ritual with erratic effects, divination is slightly more reliable.

8 — Magical laws are stable enough to produce (somewhat) predictable effect. Minor alteration is possible as a spell, quite powerful as ritual. Magical processes are developed which have a more-or-less dependable effect. These spells may be taught from one magician to another, although personal interpretation of the spell is still important.

9 — Enough magic exists to sustain entities which require a small amount of magic to live; brownies, pixies, giants, and creatures which are impossible physical amalgams of otherwise possible living beings. In addition, transmutation is possible for certain substances.

10 — Magical processes and spells may be "burned" into objects, creating enchanted items which decay over time. Such devices include lucky charms, magically sharpened weapons, and protective talismans.

Sufficient magical energy now exists to sustain highly magical creatures; non-corporeal creatures, elementals and embodiments of moral virtues may live in a world as entities.

Alteration of a living being to another living entity , or even a plant, is possible. The reversal may be done with some chance of ill effect upon the altered character.

Minor conjuration, where effects are ephemeral, is possible; the objects conjured are simple, and look "wrong" to all but the casual observer.

12 — Conjuration, from "nothing" is now possible. These effects may last days, but will eventually fade. Magical forms of communication are common.

Alteration of living being into inanimate matter is now possible. The reverse is dangerous, and often fails.

13 — Discrete units of spells known as "charges" may be enchanted into items. Magicians can master an on/off process which (usually) lets them activate an item one charge at a time.

Conjuration of permanent substance or object is now possible, and a magic user may cast a spell which lets him make a limited connection with another dimension/realm/plane.

15 — A magician can now use magic to bring beings or objects from another dimension to his own world.

Magicians may now program an object with conditions which activate its magical properties. Wards and even golems are possible.

17 — Spells may be "pre-cast" — stored or impressed in magicians for later use. Such spells are transient; a magician can erase a spell and replace it with another rather than permanently burn it into her mind.

18 — Magic is common enough that most beings in the cosm use some magic to at least a limited degree, although training confers huge advantages.

20 — "Wish spells" (spells of a generic nature which interpret the casters desires) are possible. Such "wish parsers" are unreliable.

22 — The magical nature of the cosm is sufficiently developed to begin lowering the difficulty of all alteration magical processes. Magic of all kinds becomes easier, more effective for less cost.

24 — Magic is easier than, and produces superior effects to, technology. Magic is the basis of the economy, and the prime source of labor.

27 — All conjuration magic begins to become easier.

28 — Reliable "wish parsers" possible.

33 — Magical energy can be tapped by all thinking beings, or any creature capable of formulating a desired condition. Minimal training can produce spectacular effects. Understanding of the magical nature of the cosm is intuitive in all people.

Social

The *Social* axioms govern what sort of interactions are possible between beings, how complex a social organization they may have, and what ideas make sense to them.

0 — No social interaction between beings is possible; beings who reproduced by fission or similar methods live lives of complete solitude in the presence of all other beings.

2 — The only social unit is the nuclear family (parents and offspring only); rudimentary rituals for death of a family member develop. Language is invented, but no permanent records.

3 — The extended family is possible. Verbal traditions are strong, ritual knowledge is passed down from generation to generation. Rites for all important stages of life are developed. The concept of personal property is developed. Painting is developed.

5 — The tribe (multi-family groups) is possible. Political organization is possible, but of very limited scope. Pictographic writing is developed. Dramatic theater is invented, distinct from religious theater. Poetry is developed.

7 — Village/agricultural organization possible. "Kings" are possible. The concept of land ownership is possible. Unfortunately, so is the concept of owning other intelligent beings. Semi-professional military and militia formed for common defense can exist. A combination sound/pictographic alphabet may be developed. Trade, epic poetry and sports are invented.





Francis Mao

8 — The city/state, a network of villages and smaller cities ruled from one central city, usually with a monarch of some kind, can exist. Taxes are invented, as are arithmetic counting and administrative procedures for collecting taxes. Standing armies for conquest as well as defense. Feudalism possible.

10 — Collection of information is sufficiently centralized for the beginning of scholarship and science; libraries may appear. Abstract or phonetic alphabets possible. Money is invented. Laws are codified. Democracy is possible.

12—Social organization sufficiently robust as to assimilate conquered cultures rather than simply rule them. Societies may trade "cultural ideas" as well as hard goods. Credit and money lending established. Property is rented. Religions may institute a ritual bureaucracy or church, allowing religion to influence far greater numbers of people than before. Postal and news services are possible.

13 — Financial concepts develop rapidly. The idea of a company or royal monopoly, a non-family owned venture sponsored by several partners, is possible. Stock, commodities and financial exchanges possible. The concept of collateral is invented. Long fiction (novels) are possible.

15 — The nation-state is possible; while a city or province may rule a nation, the nation as a whole has some say in forming policy. A federal system of government possible.

17 — The "denaturization and/or miniaturization" of time possible, i.e. the concept of a precise and arbitrary system for measuring time in subunits of a day, even when at odds with local astronomical time.

18—Economics, and the concept of man as an economic being, is invented. Capitalism, socialism and communism possible.

20 — Pluralism, the balancing of many factions within a government and society, is possible. More inhabitants of a nation are enfranchised. Vast bureaucracies may be spawned to handle the increased social complexity.

22 — Supranational organizations with authority over nations possible, a "federal system" for nations.

23—Standard rights of individuals and rights of the group may be accepted. A high degree of individual responsibility and the responsibility of the group is fostered. Methods for conflict resolution are established which are efficient and non-destructive.

26—A "government for all" which tolerates and enhances a wide range of cultures is possible. The limitations of Arrow's Theorem of a Social Welfare Function may be exceeded, allowing a high degree of social justice.

29 — "Evil" is identified and contained. Social memes developed which are highly resistant to evil, allowing society members moral freedom not possible when evil is a philosophy with equal, or superior, pragmatic weight. Evil acts create a contradictory reality.

33 — A more perfect society than humanity can even envision.

Spiritual

The *Spiritual* axiom defines the level of faith necessary to tap those powers commonly thought of as belonging to "the gods." These "gods" exist even if the spiritual level is very low; the axiom merely controls how easily the beings can communicate with "the gods."

0—The world is devoid spiritually and faith is not rewarded. There are no concepts of higher beings or afterlife.

2 — Miracles work only for the faithful, who must all have the *focus* and *faith* skills. Even then it takes a lifetime of study and prayer to cause even the most minor of miracles; such miracles are only possible in the presence of the entire community of the faithful.

3 — Spiritual energy is so low that years of rituals/sacrifices/penance may be needed to get the slightest effect. Miracles are rare, but may occur with only a fraction of the community of faithful present.

5—Extended community possible. Each community has at least one leader with *focus*, all other community members must have *faith* to create a miracle. The other community members are called the *laity*.

Invocation of divine power is now possible, but extremely unlikely. Even if successful, the effect will never be a visible and direct confirmation of divine agency.

7 — Rituals can produce a desired effect, but the rituals are very complicated, often requiring years of study or training since birth. Religious symbols are imbued with spiritual power as a result of divine agency; this power most often manifests itself by making the use of spiritual power easier for the faithful.

9 — Direct intervention of spiritual entities is more common, but these intervention are never at the request of the faithful. The interventions are clear signs of divine agency.

The community of faithful may now create miracles to enhance the abilities of believers.

11 — The community of faithful may imbue an item or place with spiritual power. Items (swords, talismans) may be imbued with spiritual energy that can aid in the creation of miracles later on. The items must be activated by the faith of the person wielding the item.

13 — Invocation with irrefutable evidence of divine agency possible, but still extremely difficult.

17—Locations or items are capable of perpetual miracles which occur regularly, with or without the presence of the community.

19— Religious power courses through the cosm with such regularity that specific training is not needed to create miracles, though those trained in the rituals of the religion can draw on the power of their faith with more reliability.

"Paradise" is now accessible to mortals. Travel to mythic regions is possible.

20 — The laity may create miracles even without the *focus* skill. The power of the community is so strong that a gathering automatically provides a minimal focus for the miracle. The laity must still receive training in all the proper procedures in order to invoke the miracle.

21—Miracles are plentiful, and the spiritual power is enough to lower the difficulty of all *focus* processes for the faithful.

23 — One mythos becomes dominant. All others need to create a contradictory reality to effect their miracles.



27 — All enemy mythos lose power. No believer in an enemy mythos may access an miraculous power.

33 — A pure cosm, a cosm in which all aspects of the mythos are literally true. No other mythos has any access to miraculous powers.

Technological

The *Tech* axioms affect the interaction between living beings and the natural world around them.

0 — No technology is possible.

2 — Fire making is invented. Small stone tools are possible.

3 — Advanced stone tool making possible. Animals may be domesticated and bred. Spears and clubs are state-of-the-art weapons. Armor made from animal products possible. Rafts and small river craft appear.

5 — Agriculture invented, but still practiced largely as a dietary supplement to hunting and gathering. Calendars based on easily visible phenomena may be invented. The wheel or axled rollers first used for transportation. Fishing vessels (four or more beings, muscle powered) appear. Arithmetic may be invented.

7 — Metal is first smelted, alloys of softer metals appears. Potter's wheel appears, plow speeds agriculture. Glass, cloth, wine invented. Seaworthy ships are possible. Swords and daggers state of the art weapons. Bows are possible, but only with enough punch for small game. Oil lamps invented.

8 — Medicine and astronomy as organized sciences are possible. Civil engineering possible; block and tackle, pulley, lever are available machines. Hard metals such as iron are smelted. Bows are powerful enough for use as combat weapons. Metal armor appears. Maps are invented. Avian, reptilian and other "difficult" lifeforms may be domesticated. Simple wind-powered vessels appear.

9 — Timekeeping devices such as sundials and water clocks appear. Wide-scale irrigation systems possible. Place-based numbering systems (such as the decimal system) may be invented. Large buildings appear for first time, may have simple plumbing to provide water and transport waste. Astronomy fully developed. Sea vessels powered by more than one sail possible; first true trans-oceanic vessels possible. Use of hard metals is common for professional tools. Metal currency may become common.

10 — Pharmacy and surgery systematized; healing herbs and simple drugs may be cataloged and produced. Aqueducts and tunnels may provide water to a city. Dying of fabric is possible. Hard metal common in households. Lathes, paper, candles may be invented. Bridges, dams, aqueducts, tunnels, road technology extensive.

11 — Specialized surgery, such as cataract surgery, possible. Basic anatomy of living beings, with all vital subsystems, understood enough to diagnose and treat many ailments. Gears and screws possible, allowing exploitation of water power. Sugar is refined, milling expands greatly.

13 — Inks refined, making book printing (block printing) possible. Acids, mechanical clocks, magnetic compasses possible. Alcohol denatured for use as a disinfectant. Gunpowder may be invented; cannon are possible. Biology develops categorization of animals by function rather than appearance. Glass mirrors are invented. Corrective spectacles possible, but not terribly effective.

15 — Metal plates used for printing; printing press possible. Crude firearms possible; ballistics invented. Steam power possible. Magnetism and electricity connected. Cut-glass process invented. Telescope, microscope possible. Basic mechanics of physics understood. Atomic nature of matter proposed and possibly accepted. Barometers invented; crude weather prediction begins. Probability theory invented.

16 — Muskets invented. Primitive rifling possible. Metallurgical advances allow precision machined parts; efficient steam engines possible if energy source better than wood available. Watches, bifocals possible. Anesthesia introduced into surgery. Velocity of light recognized as finite. Gravitation and tides understood. Plant extracts and essences possible; inoculation invented. Industrial revolution may begin.

17 — Rifling improved greatly. Artillery pieces now very reliable; as explosive shells are refined, they replace rifles as prime killer on the battlefield. First electric batteries possible. Steamboats, telegraph, crude calculating machines appear. Railroads are possible. Cell structure explained. Thermodynamic laws established. Easy to ignite matches invented. Sewing machine invented. Reaping machines possible. Bacteria recognized as transmitters of disease.

19 — Syringes first used for injections. Tungsten steel invented. Internal combustion engines possible. Photosynthesis understood. Antiseptic surgery developed. Single-action revolvers, repeating rifles, hand-cranked machine guns, recoil-operated machine guns are possible. Bicycles, telephones, hydrogen airships, submarines practical.

20 — Radio voice transmission possible. Crude airplanes. Radioactivity understood. Discovery of relativity possible. Automobiles reliable enough to replace animal-drawn transport. Sonar invented. Brain surgery successful. Automatic pistol. Submachine gun. Movies, including "talking pictures."

21 — Late 1930s to 1950s technology. Tanks become an effective tool of war; metal-skinned aircraft with jet propulsion, radar possible. Electron microscope, vaccinations against viral diseases, nuclear power, ICBMs, television, automatic rifles, artificial fabrics, mainframe computers, helicopters, ballpoint pens appear. Antimatter discovered.

22 —1960s to late 1970s technology, including:

Orbital spacecraft, lightweight automatic weapons, integrated circuits, crude artificial hearts and other organs, robot probes to other planets, gene synthesis, wire-guided munitions, 400,000 ton oil tanker, primitive space stations, home computers, space shuttle, neutron bomb, "test-tube" babies.

23 —1980s through 1990s technology, including:

Doppler Radar, genetic engineering, international computer networks, laser-guided munitions, compact disks, computer-controlled aircraft, fire-control helmets, permanent space

station, hyperplane capable of Mach 20, limited fusion power.

24 — Hovertanks, clone-organ replacement, "intelligent" self-maintaining houses, holographic television, high-energy laser weapons, fusion commercially attractive, superconducting technology common, manned interplanetary space exploration, supercomputers achieve limited awareness.

26 — "Living computers," personal energy weapons, "slow" interstellar travel, self-aware robots, memory chips and cyberware possible, nanotech appendages for enhanced functions, teleportation possible, mind-boosting processes allow psi functions which mimic magic.

30 — Hyperspace technology, or warp technology. Fast interstellar travel.

33 — Time Travel. The sort of technology you see from the most advanced alien races in comic book universes.

Bending the Axioms

The axioms impose boundaries on what is possible within a world, but the boundaries are flexible. The limits can be pushed outward in isolated cases or for short periods of time. This bending most often occurs in places where the inhabitants all have a special affinity for one of the axioms. Unconscious use of the possibility energy within them helps to expand the axiom boundaries.

Example: A large group of scientists work in a laboratory setting, all of them firmly committed to a developing technology. The next development is just over the axiom boundary; the firm belief in the project makes the otherwise-impossible project work.

Tech and *Social* axioms can increase as much as two points, although one-point increases are far more common. These increases last only briefly, often just long enough to develop the critical components on one prototype or the breakthrough concept on one theory. The prototype is often impossible to duplicate, or the theory rejected for years. But the breakthrough occurred.

Spiritual and *Magical* axioms appear to be somewhat more flexible, and have been known to decrease as well as increase due to outside factors. External factors seem to have a far greater effect on *Spiritual* and *Magical* axioms than on *Technological* or *Social*. The arrangement of celestial bodies, the timing of religious festivals, traditional sites of power or natural wonders — all can increase or decrease the *Magical* and *Spiritual* axioms in a small part of a cosm.

Example: The Heights of Eilgeborn in Orrorsh are reputed to have a higher *Magical* axiom than the rest of the world. The Night of Covers, an astronomical event featuring a lunar eclipse which occurs once in five years, also increases the *Magical* axiom in its area of effect. On the rare occasion that the lunar eclipse of The Night of Covers is visible from the Heights, both increases take effect.

Permanently Altering the Axiom Levels

Increasing the axiom levels permanently takes time and a huge amount of possibility energy; it requires large numbers of people, all with similar attitudes, living in an area for a long period of time. A permanent point increase over a 10 year period is phenomenal; increasing a point over five centuries is more likely.

Example: On the island of Haiti, belief in and practice of voodoo has increased the Core Earth *Magical* axiom by a point.

Decreasing the levels requires far less energy but about the same amount of time. The High Lords with their Darkness Devices can radically speed up both the increase and decrease process.

World Rules

The axioms are the limits for a cosm. The *world rules* tell how a cosm works within those limits. A cosm's world rules tell you in what way the cosm works differently from other cosms; the function and the flavor of a cosm is bound up in its world rules.

Example: The New Empire of the Nile has the following world rule as a part of its *Social* axiom: **All characters are either good or evil; all character are born with a moral stance. From birth, a character is committed to the path of good or evil.**

THE AXIOMS OF THE COSMS

	Magic	Social	Spirit.	Tech.
Core Earth	7	21	9	23
Living Land	0	7	24	7
Aysle	18	18	16	15
Nippon Tech	2	22	8	24
Cyberpapacy	10	18	14	26
Orrorsh	15	20	17	19
New Nile	12	20	17	21

When Axioms Collide

When a High Lord launches an invasion, the axioms from his cosm pour over the Maelstrom Bridge that connects the two worlds. The invad-



Living Under the Axioms

A character who is living under axioms native to his cosm is living in a world which acts in expected ways. On Core Earth, you rise in the morning to your clock-radio blaring out cheerful morning banter, and pour yourself a bowl of breakfast cereal to fire up the old body. In Aysle, you would bring the wood in and, if your firepot had gone out, ask the reddleman for use of his brownie to start your fire.

When a character lives in a cosm or realm where the axioms are different, the world is strange. Familiar objects may refuse to work, and simple tasks can become confusing to the point of impossibility. The character still has **his** axioms within him, but the **unliving** axioms are different. The Everlaw of One is working to confound him, while the Everlaw of Two tries to keep him in touch with his home cosm. Eventually the Everlaw of One is triumphant. The character is disconnected from the Everlaw of Two and the unliving laws of his home cosm. The flow of possibility energy is disrupted; a disconnected character cannot use axioms to make the world work as he would expect it to work. The disconnected must live by axioms of the land in which he lives.

A Core Earth character who is disconnected by living in an England overlaid with the fantasy cosm of Aysle cannot use his toasters, cars, computers, refrigerators — none of it would work, and he would forget how it was *supposed* to work. But he gains an intuitive sense of magic, and an increased sense of the spiritual power in the world. Many disconnected people are relieved to find that reality, even if different, has at least settled down. Others are extremely agitated that reality has changed for them, and try to find ways to grasp what the objects mean. A few adapt to the new reality with glee, preferring it to what had been their lot before.

ing axioms wash over the native axioms, disrupting the link between the living and unliving of the invaded world. The natural order breaks down as new rules take its place. This conflict of realities is the heart of the Possibility Wars.

Reality Storms

The border between conflicting realities can unleash fearsome displays of possibility energy in the form of *reality storms*. Reality storms have violent physical manifestations; winds ranging in velocity from 40 to hundreds of miles an hour are possible. History records incidents in which lightning from reality storms has sheared mountains and leveled entire cities. But the lightning is often peculiarly selective in its targets. Storms in Indiana during the initial invasion were seen to only strike objects which contained aluminum; in the Ruhr valley, churches were the chosen target; in Leeds, smokestacks and newsprint were struck.

The effects of the storms can be even more confusing. Many realities can come into temporary existence during a storm, gravity can become variable, languages of a region can be changed, vehicles can move about on their own, and the sizes and colors of buildings can alter.

Most of the effects fade within two to 24 hours of the storm's passage. In a few rare instances the effects last much longer.

Possibility-rated characters may invoke the Everlaw of One against a possibility-rated character from another cosm to create a reality storm. See Gamemaster Chapter Nine for details.

Hardpoints

An unliving object can have a strong connection with the cosm in which it was created; such a connection can cause it to become a *hardpoint*. The object continues to serve as a source for the unliving laws of a cosm, even when totally surrounded by the rules of a foreign cosm.

Example: In Philadelphia, a strong connection exists between various artifacts and the events which took place in the city. The Liberty Bell, among other artifacts, has become a hardpoint of Core Earth axioms.

The connection is flexible and tough, but it is immobile. If you move an object which was a hardpoint, it loses its properties in a matter of hours, becoming useless within 20 hours, sometimes in as little as 30 minutes. Most hardpoints project an axiom zone; within this zone the axioms of the object apply, not those of the surrounding cosm. The radius of effect depends on the object's mass, and whether or not it has absorbed significant spiritual energy from the inhabitants of the cosm. The maximum radius is given by this formula:

Radius Value = Weight Value/2 (round down) + Spirit Value

Example: A Macintosh II system in the middle of the Living Land invasion becomes a hardpoint. The total weight of all its components is about 25 kilos, a value of 7. The computer has no spiritual value. The radius value is 3, which has a measure of four meters. For an area of four meters around this Macintosh, Core Earth axioms apply.

The axiom zone within a hardpoint's radius is a dominant area, which means the axioms of the hardpoint have the upper hand, but cannot completely squelch the reality of invading cosms.

Halving the radius value (rounding down) yields the value of the pure zone radius.

Example: Halving the Macintosh II's radius value of 3 gives 1 when you round down. The pure zone around the Macintosh is about one and a half meters in radius.

For unknown reasons, some hardpoints have much smaller radii, or none at all. Such objects maintain the axioms only for the object itself.

Living beings cannot become hardpoints.

Talismans

When you uproot a hardpoint, there is a short period of time in which the hardpoint's axioms are mobile. A *talisman* is a mobile hardpoint that has been specially altered, usually by a High Lord. A talisman decays at a slower rate than an uprooted hardpoint, and may be recharged with the reality of its land. To recharge a talisman requires an area with the axioms of the talisman's home cosm, and possibility energy. The recharge time is half as long as the decay time of the talisman, e.g. if the talisman lasts a month it will require 15 days to recharge.

While the High Lords have the most knowledge about creating talismans, those opposed to the Possibility Raiders have ways of creating talismans as well. Often the talismans are created subconsciously, and so the users have no idea how to recharge them.

Creating a Contradiction

When the living from one cosm mix with the unliving axioms of another cosm, *contradictions* result. A citizen of the United States expects her watch to work. The axioms of the Living Land say it cannot; furthermore, the subdivisions of time a watch represents make no sense to natives of the Living Land. To maintain her world, her reality, is to live a contradiction. This is possible, but exacts a price.

To allow a contradiction, the character must use her possibility energy and the Everlaw of Two. She uses a minute amount of possibility energy to bend reality, subconsciously bending the Everlaw of Two in order to link her living reality with the unliving laws of the foreign land. This temporary link allows the contradiction to exist.

Contradiction Check

Whenever a character uses tools or abilities that are beyond axiom limits of the realm, she creates a contradiction.

In each scene, as soon as the character uses a tool or ability that would create a contradiction, her player must make a *contradiction check*. If using the ability or tool requires a roll to generate a bonus number, the contradiction check is part of the roll. If the tool or ability does not require a roll to use (such as armor), the player must make one roll at the beginning of the scene to see if the contradiction is too much for the reality.

First the gamemaster determines how bad the contradiction is; the worse the contradiction, the greater the chance that the Everlaw of One deals with it. To determine the degree of contradiction, consider the axioms of three things: the character, the land, and the tool (in this context, a *tool* is any thing or ability, any means used to achieve an end).

Zero Case

If the axiom level of the tool is equal to or less than the axiom level of the character *and* the land, then any possible contradiction is so minor that it escapes the Everlaw of One.

Example: The Yellow Crab is driving his Allenton Roadster in Core Earth Italy. The tech level of the car is at the same level as the Crab, and below that of Core Earth. Even though the Crab and the roadster are from "someplace else," they are behaving in accordance to the Core Earth rules. There is no contradiction created.

One-Case

The *one-case* is created when the axiom of the tool is **greater** than **either** the character or the land, **but not both**. If the player rolls a 1 while using the tool, or otherwise making a contradiction check, the Everlaw of One eliminates the contradiction.

Example: An Edeinos warrior picks up a telephone in Core Earth America. The tool works fine under Core Earth axioms, but exceeds the Edeinos' *Tech* axiom. The contradiction is eliminated on a roll of 1.

The roll is independent of the final die roll. Even if there are additional rolls, if the first roll shows a 1, the contradiction is eliminated.

Four-Case

The *four-case* is created when the axiom of the tool exceeds **both** the axiom levels of the land **and** the character using the tool. If the player rolls a 1 through 4 while using the tool, or otherwise making a contradiction check, the Everlaw of One eliminates the contradiction.

Example: An elf from Aysle is using an M-16 in the Living Land. The *Tech* level of the tool exceeds both the *Tech* level of the elf and the land. The contradiction is eliminated on a roll of 1 through 4.

Long Range Contradiction

Even an Ord may tap his minute reserves of possibility energy in a dominant area in order to create a contradiction. Though the Everlaw of Two is very weak in the Ord, as long as the tool is touching him the character, may create contradictions as though he were a possibility-rated character, until he fails his contradiction check.

But if an Ord throws a grenade, or leaves a warding spell, or fires an explosive missile — anything that requires the tool itself to cause a contradiction after it leaves the Ord's hand — then the item will not work. The grenade or missile will not explode; the spell will never be triggered. Ords cannot extend their contradiction past the confines of their own bodies.

Possibility-rated characters, on the other hand, **can** do so, but only if they can deflect the energy the Everlaw of One raises up to squelch the tool's contradiction. When a possibility-rated character attempts to create a contra-

diction at range, he must first generate a *reality* skill total. Every point the total is under the effect value of the tool is read as stun damage on the Combat Results Table (page 40). Failing this check does **not** mean the character is disconnected, unless he rolls a 1 (or 1-4 as the case may be) while making the roll.

Example: Quin throws a grenade, effect value 14, in the Living Land. Once the grenade leaves his hand, he is attempting to cause a long-range contradiction (to get the fuse to work). He must generate a *reality* total. If his total was 10, he would take 4 result points of damage — 2 shock — before the grenade explodes.

The character must survive and remain conscious in order for the contradiction to occur. If the character is killed or knocked out by the damage, the tool does not create a contradiction.

Repairing the Link

When a 1 or 1-4 is rolled, the Everlaw of One eliminates the contradiction by breaking the link between character and the Everlaw of Two. Without this link, a character cannot create a contradiction, for possibility energy is necessary to bend the fabric of reality, and the Everlaw of Two is necessary to link the realities together.

Until the link is repaired the character may not collect any Possibilities due him at the end of an act or an adventure. He may still spend those that he has, and play cards as Possibilities.

Until the link is repaired, the character may not roll for or otherwise use any tool (item or ability) whose axiom level exceeds the axioms of the current location. He may, however, exceed his own axiom levels if they are lower than the axioms of the cosm he is in.

Example: An elf in the Living Land rolls a 3 when generating a bonus number for the M-16. His ability to create a contradiction is severed. He may not use the M-16, nor may he use magic or any other tool which exceeds the axiom levels of the Living Land. If he had access to a Living Land miracle, he could use that without creating a contradiction since, in effect, he is no longer a denizen of Aysle.

As his one rolled action for a round, the disconnected character may generate a *reality* skill total in order to repair the link. Repairing the link in a foreign cosm requires the presence of the tool that was being used when the link was broken (it contains fragments of the connection to the Everlaw of Two). A character in her home cosm may repair the link without the tool that was being used when the link was destroyed.

The link may be broken in one realm and repaired in another; often the link is easier to repair in a realm different from the realm in which the character was disconnected.

Below is the chart listing the difficulty numbers for reestablishing the link to the Everlaw of Two while in every realm of the Possibility Raiders and Core Earth.

Example: The Edeinos is trying to reestablish the link that was broken while he was experimenting with the telephone. The difficulty number is 16. If his *reality* total is 16 or more, then the Edeinos has regained his ability to create contradiction. If it is less, he now lives within the axioms of Core Earth. He can now use telephones without contradiction, but he no longer has access to many of the miracles which are the heritage of the Living Land.

Bonus Modifier

A character who attempts to link back up with the Everlaw of Two may receive a bonus modifier if the tool he was using had a lower axiom level than his own level. The bonus modifier for reestablishing the link is:

Character Axiom Level minus *Tool Axiom Level*.

Example: Quin Sebastian is using a Kentucky rifle, which has a tech axiom of only 16. Quin's tech axiom is 23. Quin has a bonus modifier of +7 to repair the link if it shattered while he was using the rifle.

A negative bonus modifier is ignored unless the axiom level of the tool also exceeds the axiom level of the land.

Example: The phone-wielding Edeinos has a tech axiom of 7, the

LINK DIFFICULTY CHART

Character is from:	Character is in:						
	Core Earth	Living Land	Aysle	NipponTech	Cyberpapacy	Orrorsh	Nile Empire
Core Earth	0	18	11	8	6	8	6
Living Land	16	0	10	16	12	9	9
Aysle	14	20	0	17	11	6	8
Nippon Tech	5	19	11	0	7	8	7
Cyberpapacy	9	21	12	12	0	9	8
Orrorsh	11	17	8	15	8	0	6
Nile Empire	11	16	10	12	8	5	0

phone a 22. He would have a bonus modifier of -15, except that Core Earth can support telephones. The negative modifier is ignored.

To help remember, if a character fails only on a roll of 1, then he can only have a zero or positive bonus modifier. If a character is a four-case, then he *always* has a negative modifier.

Transformation

"The possibilities of Earth are unlike any riches I have ever known. They shall doubtless be exploited by the Everlaw to rid Earth of our presence with a rapidity of cycle never before seen. The resulting energy shall give us more power faster than any prize we have ever taken."

— a portion of the Gaunt Man's message to the other High Lords.

The Everlaw of One tries to reconcile the Raiders' invading axioms with the living natives and objects in the invaded areas; these invaded areas are cut off from the rest of their cosm by the stelae placed by the High Lords' agents before the invasion begins. Since the living entities and native objects in the small invaded area require less energy to change than the invading axioms (connected to their entire cosm by the Maelstrom Bridge), the Everlaw of One tries to convert the natives to the invading axioms rather than the other way around.

Transformation tries to convert the target into an object or being which does not create a contradiction with the attacker's cosm laws. The transformation process tries to use as much of the target's nature as possible, and tries to conserve things such as mass, attributes and skills.Transformation can take place spontaneously in a suppressed area, or during a reality storm. Only Ords may be transformed by the natural process of living in a suppressed area.

A character who is transformed loses all of his possibility energy. In addition, he now conforms to the new laws of the land, having been successfully altered by the Everlaw of One. He may even be physically altered to match denizens of the realm. He now exists as one of the natives of the realm. If an Ord crosses over into a different realm, he must exist by the rules of both realms. The only way this is possible is to take the **lower** axiom of each pair. Transformed Ords cannot create any kind of contradictory reality. Possibility-rated characters may still cause contradictions.

Example: Eric Wold wakes up in Stapleford to discover he is no longer human. He remembers being human, he remembers the concepts "television" and "automobile," and can even correctly identify them. He no longer has any idea how to work them, and is no longer capable of working them. If he should somehow become recharged with possibility energy he may be able to once again work devices which were a common part of his life.

If Eric crossed back into Core Earth England, he would be unable to operate a car even there. In addition, any potent magic he learned in Aysle would be useless in Core Earth, for he no longer has the possibility energy necessary to bend the reality of Core Earth any more than that of Aysle.

Transformation is mental as well as physical. A transformed character can gain skills he did not have in his other guise; he may lose a few skills in return.

A character or object may physically transform, but not all transformations have the same result; M-60A1 tanks have transformed into both small towers and Lakten armor in the Living Land. The one constant seems to be that living things transform to living things, or things with living components, while the unliving remains unliving.

There is an additional risk for transformed characters. If the reality should change again, the drained characters are incapable of once again transforming, as transformation requires possibility energy and all theirs has already been drained. Should the Everlaw of One transform them *again* (an unlikely event), the result is fatal and often fiery.

When a character, object, or location is transformed, the effects need not be instantaneous. Physical transformations in particular can take a few minutes, up to several hours in extreme cases.

Transcendence

When faced with a threat from a different reality, some characters experience a "moment of crisis". The different reality, along with a strong moral choice, causes the Everlaw of Two to strengthen and reinforce the link between the character and his own reality. This sends a surge of possibility energy into the character. The character is now possibility-rated and gains the *reality* skill.The Everlaw of Two has created a defender for its reality.

Transformation is a "moment of crisis" for the one involved. The Everlaws are struggling, and the possibility energy of the character is boiling away. Usually the Everlaw of One wins and strips the character of all her possibility energy, forcing her to live only under foreign axioms, dooming her if reality shifts again. But sometimes a character gains the *reality* skill before the Everlaw of One triumphs; she gains such a surge of possibility energy from attaining the skill that she can feed the Everlaw of One the energy it needs, still retaining some possibility energy for herself. She *transcends* the transformation.

Transcending can take place when a character makes a strong choice for good *or for evil.* Over time, the High Lords have meddled with and modified the transcendental process, so that what used to be a 50-50 chance now greatly favors evil; 90 percent, sometimes more, of those who transcend do so according to patterns determined by the High Lords. This is an important way for the Possibility Raiders to gain fresh troops or agents.

Reality Bubbles

Characters who have the *reality* skill are better connected to their worlds, and can tap the possibility energy of their world, albeit indirectly. A possibility-rated character can guarantee



that her reality, the axioms and world rules, work in an alien cosm by building a *reality bubble*. A reality bubble is a thin field which mimics the unliving essence of her home cosm, drawn from the possibility energy of its creators. Within this field the living/unliving link is maintained, and the character may use her axioms, without the risk of contradiction. The field sustains only its creator and her actions. The field has no effect on any other character, regardless of cosm. The reality bubble will affect unliving objects which are being held or operated by bubble's owner; they operate according to the owner's axiom.

Example: Quin creates a reality bubble while in the primitive Living Land. If he picks up an M-16 which he finds in primitive, the rifle will work for him. If he drives a Suzuki Samurai, it drives as it should. He does not check for contradiction while his bubble is up.

A character has the option to create a reality bubble as long as he is linked to the Everlaw of Two. Creating a reality bubble costs a Possibility, which is needed to provide the energy. The reality bubble last for 15 minutes, then fades from lack of energy. A reality bubble can be created in any cosm, in any type of zone, whether pure or dominant.

A character who creates a reality bubble and then uses a tool which exceeds the axioms of his *own* reality (such as Quin trying to use a cybernetic device), must make contradiction checks normally, failing on a 1 through 4 as the tool exceeds both the character and the "land" provided by the reality bubble. Therefore a character usually creates a reality bubble in order to use the tools of his own cosm to their best advantage. A character in a reality bubble must still generate a *reality* total when creating a contradiction at range.

The Invasion and the Axioms

When the Possibility Raiders attack a cosm, their axioms flood the target cosm, filling the land until they reach the boundaries defined by the stelae placed by agents of the High Lord prior to the invasion. At first the surge of possibility energy from the invading cosm has the advantage. In an area in which a maelstrom bridge has descended, about 13 percent of the unliving things are transformed. Very few hardpoints are formed. Of the living, approximately five percent are transformed in the initial surge.

But then the native cosm makes a surge of its own, swinging the pendulum back with its own possibility energy, attempting to reconnect its inhabitants.

This process would continue back and forth, gradually damping until all the possibility energy from each cosm was expended. But the High Lords, with the arcane secrets possessed in their Darkness Devices, suspend the pendulum where it is: with the possibility energy of the native cosm surging into the invading realm. This energy, and the energy which is drawn by the Everlaw of One, is then absorbed through the stelae, and channeled to the High Lord through his Darkness Device. The invading realm eventually drains the native realm of all possibility, with much of its own energy still intact.

The Theorem of Futile Reconnection

Whenever a living being creates contradictions in a cosm which has overlaid his own, he is temporarily reconnected to his unliving axioms. The Everlaw of Two then sends a surge of possibility energy through him, attempting to reconnect other disconnected beings in danger of transforming. This energy is cancelled by a corresponding surge from the Everlaw of One, which wants no further contradictions. As the Everlaw of One cancels out this surge from the being's native cosm, the possibility energy from the invading cosm builds, until it again surges across the realm as in the initial invasion; this time the possibility energy has been slightly dissipated by the first surge, and the surge is weaker. Again the Everlaw of One interferes, and more energy is lost. So it goes until all the possibility energies of the cosms are spent, and a single reality emerges.

This makes the presence of Storm Knights (who routinely reconnect to their overlaid axioms) actually **useful** to the invaders, at least in the short run, as every surge from the Everlaw of One provides them with additional energy.



Chapter Nine

Storm Knights

The Possibility Raiders refer to those who transcend a moment of crisis as *stormers* since most transformations take place during reality storms. Long ago, the Raiders realized that stormers were the greatest threat to their plans for pillaging other realities, because those who made the choice to defend their home cosm — the *Storm Knights* — had the power to defend themselves and others, and even the power to attack the High Lords. With long experience, the High Lords adopted strategies for quickly destroying the few Storm Knights who appeared in an invaded cosm, thus preventing them from joining forces or organizing others to effective action.

Even before the invasion of Earth, they knew that this cosm would be different. Earth's possibility energy was more plentiful than had ever been experienced by the Raiders; the number of Storm Knights generated on Earth would be unprecedented. While still very few in number — perhaps one per 100,000 people on Core Earth would become stormers — it was more resistance than the High Lords were used to. The Raiders, trying to anticipate these additional Storm Knights, increased the number of Ravagons and planned to use their Darkness Devices to monitor the Storm Knights whenever possible.

Once the invasion took place, there were additional complications for the High Lords. They had agreed to despoil Earth together, to plunder her together — but not all rivalry, jealousy and fear are forgotten when pledges are made. Where coordination lapsed or was intentionally undermined, the people of Core Earth regrouped, patched their wounds, and began to resist with renewed ferocity.

There are two unexpected factors which give the people of Core Earth hope. First is the steady **increase** in the number of Storm Knights. The possibility energy of Earth is so strong that new Storm Knights are created even in realms where Storm Knights have long been eradicated — in Aysle, in Orrorsh, in the New Empire of the Nile, as well as on Core Earth. Areas which had previously been perfectly safe for the High Lords and their minions now carry some risk, and attention must be diverted from crushing Core Earth to securing the home realms and cosms.

The second unexpected factor is the strength of the *possibility nexi* of Earth. Due to Earth's affinity for other realities, the struggle has been felt in other cosms, even those not connected to the Earth by the invasion. A few Storm Knights from other cosms are actually finding their way through, even a few who have fought the High Lords before. When they find Storm Knights on Core Earth, they can teach them about the High Lords and the invasion, and in turn learn about other cosms. This increase and spread of knowledge has strengthened the resistance; with the addition of this knowledge — as stormers transcend the storm, as Storm Knights transcend stormers — the Storm Knights on Earth have transcended their own individuality to become something even more powerful: a Storm Knight group that can tap fabulous powers. Like the Storm Knights of other cosms, Earth's Storm Knight groups resist the High Lords. Unlike lone Storm Knights, the groups of Earth might actually win.

Giving Possibility to the People

An area which is bounded by stelae will eventually drain all the native beings of their possibility energy, transforming them to the reality of the invading cosm. Once drained and

transformed, however, these beings are far from useless to the High Lord; rather, they are hostages against the attacks of the Storm Knights.

The Fate of the Transformed

When Storm Knights manage to locate a stelae and pull it up, Core Earth possibility energy pours back in to the formerly bounded area. This energy soon returns the land, and the living, to Earth's axioms. Unfortunately for the transformed, this means eventual death — as soon as the Everlaw of One transforms them back to the reality of Core Earth, their lack of possibility energy means that their very life-force is used to fuel the change. If the Storm Knights reclaim the land without first reclaiming the people, the land will soon be empty.

Glory

To *reclaim the people* the characters need to re-imbue them with a small amount of possibility energy before destroying the stelae. High Lords can do this through a Darkness Device, which the Storm Knights do not have.

But they do have legends.

Stories, myths and legends are ways of framing events from a particular point of view, a point of view with its own beliefs and visions of reality. Certain stories can even serve as a spark for the Everlaw of Two, a slender thread of idea which the Law strengthens to reconnect a person with her former reality. Once reconnected by this tenuous thread, and given a tiny bit of energy by the Storm Knights to initiate the living/unliving link, the person is slowly refilled with possibility energy. The process may take a few days, or a few weeks.

Once a transformed being has been refilled, she may retell the same story to others, eventually reconnecting them and refilling them with possibility energy as well. This process grows and grows as more and more people hear the tale and reconnect. Soon, all will be ready for the new transformation.

What sort of stories contain enough of the mythic and legendary to spark people? Stories of heroes, stories of Storm Knights who are resisting the High Lords — the stories of the player characters themselves.

To spark the people, the story must be about events close to them, to their lives. For the game this means the players must have played a *glory* card (see Gamemaster Chapter Four) during an adventure in the area in which the people are to be sparked. The *glory* card marks the magnitude of a deed, and fixes it in time and space. The deed can then be the focus through which the Everlaw of Two returns to the people.

The players themselves must recount the story. One of them must be appointed storyteller for this telling of the story. The storyteller's character must:

- Spend a single Possibility, which becomes the seed for the energy of the story.
- Make a *persuasion* roll against the audience member with the highest *Mind*, to convince that key person of the truth and importance of the story.

Once all three conditions (*glory* card, Possibility, and *persuasion*) are met, the story begins its work. A story from a single seed can take awhile to work its way through an area, or it can spread like wildfire. Each story-seed the player characters plant increases the chances that the story "takes" and reconnects the people.

If the *persuasion* roll fails, the Storm Knights may no longer use that glorious deed as a seed. They must perform a new deed in this area, and successfully play a new *glory* card, before they may continue the process. In some cases (see below) it is actually desirable to do so anyway.

Does the Story Take?

At any time, of course, the Storm Knights may seek out and remove the stelae. But the less time they wait after the telling of their deeds, the more likely the transformed are to die.

As their characters are pulling up a stelae, have a player roll once for each story seed they have planted in this area (cards and Possibilities may **not** be spent on this roll, but additional rolls **are** taken on 10s and 20s). On the TransformationTable (see page 86), find the line which is closest to the amount of time since the first story-seed was planted. If any of the rolls equal or exceed the "transform number" listed under the **dominant area** column, the story took with the transformed of this area, refilling them with possibility.

Example: *Quin, Crowfire, and the Yellow Crab removed the last bit of dirt from the stelae, which had been buried beneath the crossroads church. They carefully placed the hooks, and began to pull. As Quin whispered "On three," the wind picked up.*

The characters have told their story five times in this area; the first seed was planted two and a half months ago. They have five chances, and the number they need to beat is 19. Winter rolls the die: 2, 9, 1, 18, 7. No 19. The stories have not yet had time to work. She looks at Paul and Chris.

Crowfire shook her head, moaning at the pain she felt throughout the land. The Yellow Crab started to release his rope, but Quin pulled even harder. "Move it, Crab," he growled. "The Ravagons are sure to notice this. We may not get another chance!"

Three-time Bonus

If the characters have performed three **separate** *glory* deeds in the bounded area, they have effectively neutralized each of the three bounding stelae. In this case, the roll is made under the **pure area** column of the Transformation table. In the above example, Winter would have only needed to roll a 12 if their five seeds were based on three **different** *glory* deeds. Her fourth roll would have succeeded, and the stelae could be removed safely.

Removing Stelae

Removing a stelae is dangerous for a number of reasons. As the stelae is being removed, any boundary of which it is part begins to weaken. The



realities that had been successfully separated now clash all along the boundary, with the stelae as the focus. Horrific reality storms often result.

Such storms have values of 20 when they start, and escalate from there (see below). While the fury of the storm is usually focused upon the stelae being removed, occasionally the stelae is in an area of calm, much like the eye of a hurricane.

In addition, stelae are connected to a Darkness Device, which is aware of what is happening to the stelae. The Darkness Device will communicate with any beings it can, and urge them to save the stelae.

Removing a stelae is almost always a dramatic skill use (see Gamemaster Chapter Four) of the *reality* skill, of at least difficulty 12. This can be increased according to circumstance and the cosm in which the stelae resides. In addition, most stelae will require some physical, magical, or spiritual manipulation in order to be moved.

Reality Storms

Reality storms occur when the Everlaw of One is working hard to eliminate contradictions. The physical manifestations of a storm are a roiling, ethereal cloud cover, jagged lightning, and a bending and distortion of local space. Typical reasons for a storm include the natural effects of a mixed area, reality conflicts at the border of two separate cosms, and invocation.

Invoked Storms

A possibility-rated character can invoke the Everlaw of One whenever he is confronted with a possibility-rated being from another cosm. The two, being strong representations of their realities, are prime targets for elimination by the Everlaw of One. No more than one being may be targeted when invoking the Everlaw. The character and his foe are then locked in a reality storm.

Confrontation in a reality storm is conducted using the Storm Results Table (page 40). The reality storm continues until either the invoking character or the target is completely drained of Possibilities, or transformed. The contest is like combat, each opponent generating a *reality* total each round, and comparing it to his opponent's *reality* value.

The reality storm seals off the contestants from all other beings, objects, or energy, although legend states that communication is possible. The Everlaw of One tries to minimize the number of variables with which it must work; nothing affects the contestants other than themselves, until the storm is over. For game purposes, the character in the maelstrom may not receive cards from other players, nor trade in any way.

Home Cosm Advantage

A character who is in his home cosm receives a +3 bonus modifier when generating his *reality* total during a storm. This is because the Everlaw of One sees the greater incongruity in the character who is not native to the cosm. If neither contestant is native to the cosm, there is no bonus modifier.

The Storm Results Table

The results on the Storm Results Table (page 40) are expressed as a number followed by a special notation. The numbers are the Possibilities lost by an opponent as a result of that round of the storm.

Example: *Ace Decker stood before the Master of the Hunt, and invoked the Everlaw of One from deep within himself, and the land. The storm began with a howl, and the marble floor exploded, hurling fragments of razor sharp stone high into the air.*

Decker rolls well enough to get 6 result points. The huntsman loses 3 Possibilities. The fight continues.

When a character loses all of his Possibilities, further losses are taken from his *reality* skill **adds**. Once his adds have been reduced to 0, the character loses the fight and is transformed; the storm ends. The character does not lose the skill, only the adds. He may later build back up by first accumulating Possibilities in the normal way, then buying the skill adds — presuming his opponent leaves him alone after stripping him of his Possibilities.

In addition to the Possibility loss there are three special notations on the Storm ResultsTable: *storm multiplier*, *Maelstrom* and *Transform*.

Storm Multiplier

A *storm multiplier* increases the radius of the effect and the intensity of the storm. The beginning radius is only five meters, and the storm appears midway between the two opponents, with wisps of energized mists enshrouding the contestants. (If the opponents are closer than five meters, the storm engulfs them.) The multiplier increases the radius of the storm; a *x2* result doubles the radius; the *x5* multiplies the radius by five.

The strength of the storm begins equal to the greater of the two characters' *reality* values. The storm's effects are only felt by non-combatants if they are actually within the storm's radius. Each *storm multiplier* result not only enlarges the radius of the storm, it also increases the storm's ferocity, increasing the storm's strength value by one.

Example: *Decker couldn't tell whether his vision was blurring because of the storm, or whether the world had actually lost some of its sharpness, its definition.*

Decker and the Huntsman started with a storm at a *Strength* of 18, Decker's *reality* value. There have been five storm multiplier results, two *x2* scored by the huntsman, one *x5* by the huntsman, and two *x2* by Decker. The size of the storm is now 400 meters, and its *Strength* is now 23.

The strength of the storm is the value used to generate any storm-related effect. It could be used as raw *Strength*, or it could be used as a mental skill value attacking the *Minds* of others in the area — reality storms are rarely predictable, and their effects vary wildly. See Gamemaster Chapter Eight for some examples of effects.



Maelstrom

A *Maelstrom* result stops the growth of the reality storm. From that point, the storm maintains its current size and intensity; *storm multiplier* and *transform* effects are ignored thereafter. Only the number of Possibilities lost is important.

During a maelstrom, crackling possibility energy surrounds the contestants, and their axioms break down and then rebuild themselves from constituent Possibilities. All order is gone from the battle; a direct transformation is no longer possible. Only by draining an opponent of all his Possibilities may the conflict end.

Once locked in a maelstrom, the attacking character may either inflict the listed damage on his opponent's Possibilities, or revitalize himself by adding that many Possibilities to his own template. On a *transform* result, the character may drain the opponent of five Possibilities, **and** increase his own total by five.

Example: The Gaunt Man is locked in a maelstrom contest, and gets a *4 Storm x5* result. The High Lord may reduce his opponent's Possibilities by four, or increase his own store of Possibilities by four.

Opponents with high *reality* values and plenty of Possibilities can be locked in a maelstrom for a long, long time. Don't forget: invoking the Everlaw of One can be very dangerous.

Transform

Transform does exactly that: transforms the target character, instantly stripping him of all his possibility energy (although a transform result leaves his *reality* adds intact). When a character scores a *transform* result, he takes five Possibilities from his opponent and adds them to his own store. If the target character has fewer than five to lose, his opponent takes all that remain.

There is a chance the transformed character will physically transform into a denizen of the cosm which defeated him. Have the loser make an immediate contradiction check (he is the "tool" to which the cosm objects). If the player (or gamemaster for a gamemaster character) rolls a 1, the character is physically transformed into a being native to the cosm which defeated him.

High Lords and Reality Storms

In the unlikely event that a High Lord becomes involved in a reality storm, he may draw upon his Darkness Device to satisfy any losses incurred in the storm. However, should a maelstrom result, the intense forces within the maelstrom sever the link between the High Lord and his Darkness Device. From then on he is on his own. If the High Lord should happen to be transformed because of the storm, he would have to re-attune himself to the Darkness Device. There is no guarantee that the Device would not instead choose another being more suitable to the reality to which it is most accustomed.

Eternity Shards

The legends speak of Apeiros, a being of immense and unknowable power, creator of cosms, who exists outside each and every cosm. Theologians in some cosms believe Apeiros to be the source of all Possibilities, while others believe Apeiros to merely be the source of the first Possibilities.

In either case, the Everlaw of Three states that a third part is added to each cosm, aside from the unliving and the living: a part created directly by Apeiros. This part is rich with the energy of Possibilities, and works to protect and empower the living and unliving on each world. The legends speak most reverently of these manifestations of Apeiros, some of which are physical and durable, named in legend: Excalibur, Atlantis, the Holy Grail, the Lost Ark of the Covenant, the Heart of Coyote. The legends speak of "an incarnation of Possibilities" when describing these manifestations of Apeiros.

These incarnations of possibility are supposed to exist forever, surviving for all time. For this reason they are sometimes known as *eternity shards*. If they can find one, Storm Knights can tap into the powers of an eternity shard; High Lords can drain them to give further possibility energy to their Darkness Devices.

Many eternity shards carry a "group power," which Storm Knights may learn (see page 107). Eternity shards also have other abilities, which usually mirror the axioms of their native cosm. For instance, an eternity shard of Nippon Tech, known as the Tobukai Algorithms, allows impossibly fast computer processing, information transfer and analysis beyond the limits of physics.

In all cosms, eternity shards have a spiritual quality; even the driest technological item or magical effect has a spiritual aura, the heritage of Apeiros. In addition, all eternity shards contain great amounts of possibility energy. Storm Knights and other possibility-rated characters can tap this energy for their own use. Tapping requires a character to generate a *reality* skill total against the tapping difficulty; tapping difficulty is 15 at a minimum, and can be as high as 40. The quality of the result corresponds to the number of Possibilities which are liberated from the shard; *minimal* gets one, *average* two, *good* releases three, *superior* releases four, and *spectacular* calls five Possibilities from the shard. These Possibilities may be used for any actions which are not prohibited by the design of the shard. They must be used at once, but **may** be used in excess of the normal rules for limitations on Possibilities, in the same manner as *hero* and *drama* cards.

An eternity shard is rated for how many Possibilties it contains, what the purpose of the shard is (if any), the powers and abilities it has, and what restrictions are placed upon them.

Example: *The Heart of Coyote*
Cosm: Core Earth
Possibilities: Many Hundreds
Tapping Difficulty: 16
Purpose: To awaken spiritual



power within humankind, to rekindle the divine fires within the heart of humans.
Powers: The Heart of Coyote is an entity of pure Core Earth; beings in contact with the Heart are in a dominant zone of Core Earth.
Group Power: *Shift Possibility*
Restrictions: The heart's Possibilities may be used to augment any *Spirit* skill. The heart may be used to augment miracles; the Possibilties of the heart may not be used for other types of skills.

It is very difficult to use eternity shards to perform acts which are contrary to their purpose. The shards are akin to Darkness Devices in that they can sense the intent of the beings using them, and they can block the use of any of their powers for goals contrary to their purpose. It is always possible to drain Possibilities from the shard, but if the Possibilities are being drained by someone whose purposes are counter to the shard's, the tapping difficulty is increased by 20.

Group Powers

Group powers may only be used by a team (at least two) of possibility-rated characters. A group power is activated by the whole group, and allows that group to perform spectacular feats. When enacting a group power, one character is chosen as the lead character; the others are supporting characters who strengthen the lead character's chance for success and augment his result. All checks for group powers are made on the *reality* skill.

Getting Group Powers

A group is eligible for a group power only when they find an eternity shard containing a group power, and they may gain a new group power each time they find such a shard (some eternity shards do not have a group power).

Once they have found the shard, the party buys a group power by donating Possibilities to a pool. Every possibility-rated character in the party must contribute at least one point to the pool. This contribution may take place over the course of several adventures until the "price" of the group power has been paid.

When the power has been paid for, the character (or characters) who contributed the most Possibilities to the pool become the *bearer* (or bearers) of the power. The cost may be "overpaid" in order to have more than one bearer.

Example: Our group of player characters finds a shard for which the group power is *Stelae Sense*. The purchase cost for the power is 10 Possibilities. At the end of an adventure, Quin pays three Possibilities, the Crab two, and Crowfire two. Next adventure, each character spends one; this meets the cost, and Quin is the bearer since he has spent the most Possibilities. The Crab decides to spend an extra Possibility even though the power has been paid for. Now both he and Quin have spent four Possibilities, so both are bearers.

A group must have at least one bearer to use the group power, and the lead character when using the power must be one of those bearers.

If a character later joins the group, he must spend at least one Possibility to become eligible to participate in a group power. If a bearer is willing to "spark" the new character in the power, the new character can become a bearer by spending as many Possibilities as the sparking character originally spent. This also holds true if a regular member of the group decides to become a bearer.

Example: Vancen and Sabrina (played by Doug and Barb) join the group. Each must spend one Possibility in order to share in the group power. Vancen decides to spend three more and become a bearer; at the same time, Crowfire spends one more and also becomes a bearer.

Using Group Powers

To enact a group power each member of the group must spend at least one Possibility. A group power cannot be used alone; at least two characters must successfully combine to use a group power.

When using a group power, one character who is also a bearer is chosen to be the *lead character*. The other characters are called *supporters*. Each supporting character generates a *reality* total against the coordination difficulty of the power. The value of the number of characters who successfully add their efforts (including the lead character) is used as a bonus number modifier for the lead character's skill check.

Example: Four characters successfully coordinate on a group power. The value of the measure 4 is 3. The lead character gets a +3 bonus number modifier.

In addition, the unique synergy involved in using a group power lets a supporter contribute more; each success quality beyond *minimal* on the coordination skill check adds one point to the bonus number rolled by the lead character.

Example: A character is supporting the use of *Create Hardpoint*, which has a coordination difficulty of 8. His *reality* total is an impressive 21, for a *spectacular* result. He adds an additional 4 to the bonus number rolled by the lead character.

To successfully use a group power, at least one supporting character must exceed the coordination difficulty with his *reality* skill total. The lead character then generates a *reality* total, adding in all the appropriate modifiers from her supporters.

Example: The lead character in the *Create Hardpoint* has a *reality* skill value of 12. Four of her five supporters succeed against the coordination difficulty, for a bonus modifier of +4. Because of the character in the example



above, she also receives +4 in support, for a total of +8. She generates a bonus number of 2, which becomes 10 with the support of her group, for a *reality* total of 22.

The Powers

Below are descriptions of all of the group powers which are known to exist on Core Earth; others may become known as the Possibility Wars continue. Each power description includes the following information:

Purchase is the purchase cost in Possibilities for the group power.

Use Cost is how many Possibilities must be spent each time the power is used (minimum of one per member of the group).

Coordination is the coordination difficulty of the power.

Difficulty is the group power's difficulty number. The lead character makes a possibility check against the difficulty number.

Range is the group power's range.

Duration is the duration of the group power's effect. A duration of "performance" means the effect lasts as long as the group power is being used.

Effect is a brief summary of the effect of the group power.

Create Hardpoint

Purchase: 20
Use Cost: 4
Coordination: 8
Difficulty: 8
Range: touch
Duration: variable
Effect: create a hardpoint from an object

This power focuses the possibility energy of the group into an object in order to make that object a hardpoint (see Gamemaster Chapter Seven). The axioms of the hardpoint are those of the lead character.

The lead character's *reality* skill total becomes the value for the maximum weight which can be converted into a hardpoint. An object must be chosen for conversion into a hardpoint before the dice are rolled.

Example: A party of Storm Knights wants to create a hardpoint out of an anchored yacht that weighs 90 tons. The value of 90 tons is 25. The power total will have to be at least 25 in order to convert the yacht into a hardpoint.

The standard duration is one week, a time value of 29. For every point by which the final total exceeds the weight of the object, the time value is increased by one.



Valerie Valusek

Example: The Storm Knights succeed at converting the yacht into a hardpoint, by rolling a *reality* total of 27, which is two more than the yacht's weight value of 25. The time value is increased by two to 31, which is two and a half weeks.

Gate

Purchase: 20
Use Cost: 12
Coordination: 10
Difficulty: 15
Range: reality value
Duration: performance
Effect: creates a gate for travel between two points

The group uses this power to form a teleportation gate between two points in space. The *gate* is two meters by two meters in area, and appears at a spot two meters or less away from the lead character. Each round in which the *gate* is open, the difficulty number must be beaten by the lead character. Each round the *gate* is open, its point of entrance/exit may be moved up to five meters by the lead character.

The *reality* skill value becomes the range value for the power, but the lead character may attempt to extend the range of the *gate* before it is formed. For every three points by which the base difficulty number is increased, the range is increased by two. In other words, the minimum difficulty may be raised in order to raise the maximum range.

Example: Hachi Mara-Two and her group are trying to create a *gate* from Indonesia to California, a considerable trip of some 16,000 kilometers (distance 37). She has a *reality* value of only 13.

Mara decides to increase the difficulty by 36, thus increasing the range by 24. Now the minimum difficulty is 51. She will need a bonus of 28 to succeed.

The *gate* is only accurate to within five meters, close enough for most transportation. If the *gate* opens in solid ground, the lead character can try to move it five meters in another direction the next round.

There are times, however, when the accuracy of the *gate* must be better than five meters. For every five points by which the difficulty is increased, the accuracy is increased by a value of five.

Example: In an extreme emergency, Hachi Mara-Two must *gate* to a spot within a tenth of a millimeter of her intended target. This requires an increase in accuracy of a factor of 50,000, or a value of 24. Since accuracy must be increased in groups of five, she must "over-target" and increase accuracy, and thus difficulty, by 25. The difficulty is now 15 plus 25 equals 40.

If the *gate* power is used to travel between cosms which are not physically connected (via a Maelstrom Bridge), the difficulty is increased by 20.

Herald

Purchase: 20
Use Cost: 2
Coordination: 8
Difficulty: 22
Range: na
Duration: one round
Effect: allows characters to send messages to another cosm

Herald sends an ethereal packet of information from one cosm to another. The message is imprinted on some media upon arrival, although the group which sends the message has no control over the media used. The message is attracted to beings who are strong with possibility, landing within 10 kilometers of a possibility-rated character. The herald cannot distinguish between possibility-rated characters who serve a High Lord and those who oppose one.

These "messages in a bottle" are often the only way possibility-rated characters can contact their counterparts on other cosms. If the cosms are physically connected, the difficulty is reduced by five. If the lead character knows a character in another cosm, she may try to send the message to that specific person, which increases the difficulty by 10.

The message may contain about as much information as the lead character can speak and or visualize in a minute and half.

Life Thread

Purchase: 15
Use Cost: 4
Coordination: 12
Difficulty: 8
Range: touch
Duration: one day plus
Effect: keeps mortally wounded characters alive

Life thread sustains mortally wounded characters who cannot be kept alive by any other means. This power may not be used on characters who are not *mortally wounded*. *Life thread* connects the wounded character to the group by a thin invisible conduit through which possibility energy flows to the wounded character. The energy sustains the character, even replacing metabolic energy so that food consumption is greatly reduced (one day of food will last ten days), although liquids still need to be replaced on a normal basis. A character connected by life thread may take no action (except recovery checks) until healed to a wound level less than *mortal*.

If the wounded character receives further damage when connected to a *life thread*, the additional damage levels will not kill him or her so long as the character is receiving the power.

Life thread lasts a number of days equal to the result points of the power check.

Send

Purchase: 20
Use Cost: 8
Coordination: 8
Difficulty: 15
Range: 3 meters
Duration: instantaneous
Effect: sends spirit of dying hero to new cosm

Send is perhaps the power most feared by High Lords. Just when a High Lord has a Storm Knight at the



edge of death, a *send* can fling the soul of the hero to another cosm, a cosm on which another body can be found to house the hero, a cosm in which the Storm Knight can still fight the Possibility Wars.

Send takes only a round to perform, but the soul of the Storm Knight may wander for some time before arriving at her new cosm. The hero must wait until a suitable host is also dying; when the soul of the host departs, the soul of the Storm Knight may enter.

Upon arrival, the hero begins to regain the skills and abilities she formerly possessed. The hero automatically regains the *reality* skill, and her attributes are those of the old body rather than the body of the host. Each week the hero makes a *reality* check against a difficulty of 18, with a bonus number modifier equal to the value of the number of weeks she has been in the new body; a *minimal* success regains no skills. An *average* success regains a skill, a *good* success regains two skills, *superior* success regains three skills, and *spectacular* success regains four skills. All skills return with their full adds.

Example: Tolwyn of Tancred has been *sent* from her home cosm to Core Earth, where she inhabits the body of Wendy Miller. Tolwyn's attributes and *reality* skill are as they once were. At the end of the fifth week she generates a *reality* skill total against a difficulty of 18, with a +3 bonus number modifier. She gets a total of 25, for a *superior* success; three of her skills return at full adds.

Send can sometimes affect the memories of the hero sent. The memories usually return after half the the skills and abilities are regained.

Shift Possibility

Purchase: 20
Use Cost: 2
Coordination:10
Difficulty: 15
Range: 50 meters
Duration: one round
Effect: allows characters to shift possibility energy to another character who is attempting task

This group power allows participants to shift all of their possibility energy to a character in exchange for the energy that character has generated. One of the participants in the power (other than the lead character who still must be the focus for the power) may attempt another task while gaining the benefits of this power.

In game terms, this means that all of the power participants (including the character performing the other task) roll the dice as though trying to accomplish the task. The task character may choose the best roll as his own, using it to generate his skill total.

Example: The Yellow Crab is trying to repair the surface control circuitry on a *Mitsubishi J5* hyperplane. Quin becomes the lead character for the Shift Possibility power, while the Crab is the task character. Quin and the Crab succeed at the power.

With the power in effect, the Yellow Crab attempts to repair the circuitry. The Crab rolls a 4. Quin rolls a 19. The Crab choose the 19 to repair the circuit.

The power may be kept up by spending the use cost, rather than having to roll for the power each round, as long as the lead character is still able to focus on the power and does not have to take any other action.

Stelae Sense

Purchase:10
Use Cost: 5
Coordination: 8
Difficulty: 20
Range: 10 kms
Duration: instantaneous
Effect: allows characters to narrow down the location of stelae

This power lets characters sense the possibilities which flow through stelae. The accuracy of *Stelae Sense* depends on the quality of the result. The sense provides a vision of a location; the stelae will always be within a certain distance of that location.

STELAE DISTANCE CHART

Success	Stelae is within
Minimal	1000 meters
Average	400 meters
Good	60 meters
Superior	6 meters
Spectacular	1 meter



Chapter Ten

Magic

Magic is a powerful, varied force. In some cosms, such as Core Earth, the power has waned, but in others, such as Aysle and Orrorsh, magic is strong. Although the purposes and uses of magic are different in the two realms, magic theory is consistent from cosm to cosm; spells may be obtained in different ways and have different effects, but magic remains magic.

The Structure of Magic

When a powerful mage designs a spell, he is aware that it has many elements. Only two of them are key: the *skill used* and the *arcane knowledge* involved in the spell.

There are four skills basic to magic: *alteration, apportation, conjuration,* and *divination. Alteration* causes a change in an existing object or entity. *Apportation* moves an object, effect, or entity. *Conjuration* creates an object, entity, or condition. *Divination* perceives and interprets information about an object, entity, or condition.

The skills are akin to verbs in sentences. The magic skill used in a spell determines what basic effect the spell will have. To create a spell may require several such "verbs." For example *conjuration* to create an effect and then *apportation* to move it to its target. However, most spells cast by beginning magicians are not created by them, but are cast from a *grimoire* (magical tome of stored spells).

The Grimoire

To cast a spell from a grimoire requires only the skill necessary for the **most important component** of the effect. Secondary effects may be subsumed under the spell at the time of its design, but are not necessary to cast the spell. For example, altering a small sphere into a fireball is the most important element of a fireball spell; moving the fireball is secondary. The magician who designed the spell would have to take into account the problems of moving it (*apportation*) and accuracy (*divination*) as well as the initial *alteration*, but once designed and placed in a grimoire these effects are "built in"; the only skill the caster need furnish is *alteration*.

Arcane Knowledge

The *arcane knowledge* used in a spell determines how the spell effect will manifest itself. If spells were sentences, arcane knowledges would be nouns and modifiers. Arcane knowledge is like a skill, in that you can buy adds in an arcane knowledge, paying the same price in Possibilties as you would for skills; unlike skills, arcane knowledges have no base attribute.

Arcane knowledges also differ from skills when generating a new character on a template. A mage receives a pool of 12 additional skill points, but she may only use these points to buy arcane knowledges and spells (see below). After generating the template, arcane knowledge must be purchased directly by spending Possibilities at the end of an adventure, as any skill add.

Example: Grendolyn's starting adds include 1 in *divination*, 3 in *conjuration*, and 1 in *apportation*. She also buys a total of 7 adds in arcane knowledges of her choice. She takes 4 adds in *folk*, and 1 add each in *fire, metal* and *light*.

Arcane knowledge may not be used "unskilled"; that is, a character may not cast a spell which requires an ar-

cane knowledge which she does not have.

The cosm of Aysle is probably the most magically advanced of those involved in the Possibility Wars. The mages of Aysle have studied the science of magic for generations, and have compiled a list of arcane knowledges. The list is not long, and it is not known if it is complete. Complete or not, a great number of effects may be constructed from these arcane knowledges. The following are the arcane knowledges known on Aysle as well as in Orrorsh and on Core Earth.

The Essences
- Death
- Life
- Time
- True Knowledge

The Principles
- Darkness
- Light
- Magic

The Mixed Forces
- Inanimate Forces
- Living Forces

The Elements
- Air
- Earth
- Fire
- Metal
- Plant
- Water

The Seven Kindred
- Aquatic
- Avian
- Earthly
- Elemental
- Enchanted
- Entity
- Folk

Theory Knowledges
- Cast Time
- Control
- Duration
- Range
- Speed
- State

Magicians consider the *Essences* to be at the pinnacle of the natural order. *Essences* are the most difficult of the knowledges to work with, requiring great skill and patience. The *Essences* are immutable, which means they may not be changed to another *Essence* or any other knowledge. Many magicians believe that *true knowledge* represents divine knowledge, knowledge of the gods uncorrupted by the matter of mere existence. All conditions, all real objects and beings, have a core of *true knowledge* which defines their nature.

The *Principles* are pure forces of a high order. When used in pure form, they conform well to the will of the magician. As soon as they are mixed with any other knowledge, complications arise. Some magical theoreticians believe *darkness*, *light* and *magic* all to be the result of interplays of *Essences*: *Darkness* is the product of *death* and *time*, *light* is the result of *time* and *true knowledge*, and *magic* is the result of *time* and *life*.

The *Mixed Forces* represent a bridge between the *Essences* and *Principles* and the knowledge below them, as well as combinations of elemental forces. They are difficult to handle, but they have great applications in the hands of a master magician. *Living forces* include *Dexterity*, *Perception* and the other attributes. *Inanimate forces* include lightning and magnetism.

The *Elements* are often easy to work with, even for a beginning mage. All the *Elements* are considered to have a small spark of life. *Plants* are the sole element which can coexist with each of the other elements, at least in small doses.

The *Seven Kindred* are the living beings of the land. *Aquatics* are all creatures who live primarily in water. *Avians* are the flyers, the masters of the air. *Earthly creatures* are the ground dwellers. The *elementals* are beings who consist almost entirely of one elemental force. *Enchanted creatures* are those who subsist on or interweave magic into their natures. *Entities* are those beings who do not belong to the world of the folk; demons, ghosts, undead, and golem constructs all fall under the *entity* description. *Folk* are intelligent beings whose defining relationship is with others of their kind, rather than with any of the elements or with magic. While elves, edeinos, dwarves and human are each different, they are all *folk* in the sense of magic.

Theory knowledges are used exclusively in the design of spells. See the *Aysle* sourcebook for more about designing spells.

The Principle of Definition

An important rule of magic is *the Principle of Definition*. This states that a character or object may not be subjected to two active spells at the same time, if both spells are based on the same arcane knowledge. An *active spell* is one which still has time left on its duration.

A mage may replace one spell with another, but never may a target be under two spells using the same knowledge at the same time. This restriction extends even to casting an active spell upon a character who is already under an active spell of the same knowledge. For example, a character under the effect of a *strength* spell could not gain *languages* without losing the *strength* spell, for each is derived from the *folk* knowledge. Spell warding (magical protection) is based on this principle.

A spell cast upon a target has a "strength" equal to the magic skill of its caster. When another magician casts a spell upon the target, the old spell generates a total to resist the new spell. The defensive total is generated as if the magician were recasting the spell, but he does not have to be present; his magic ability is assumed to be within the spell. It is the spell rather than the mage who must cast it who suffers any ill effects (such as disconnection). If the mage is possibility-rated, the spell gains a roll-again on a 20. If the target is a possibility-rated character, she may use a Possibility to roll-again to increase the defensive spell total.

The spell with the higher total takes effect, and the other spell is immediately dissipated.

Synonymous Knowledges

The restrictions of the Principle of Definition have perplexed mages from many cosms. The answer was found in Aysle, by using *true knowledge* in elaborate rituals. Using these rituals, the existence of *synonymous knowledges* was discovered.

Synonymous knowledges are arcane knowledges which are nearly identical to the known, existing know-

ledges, but use slightly different definitions of the same word. Using synonymous knowledges, a mage can work around the Principle of Definition. A fire mage with three definitions for fire can have three spells active upon himself (or another character or object) at one time, all of which are using basically the same knowledge. Synonymous knowledges are zealously guarded and quite rare. Should a character gain access to a synonymous knowledge, he must learn it from scratch; despite being so close to another knowledge, a synonymous knowledge is a distinct knowledge — it just happens to work in all the same spells as its synonyms.

Starting Spells

A mage begins the game with 12 additional skill points, usable only for arcane knowledges and spells. Each point not used for arcane knowledge entitles the mage to an additional spell; for example, if a player uses eight of his character's bonus skill points to buy arcane knowledge adds, he may buy four spells as well.

During the course of the game, the mage may obtain new grimoire spells. To do this, he must have access to a grimoire, and spend a Possibility. He gains one new spell for each Possibility spent. Once a grimoire spell is purchased in this way, the mage need not read the grimoire in order to cast the spell.

Mages are assumed to have access to a grimoire before the game begins, and so may purchase additional spells for Possibilities (it's usually a good idea to take one to four additional spells).

Casting Spells

To cast a spell, a character generates a *spell skill total* from the appropriate magic skill, and compares this total to the spell difficulty as listed in the spell description.

Example: Grendolyn, skill 12, casts a *strength* spell, which has a difficulty of 12. She gets a bonus number of 2; her spell skill total is 14; the spell succeeds.

Backlash

The spell skill total is then compared to the "backlash" number listed in the spell description. *Backlash* is the natural resistance of a spell, unleashed when the caster attempts to work magic (some say it is a manifestation of the Everlaw of One, but this has never been proved). Backlash is a damage value which is compared to the **spell skill total**; the amount by which the backlash number exceeds the spell total is read as result points on the Combat Results Table (see page 40). Damage taken from spell backlash is normal damage with mental consequences (see below).

Example: Grendolyn's spell total of 14 is compared to the backlash for the *strength* spell, which is 17; she takes a K1 result from backlash (3 result points).

If the spell is cast from a grimoire, the magician is partially protected from backlash. If the **spell skill total** is less than the caster's *Mind*, the *Mind* value is used instead.

Example: Grendolyn casts another *strength* spell (backlash 17); she rolls a 1 for a total of 0. Because the spell is a grimoire spell, her *Mind* is used as the value when checking backlash. Her *Mind* is a 10, so she suffers Knockdown K2 damage (7 result points).

A spellcaster takes backlash each time he attempts a spell, regardless of whether or not it succeeds. To successfully cast a spell the caster must still be conscious after checking backlash. Some powerful spells have very high backlash values. Casting, or even surviving them, can be difficult.

Mental Damage Effects

When damage is taken from a spell's backlash, it has mental consequences. Even though this type of damage is treated as if it were physical damage, it has additional mental effects and is called *mental damage*.

When a character is KOed by mental damage, the character loses the arcane knowledge used to cast the spell. This does not include falling unconscious from accumulated shock, only from KO conditions. The character must wait 24 hours or undergo a miracle of *refreshment* to restore the knowledge.

If the character suffers one or more wounds from mental damage and his cumulative damage total becomes *heavily wounded* or greater, the character loses both his arcane knowledge and the appropriate magic skill. He cannot restore the knowledge or skill until 24 hours have passed or he has undergone *refreshment*. Additionally, his wound status may not be healed to better than *wounded* until he has restored his skills.

Spell Bonus

If the character is still conscious after backlash from a successful spell, the spell works. Each of the spells described below has a section labeled "Bonus Number to:". The **bonus number** generated while casting the spell is added to the part of the spell listed in the *Bonus Number to*, increasing the effectiveness of some part of the spell.

Example: Grendolyn's roll is a 15, for a bonus number of 2. This is added to the effect value (10) of the spell, for a total effect of 12.

Grimoire Spells Versus Spells "On the Fly"

Grimoires are often impressive volumes (though not all need be books) bound in ivory and precious metals, but the value of a grimoire lies in the spells it contains. Magicians learn spells from grimoires, or from teachers who have created the spells, by spending one week and one Possibility learning the spell. Once learned, it is not necessary to consult the grimoire when casting the spell. A magician may cast a spell from a written grimoire without learning it first, and still receive the benefits of a grimoire spell. The grimoire usually remains



unaltered by such castings. Grimoire spells are the most common spells, especially for beginning mages.

The benefits of casting a spell from a grimoire are:

1. That only the main magic skill and arcane knowledge of a spell are needed to cast it.

2. That effects from backlash are lessened.

A magician may cast spells "on the fly" — that is, without have committed the spell to or having learned it from a grimoire. Casting such a spell requires the magician to have skills in all the necessary elements of a spell, and is also far more dangerous.

Rules for spell design and casting "on the fly"are contained in the *Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook.*

Focused Spells

Focused spells are spells that are placed into an object so that the spell effect originates from that object rather than from the caster. Focused spells are commonly detection or warding spells which the mage wishes to place in an object, such as a doorway. More details on focused spells can be found in the *Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook.*

Impressed Spells

At magic axiom level 17, "impressed" spells are possible. *Impressed* spells are those that are "partially precast" by the mage, and then held for future use. Spells may be impressed over a far greater length of time than is practical in an adventure situation, then released in a hurry when needed. Spells which are listed as "Cast Impressed" can *only* be cast impressed, and only such spells can be cast impressed.

To impress a spell, the caster rolls to beat the difficulty number and calculates backlash as for a normal spell. If he is successful, the spell is impressed in his memory. The spell may then be released within a combat round at any future time.

When releasing the impressed spell, the caster must roll again to generate a bonus number which is added to the *bonus number to* portion of the spell. However, since difficulty and backlash have already been checked, the spell always succeeds, and the mage never takes backlash from releasing an impressed spell.

A mage may hold as many impressed spells as the total of his adds in *conjuration magic* and the *state* knowledge, which are a measure of his knowledge of the impression process. He may impress several different "Cast Impressed" spells, or he may impress the same spell several times, in any combination. Once impressed, a spell remains impressed until it is cast or until the mage dissipates it in order to make room for a different impressed spell.

Illusions

Illusions are magical "cheats," ways of conjuring reality without expending the energy necessary to create the **full** reality. Illusions can run the gamut from fully illusory (merely a sensory impression of the object "conjured") to almost real (there is some reality conjured, but not the whole amount). Illusions "borrow" possibility energy from those around them who believe in the illusion, and thus become more real over time (the amount of possibility energy taken from a believer is minute — no energy is lost by those who believe). This effect is temporary, though — as soon as the belief ceases (either because the believers leave the area or because someone becomes convinced that the object is an illusion), the illusion vanishes as well.

To disbelieve, a character must generate a *Mind* total. The difficulty number for *disbelief* is 8; this is sometimes modified by the spell result as stated in the various spell descriptions, and is always modified (using the multi-action chart) by the number of beings who **do** believe in the illusion.

Example: A warrior attempts to disbelieve an illusory foe, but the warrior's six companions believe in the foe. The warrior's difficulty is increased by 8 to successfully disbelieve what six other people believe in.

Illusory spells which affect a mental state, such as *charm person* which succeeds in charming its target, may not be disbelieved by the target character without prodding from a different character. This is because, by definition, the emotions produced by the spell feel real enough to negate any desire to question them, and an objective viewpoint is needed to allow disbelief.

An illusion's effect value is the amount of reality the illusion contains. The lower the effect value, the more the spell relies on pure illusion, and the less "real" it is. Conversely, an illusion with a high effect value is at least partially real.

Example: An illusory bridge with an effect value of 15 could hold up to 1,000 kilos of weight at a time, although it could appear to be far stronger, or more frail, than that.

The gamble for the caster of an illusion is that successful disbelief in the spell dissolves the effect value of the spell completely — and not just for the disbeliever. Thus, even the caster of the spell is required to make a disbelief roll if he wants to use some portion of the illusion as though it were real. The caster would be safer if many people around him believe in the illusion, as it will now be more difficult for him to disbelieve his own spell!

Example: A mage casts an illusory bridge with an effect value of 15. His army starts across the bridge, thinking that it is real, and it becomes more real as they cross. The mage, however, knowing it is an illusion, must roll for disbelief before crossing himself. The fact that 100 men believe in the bridge increases his difficulty by 20; he's probably safe.

Any physical effects from an illusion (such as damage) are real enough if they affect a character prior to disbelief; the disbeliever regains control of his mental and spiritual self and may act as he wishes, although for a short while his judgment might still be clouded by the illusion.

Example: The warrior observes a force moving over a bridge which he believes to be illusory. With a mighty

roll he succeeds in disbelieving, and the bridge vanishes. Those on the bridge might still believe they are on the bridge for a few seconds or even minutes, and so drown while their legs make walking motions and their eyes see the far shore approaching.

The Primary Rule of Magic

Magic is not physics, or chemistry, or biology. It is a distinct discipline with its own rules. Magic works by extending the will of the spellcaster, interweaving it with nature and coming up with a result. The primary rule of magic is **a spell will have no positive effect without being willed by the caster; negative or non-effects are generally a result of insufficient control and will.**

Thus magic and technology are at odds at a fundamental level. Technology works with natural laws, while magic intervenes in those laws. Each has its advantages and drawbacks.

Magic can accomplish spectacular feats beyond the possibility of even sophisticated technology, but is limited by the primary rule of magic. To those raised in a technological society, the very workings of magic make no sense. A magically propelled bullet could be deadly within the range of the spell, but once it reached the end of the range, it would fall straight to the ground; out of the range of the will that powered it, the bullet has no velocity, no momentum, no physically measurable force whatsoever. Within the range of the spell, such concepts as friction, angular momentum, and other crucial underpinnings of science have greatly reduced meanings. In a sense all magic is illusory, in that magical effects can create a reality at odds with the local laws of physics. When the magic wears off, physical laws resume.

However, magic is real in that when magic takes effect, the natural can be affected by eldritch forces. A rock split by magic will not miraculously reseal itself when the magic wears off. "Nature concedes the destruction of anything, the construction of nothing" is a magician's maxim.

Magic and natural law can work together. For example, magicians quickly made the messy discovery that wounds could be healed easily through gross use of *alteration magic*, but would reappear when the spell wore off. When more effort and finer control were put into the spell, a solution was found: if you repair human tissue at so fine a level as to facilitate natural healing processes, then when the spell wears off, the healing will have proceeded in accordance with natural laws.

For further scholarly discussion about the nature of magic, see the *Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook.*

The Grimoire Spells

The following spell descriptions are common grimoire spells, found in many cosms. A grimoire spell description has the following parts: *axiom level, magic skill* that generates effect, the *noun* that generates effect, *control, range, speed, duration, casting time* and *backlash.*

The standard grimoire spell looks like this:

Bullet

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *apportation/metal* 13

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: control

The *axiom level* lists where the spell falls in the scale presented in Gamemaster Chapter Eight. If the axiom level of the spell is less than or equal to the axiom level of the cosm, it works just fine. Otherwise the caster must check for a contradiction as described in that chapter.

A spell that is impressed in an area with an axiom level lower than 17 requires a contradiction check; when the spell is cast, use the non-parenthetical number as its axiom level. The (17) in the entry is there to remind you of the impression limits.

Skill lists which of the four magic skills is used for the spell: *alteration, apportation, conjuration* or *divination.* The necessary *arcane knowledge* is also listed. **The sum of the caster's skill value and knowledge adds must equal or exceed the number listed.** The spell may not be cast unless the caster has the appropriate arcane knowledge.

Backlash is how powerful a force surges through the magician as he casts his spell. Backlash is a damage value which is compared to the spell total. The magician must survive the backlash (stay conscious) to successfully cast a spell.

Difficulty of the spell is the difficulty number required for a successful cast. "Successful" means the spell's effect value is used, not necessarily that the spell affects its target.

Effect value is the effect value of the spell, if any.

Bonus Number to lists the part of the spell to which any generated bonus number is added. While usually added to the effect value, the bonus number could be added to duration or range, depending on what the designer of the spell wished. Negative bonus numbers **are** "added" to the appropriate value.

Range is the greatest distance over which the spell effect may be projected. The range is measured from the caster of the spell unless the spell is focused, in which case it is measured from the focus object. A range of *self* means the spell may only affect the caster. A range of *touch* means the caster must make physical contact with his target for the spell to take effect.

Duration is how long the spell effect lasts.

Cast time is how long it takes the magician to cast the spell. Combat spells which strike an enemy target must have a cast time of 3 or less in order to have a chance to hit their targets in the same round in which they are cast. Combat spells which have a cast time of 4 may be used on a friendly character during the same round as the effect takes place.

Cast times greater than 23 cannot be done in a single stretch. The magi-

cian is assumed to be casting six to eight hours a day for an extended period; this is the maximum cast time which can be done repeatedly with little chance of error. A mage may be able to go 24 hours straight for one spell, but has little chance of going 12 hours a day for a month without making a mistake which would ruin the spell (and possibly himself).

Manipulation lists the additional arcane knowledges or levels of skill that are necessary to manipulate and modify the spell. Should a spell need additional skills or knowledges to cast, the body of the description tells you what else is needed to cast the spell. Spell manipulation is discussed in the *Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook*.

Whenever a spell description lists "limited to a man-sized or smaller target," that means the spell is limited to a specific mass, 100 kilos, which is the size of a large, but not huge, man. Other restrictions may be inferred from the knowledge that generated the spell. A spell based on *folk* knowledge, for example, could not affect dogs, regardless of their size.

If a spell is listed as having a radius, all targets within that radius are affected by the full value of the spell.

Spell Descriptions

Altered Fireball

Axiom Level: 10
Skill: *alteration/fire* 18

Backlash: 21
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 8 (40 meters)
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: apportation, control

Altered fireball requires a large flammable ball, traditionally of pitch and coal, weighing about a third of a pound. The magician lights the ball from a source of flame, grabbing a piece before the sphere is completely engulfed. As the spell is cast the rest of the ball leaps toward it target. The magician directs it toward its impact point by mimicking its flight with the piece he retained, slamming the piece into his hand when, in the flight, he wants the ball to expand to its full four meter radius and do damage.

Away Sight

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *divination/light* 15

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: range

Range: 13 (400 meters)
Duration: 13 (six minutes)
Cast Time: 15 (15 minutes)
Manipulation: range, speed

Away sight forms a small, slowly revolving series of translucent tubes which catch the reflections of light, and hence the images, of everything in a 10 meter radius. The whirling construct can travel 250 meters per round (60 mph). The images it collects are grainy; a mage viewing distant objects through *away sight* could not tell the detail on a coin, for example, but could certainly tell that the object was a coin. Beyond the basic range of the spell the image becomes increasingly coarse, until at six miles only basic shapes are recognizable.

Casting the spell requires a glass lens, through which the image is focused for the duration of the spell.

Bullet

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *apportation/metal* 13

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: control

The spell is set for metal the mass of a small sling bullet, or a coin about the size of a quarter. The magician pantomimes the whirling of a sling with the hand holding the metal, then releases it aiming at his opponent. The *apportation* total must exceed the *Dexterity* or *dodge* of the target character in order to hit him.

Charm Person

Axiom Level: 11
Skill: *conjuration/living forces* 16

Backlash: 18
Difficulty: 13
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 2 (2.5 meters)
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration, state

Charm person begins with a smile, and a gesture resembling a greeting. The effect value of the spell is substituted for the caster's *charm* skill. The spell works as the *charm* skill, except that the caster may roll for a *charm* each round rather than every few minutes. *Charm person* is limited to beings who are man-sized or smaller.

Charm person is an illusory spell. After the duration of the spell expires, the effect wears off rather quickly, and is dispelled within an hour for intelligent beings, perhaps a day for simpler creatures. If the spell is disbelieved, the character is no longer charmed, although memories of the feelings do exist.

Cleanse

Axiom Level: 10 (17)
Skill: *alteration/water* 19

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 7
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 26 (1.5 days)
Cast Time: 29 (1 week)
Manipulation: control

Cleanse is an impressed and focused spell, with the effect being placed in a liter of specially prepared water. The

water contains a very small amount of herb tea. When a character drinks the water, the water cleanses his body by absorbing any chemical impurities, such as poison or alcohol. The water does not act quickly, as it must travel through the body's own transport mechanisms. When the water passes from the body, it takes the impurities with it.

Conjured Fireball

Axiom Level: 13 (17)
Skill: *conjuration/fire* 20

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 6
Effect Value: 18
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, speed, state

Conjured fireball is an impressed spell, cast in advance of need. The conjuring must be done near an open flame, although the flame may as small as a pair of candles. Once impressed, the spell may be cast within a round, the magician uttering a cast word of his choosing and mimicking the shaping the ball of flame with hand motions. The ball of fire has a burst radius of 10 meters.

Detect Magic

Axiom Level: 5
Skill: *divination/magic* 11

Backlash: 14
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 7 (25 meters)
Duration: 8 (40 seconds)
Cast Time: 7 (25 seconds)
Manipulation: range, speed

This spell requires the magician to hold a grimoire. The mage opens the grimoire as he incants the spell, then turns slowly in a circle, holding the open grimoire. If magic is in effect within range of the spell in the direction the mage is facing, the pages will flutter softly. The more powerful the magic, the more the pages move — extremely potent magic can cause the book to shake and tumble violently as if caught in a whirlwind.

Disguise Self

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *conjuration/folk* 13

Backlash: 14
Difficulty: 9
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: self
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, state

Prior to casting the spell, the magician must have a rendition of the kind of person or being he wishes to look like, and must somehow attach the rendering to his person. The mage casts *disguise self* by "sculpting" the image with his hands as he imagines his new look. The spell weaves an illusion of the being.

Disguise self is not precise enough to copy a specific person. Disguising oneself as a race (such as a human disguising himself as a dwarf) different from one's own increases the difficulty to 15.

Earth Shield

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *apportation/earth* 12

Backlash: 12
Difficulty: 7
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 7 (25 seconds)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration

The mage scoops a small piece of earth from the ground, quickly molds it into a crude image of a shield, then touches the ground where he had scooped out the dirt. An immobile shield of earth rises from the ground, two meters high, one meter wide and a hand span thick. The shield has an armor add of +10, up to a maximum of 25.

Extradimensional Gate

Axiom Level: 15
Skill: *conjuration/true knowledge* 22

Backlash: 20
Difficulty: 14
Effect Value: 8
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 23 (10 hours)
Manipulation: control, duration, divination

Aysle mages believe that every cosm contains extradimensional pockets that are separate from the cosm but are not quite part of another cosm. These pockets may be traveled to via an *extradimensional gate*. To construct the gate, the mage must draw an image of the gate into the ground. He must then inscribe into the gate images of what he believes the extradimensional pocket looks like. The more correct he is, the easier the spell — general images take the full 10 hours to cast, good renditions of existing places cut the cast time down to six hours, exact representation of an existing spot in the cosm pocket cuts the cast time down to two and a half hours. When the gate opens, the dimension beyond can be seen through a glowing veil, near a location which resembles that drawn by the mage.

The gate remains in the ground. The other side the gate is perpendicular to the ground (or perpendicular to whatever force of gravity there is). Falling into it is disorienting, as you go from the gravity field of the cosm to that of the pocket. The amount of mass that may be moved through the gate is equal to the effect value (starts at 40 kilos per round, so a 100 kilo man would take three rounds to go all the way through). You cannot travel from one cosm to another by use of this spell.



Floater

Axiom Level: 5
Skill: *apportation/air* 17

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 12
Effect Value: 3
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 7 (25 meters)
Duration: 14 (10 minutes)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: none needed

The caster begins the spell by puffing air under a feather or lightweight disk to get it to rise in the air. The floater can then lift up to 100 kilos; the mage directs the spell up and down. The speed at which the mass moves is the effect value of the spell (or less if the mage desires). A person riding the floater is buffeted from underneath by hard, rolling air currents. While not dangerous, they occasionally snare items not securely bound to the floater.

Fly

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *apportation/avian* 18

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 12
Effect Value: 8
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control

Fly requires the feathers, skin, or other covering from the skin of a flying creature. The mage flaps the component as if flying, then gives them to the recipient of the spell. As long as that character is holding onto the component, or safely tucks it somewhere next to his skin, he can fly for the duration of the spell. The spell is on the character, not the component, so passing the component to another character does not allow the other to fly. If the flying character loses the component, he immediately loses the ability to fly. Speed of flight is equal to the effect value.

Fog

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *alteration/water* 12

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 8
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 11 (2.5 minutes)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration

The *fog* spell requires a liter of water in a vessel with an opening. As the magician casts the spell, he pours the water over one of his hands, splashing the water into the air. The water billows into a dense fog, completely filling a 25 meter radius. The fog stays centered about the vessel, and will last for the duration of the spell or until the magician's hand is dried.

Gain Language

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *divination/folk* 14

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 14
Effect Value: 13
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: self
Duration: 11 (2.5 minutes)
Cast Time: 6 (15 seconds)
Manipulation: duration

The mage must touch the lips (or whatever is making the sound) of the speaker whose language he wishes to gain. At the same time he begins to parrot the speech, to the best of his ability. The effect value of the spell is compared to a difficulty number of 8 on the Power Push table. The resulting value modifier is added to the caster's *language* skill (giving him the skill if unskilled) for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored. *Gain language* only works for casters who are man-sized or smaller.

Haste

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 14

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 4 (six seconds)
Manipulation: control

Haste increases the speed of the target character, as well as his *Dexterity* for the duration of the spell. *Haste* does not increase eye-hand coordination, so firearm and energy weapon use does not benefit from the *haste* spell. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Dexterity* on the Power Push Table on page 40(**not** the Speed Push). The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *Dexterity* and movement limit for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

To cast the spell, the target character and the caster move their hands up and down with increasing frenzy, then the magician touches the character with one of his hands.

Increase Charisma

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 14

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 14
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: self
Duration: 14 (10 minutes)
Cast Time: 6 (15 seconds)
Manipulation: control

The caster needs two images, one smiling, one frowning. He crumples the frowning image, and places the smiling image against his skin. The effect value of the spell is compared to his *Charisma* on the Power Push table. The resulting value modifier is added to his *Charisma* for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

Jump

Axiom Level: 6
Skill: *apportation/folk* 14

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 9
Effect Value: 6
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 3 (four meters)
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control

This spell requires the hind legs from an animal known for jumping, such as a cricket or frog. The magician makes the sound of the animal while making hopping motions with the hand holding the legs, then points at the recipient of the spell.

The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *jumping* value on the Power Push table. The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *jumping* value and limit for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

Lightning

Axiom Level: 10
Skill: *alteration/ inanimate forces 19*

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 20
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 8 (40 meters)
Duration: 8 (40 seconds)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, range, speed

Quick, jagged motions by the caster's arms begin the *lightning* spell. If successful, powerful electricity charges up within the caster, doing no harm save that of raising his hair. He may then cast a lightning bolt for each of the next four rounds, with a damage value equal to the effect value. To hit a target he must generate an *alteration* total which exceeds the target's *Dexterity* or *dodge*, but this use does not cause any backlash as the spell has already been successfully cast. The bonus number used is that of the initial cast, not the targeting rolls.

Mage Dark

Axiom Level: 12
Skill: *conjuration/dark* 15

Backlash: 18
Difficulty: 12
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 8 (40 meters)
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control

Blowing a bit of soot or ash into the air and pointing at a target starts the *mage dark* spell. Everything within 15 meters of the initial target point is enshrouded in a thick, palpable darkness. *Mage dark* is not completely impervious to light, but ordinary light appears as random sparkles, more common near a light source, but insufficient for illumination and sight. *Mage light* combined with *mage dark* fills the overlapping areas with a suffused glow like an illuminated fog, and vision is barely possible (+10 to the difficulty of all visual *Perception* checks). *Sunstore* creates a condition similar to dusk, and *true light* destroys the *mage dark*.

Mage Light

Axiom Level: 12
Skill: *alteration/light* 15

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 6 (15 seconds)
Manipulation: control

The mage needs a mirror and at least a faint glimmer of light to cast this spell, catching the reflection of the light in the mirror. The mirror glows with a gentle brightness until everything within 10 meters is illuminated. *Mage light* has a strange, "thick" quality to it, and objects illuminated appear coarse and grainy, occasionally with a few random gray or black speckles. Colors are muted. The mirror is a necessary component of the spell, but the spell is not focused into the mirror. Should the magician be separated from his mirror, the spell ends.

Open Lock

Axiom Level: 6
Skill: *apportation/metal* 14

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 13
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 5 (10 seconds)
Cast Time: 6 (15 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration

Touching the lock with one hand, the mage takes a key in the other and mimes the opening of a lock. At the completion of the spell, he takes the key and places it as near the lock mechanism as possible. This time, turning the key opens the lock, as long as the effect value exceeds the difficulty of the lock (see Gamemaster Chapter Three)

Pathfinder

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *divination/earth* 14

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 9
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: range

Range: 13 (400 meters)
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration, speed

The mage draws a simple design into the earth, drawing over the image again and again to score it deeper. At the same time he visualizes the place or object he seeks. If the place or object is directly connected to earth or stone and within range, the spell can find it.



When the spell is cast, the design moves through the earth toward the place or object in the most direct manner possible, at the rate of 10 meters per round — the pace of a moderate walk. If the range of the spell is greater than 18, then the spell ends before arriving at its destination.

Possibility Shadows

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *divination/folk* 16

Backlash: 22
Difficulty: 7
Effect Value: 19
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 9 (one minute)
Manipulation: control

The spell requires that a light source be placed behind the mage and character on whom the spell is to be cast. The magician arranges herself so her shadow overlaps that of her subject, and casts the spell while touching the subject. Once cast, the shadow of the mage fades, and the shadow of the subject begins to act out the chosen near future, with the rest of the world appearing as faint, wavering shadows. The more likely the outcome, the more distinct the shadows.

The mage may choose to examine any one point in the future each time she casts the spell; the point examined may begin at any time from the present through to a maximum of her effect value expressed as time.

Example: Grendolyn generates a bonus number of 3 when casting *possibility shadow*, giving her an effect number of 22. She may examine any one point in the future that starts from a moment after the spell was cast up to a point about six hours into the future.

The caster need not specify an exact time; she may imagine to herself (tell the gamemaster) a condition and "search" for that condition within the allowed timespan. She must determine how far into the future she will try to look before she casts the spell; even if the event she sees takes place before that limit is reached, the effect value must be equal to the task.

Example: Grendolyn's player tells the gamemaster she wants to see "the time of greatest danger within the next week" for the target character. Even if that time is in the next few hours, Grendolyn must get an effect value of 29 for the spell to work at all.

The accuracy of the reading is determined by comparing the effect value against the maximum distance chosen. In the above example, Grendolyn's effect value is compared to 29 to determine the level of success, even if the event she viewed was only a few hours in the future.

Minimal success gains only confusing images, *average* success allows one useful fact to be gleaned from the reading, *good* success lets the mage pinpoint the exact **time** of the occurrence, and *superior* success lets the mage note details of the **location**. *Spectacular* success lets the mage see the scene as if she were present, except that the shadow world exists only in black and white.

The possible future is enacted in real time; that is, she can see one minute's worth of the future (the duration of the spell).

Ritual of Mind Preparation

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 15

Backlash: 17
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: self
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration

The *ritual of mind preparation* requires the mage to memorize a poem or geometric proof during the first half of the ritual, and then to silently recite the proof or poem, associating a hand gesture with each part of the work. Once the link between thought and movement is complete, the spell is finished. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Mind* on the Power Push Table (page 40). The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *Mind* for the duration of the spell. The shock effects are ignored.

Ritual of Perception Preparation

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 15

Backlash: 17
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 15
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: self
Duration: 18 (one hour)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration

The mage must draw three large concentric circles, the smallest large enough for him to sit in, the others about a handspan farther out. He must make the circles as perfect as he can. Then, sitting in the innermost, he examines each of the circles looking for imperfections. He touches each circle at the site where it is furthest from a true circle.

The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Perception* on the Power Push table. The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *Perception* for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

Slow

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 19

Backlash: 18
Difficulty: 14
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 7 (25 meters)
Duration: 11 (2.5 minutes)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: control, range, speed

The mage points at his target in slow motion. If the spell total is greater than the target's *Dexterity* or *dodge*, that target is slowed. The effect value



is then compared to the target's *Dexterity* on the Power Push table. The target character's movement value and *Dexterity* are reduced by the value modifier; the shock results of the push are ignored. The spell does not reduce a character's balance, so he is no more clumsy than he was. He is just considerably slower.

Slow is limited to creatures who are man-sized or smaller.

Stealth Walk

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 17

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 14
Effect Value: 14
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 16 (25 minutes)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration

Stealth walk increases the *stealth* value of a character. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Dexterity* on the Power Push Table. The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *stealth* (giving him the skill if he does not have it) for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

To cast the spell, the mage stands three paces from his target and holds his hand out, palm up. As he chants the spell, the recipient quietly takes three steps forward and lightly places a personal possession in the palm of the mage. The mage must hold the item for the duration of the spell; if he lets go the spell is broken.

Stealth walk is limited to beings who are man-sized or smaller.

Stone Tunnel

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *apportation/earth* 12

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 9
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 12 (four minutes)
Cast Time: 9 (one minute)
Manipulation: control, duration

The mage begins by taking a chip of the rock he wishes to tunnel through and smashing it to fine pieces. Once he has done that, he may cast the spell by kneading the stone dust into a piece of clay, then smearing the clay onto the wall. The mage pounds his hands on the stone with increasing firmness; at the end of the cast time the stone cracks and breaks. The effect value represents the distance the mage tunnels each round, the tunnel being roughly one meter in diameter. The rubble would have to be cleared behind him, an easy task compared to digging through solid rock.

Strength

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 15

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 12
Effect Value: 10
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: touch
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control

The mage places a heavy object in the hands of the recipient, and helps the character lift the object, applying more force as he finishes the spell. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Strength* on the Power Push Table. The resulting value modifier is added to the target's *Strength* for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

Sunstore

Axiom Level: 10
Skill: *alteration/light* 20

Backlash: 15
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 8 (40 meters)
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: control

The mage places a glass sphere in the sunlight so that the sunlight catches on some part of the sphere. The mage quickly utters the spell and the sunlight is trapped in the sphere. The sphere glows brighter and brighter, until at the end of 10 seconds its glow illuminates a 15 meter radius with sunlight. This effect lasts for the duration of the spell.

Sweet Water

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *alteration/water* 14

Backlash: 17
Difficulty: 11
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 6 (15 seconds)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration

Sweet water purifies a liter of water, or a solution which is primarily water, each round of its duration. To cast the spell the magician requires two containers, one of which must be immaculately clean. The magician pours the liquid into the dirtier vessel, and places the clean vessel an arm's length away. He then scrubs clean one of his hands, placing that hand nearer the clean vessel. As the spell is cast, the fluid moves from the dirty to the clean vessel, passing through the magician's hands. His clean hand sparkles and glows, while his less clean hand collects all the impurities in the water.

Tracker

Axiom Level: 7
Skill: *divination/earth* 14

Backlash: 18
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: range

Range: 13 (400 meters)
Duration: 20 (2.5 hours)
Cast Time: 18 (one hour)
Manipulation: control, duration, range, speed



To cast *tracker* the mage must bury something which belonged to the person being tracked, and sit beside the spot while casting the spell. The spell is completed by digging up and "discovering" the buried item. If the place or object is directly connected to earth or stone and within range, the spell can find it. The item tumbles to the earth and begins to move along the ground toward the person in the most direct manner possible at the rate of 10 meters per round — the pace of a moderate walk. If the range of the spell is greater than 20, then the spell stops before arriving at its destination.

True Light

Axiom Level: 17
Skill: *conjuration/true knowledge* 28

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 5
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 15 (15 minutes)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control, duration, light

True light conjures a glowing, streaming mass of true light, one of the three *Principles* of nature. The mage casts the spell by imagining that all he believes to be true is coalescing before him, and shaping these beliefs into the light. The light illuminates anything within 10 meters. *True light* drives away darkness, be it physical, mental or spiritual.

In addition, each round the mage may concentrate upon one being within the radius of the light. The mage rolls a die, and adds the bonus number generated to the effect value for a total. Lies and evil intentions will appear as shadows about the creature if the effect total is greater than the *Mind* of the creature (if lying) or the *Spirit* (if harboring evil intentions).

Water Spray

Axiom Level: 8
Skill: *alteration/water* 12

Backlash: 16
Difficulty: 10
Effect Value: 10
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 6 (15 meters)
Duration: 6 (15 seconds)
Cast Time: 5 (10 seconds)
Manipulation: control

The magician requires a liter of water in a container he can squeeze to produce a spray. As he incants the spell, the mage squirts the spray into his other hand, allowing it to deflect at a shallow angle. When the spell is cast, the volume and power of the spray increases dramatically as it leaves the mage's hand; he directs the spray by changing the position of his hand. The spray lasts for two rounds of combat. The *alteration* total must exceed the *dodge* or *Dexterity* of the target character in order to hit a target with the spray.

Weakness

Axiom Level: 9
Skill: *alteration/folk* 16

Backlash: 19
Difficulty: 13
Effect Value: 8
Bonus Number to: effect

Range: 5 (10 meters)
Duration: 9 (one minute)
Cast Time: 3 (four seconds)
Manipulation: duration

The mage points at the target character and lets his arm fall limp as he finishes the spell. The effect value of the spell is compared to the target's *Strength* on the Power Push Table (page 40). The resulting value modifier is subtracted from the target's *Strength* for the duration of the spell. The shock effects of the push are ignored.

Weather Control

Axiom Level: 13
Skill: *alteration/air* 33

Backlash: 25
Difficulty: 12
Effect Value: 0
Bonus Number to: duration

Range: touch
Duration: 25 (one day)
Cast Time: 32 (one month)
Manipulation: duration

Weather control must be cast over a full month. Each sunrise the mage writes the symbols for that morning's weather on the perimeter of a circle with a radius of six meters. During the course of the day, he alters the symbols to match the changes in the day's weather. After a month, he completes the spell.

The mage controls the weather within a six kilometer radius (four miles). He can change the air temperature about six degrees an hour, and increase or decrease the humidity about six percent. The changes are sufficient to cause/stop rain within two hours, and to get a raging storm (or calm one) within four hours. He can manipulate the air pressure so that any severe weather he wishes to avoid will slide past his area.

Spell Design and Manipulation

Designing a spell is an involved process, both within the game and outside of it. In the game, a character may experiment as much as he likes with spells.

Rather than design a spell from scratch, a character may choose to *manipulate* a spell. To manipulate a spell, the character must have all of the knowledges listed under the **Manipulation** line of the spell; those knowledges were all of the additional knowledges which went into the design of the spell.

Spell design and manipulation are fully explained in the *Aysle Fantasy Sourcebook.*



Chapter Eleven

Miracles of Faith

In every cosm inhabited by sentient beings, there is religion. How much influence religion has on a cosm can vary widely, but in every cosm where spirituality exists, there are stories of miracles. Many of them are true.

Community and Spirituality

Religion and spirituality differ from magic in a fundamental way: magic bends the forces of the universe according to alternate laws of nature; religion creates a spiritual community linked by a divine will separate from each individual's will.

Magic is much like an alternate technology limited only by the practitioner's mentality. A wizard can study in his tower for years, never see a living soul, and be unhindered in his quest for magic. Religion, on the other hand, connects people to their cosm through the community. When people of a belief gather and interact in a service or ritual, the community is reaffirmed. Even hermits begin their lives of faith in the community. When they leave to seek solitude, they are still bound to the community by their faith, linked to others through the divine principles they seek to explore.

Mythos

A *mythos* encompasses the stories, symbols, practices, beliefs and history that people use to connect themselves to the spiritual power of their universe. A mythos is a peoples' interpretation of the way spiritual power works in their cosm; their faith in this mythos can act as a conduit for such power. However, faith can only carry power for purposes which are consistent with the mythos, and the power must manifest itself in ways which are consistent with the beliefs.

Religions differ dramatically in their interpretation of nature, of humanity's place in nature, and the ethical structure of the universe. Traditional Western Core Earth religions set man apart from nature, usually one notch above the rest of the world. A character believing himself to be separate from nature may use nature as he sees fit; for example, animals may be killed for any reason which benefits man, as man is a more divine creature than any other.

Many Eastern and American Indian Core Earth religions assign man a place as a piece of nature. In some American Indian mythos, prayers must be spoken to get a deer's permission to kill it, for a deer is as close to the spirits of the world as humanity is.

To have faith and work miracles in a religion is to accept all of the core beliefs of the religion. If a religion says there is only one true god, a faithful follower of that religion can only perform miracles as long as he believes there is only one true god.

Focus

The *focus* skill allows a caster to focus the spiritual energy which infuses both the world itself and the believers who share his faith. Without *focus*, miracles are not possible. *Focus* is a *Spirit* skill, used for the action total of a miracle (see below).

Religious symbols and items can be used to provide focus for a miracle. To act as a focus, the symbol must have spiritual energy invested in it through faith; this can occur over time when an object is a center of worship for a

community of the faithful. Such symbols have a *focus* skill which may be used by anyone possessing the symbol, provided the symbol is of the user's faith.

Faith

Faith is a measure of a character's strength of belief in a mythos, the degree to which a character is connected to the spiritual power of his cosm. *Faith* is necessary to power a miracle.

Faith is a *Spirit* skill. A character's *faith* value is used for the effect total of a miracle (see below). The *faith* total determines, to one degree or another, the power of the miracle.

When a miracle is requested, the **beneficiary** of the miracle is usually the one whose *faith* gives the miracle its spiritual power, **not** the one providing the miracle's *focus*.

Example: A refugee in Philadelphia needs healing. Father Bryce attempts to heal the character through a miracle, using his *focus* skill. The *faith* value for the second total is that of the refugee.

Since the beneficiary of a miracle uses her *faith* to power the miracle, she must **volunteer** in order to accept the effects of the miracle. If she does not, the miracle has no power. A miracle harmful to a character must therefore draw its *faith* from a character other than the target. This can be the *focus* character, if he stands to be the beneficiary of harm coming to the target. If the target has no *faith*, the *focus* character may provide the *faith*.

Faith and Believers

When a miracle is created among believers, their faith intertwines and supports one another; thus, the miracle of a community is far greater than the miracle possible for one individual. The difficulty of participating in the creation of a miracle is called the miracle's *community rating*.

Each character wishing to aid in the miracle generates a *faith* total, and if the total is greater than or equal to the community rating of the miracle, that character contributes. The **value** of the number of people who successfully contribute (including the focusing character) becomes a bonus modifier to the focusing character's ability.

Example: Four people successfully equal or exceed a miracle's community rating with their *faith* total. The *focus* character gets a bonus modifier equal to the value of five people (four, plus himself); his *focus* total is +4.

When you wish to sum the effect of many characters' *faith* without having to roll each community check individually, use the following formula:

Value of number of characters
+ average *faith*
- community rating of miracle
- 2

= bonus modifier for *focus* character

The final modifier may never be greater than the value for the number of characters. If a modifier is too large, reduce it to the value for the number of characters. A zero or negative modifier is ignored; a miracle can never be less effective because of faithful participants.

Example: 60 faithful gamemaster characters (value of 9) with an average *faith* value of 10 are trying to help a Core Earth priest feed the refugees in Philadelphia. The community rating of the *multiply food* miracle is 3. Character value (9) + Average faith (10) - Community rating (3) - 2 = a bonus modifier of +9 for the priest.

To determine the average faith of a community, use the following rule of thumb: a casual believer in a religion has a *faith* add of 1. A confirmed believer, one who lives his life by most of the tenets of the religion, has a *faith* of 2 to 4. Only the fiercely devout have *faith* adds greater than 4.

Religion in a Game

This chapter defines religions as they exist and operate in the fictional setting we have created for the *Torg* game. It is in no way intended to be a treatise about the state or nature of religion in the real world.

Characters of Different Faiths

Characters who have faith in different mythos cannot coordinate on miracles. A character of one faith **may perform** a miracle on a character of a different faith, generating his *focus* total normally. If he succeeds, the target uses his *faith* normally (he must volunteer to do so, of course), but a *spiritual struggle* erupts due to the difference in religions between the *focus* and the *faith*.

Immediately after the miracle effects are enacted, each character generates a *faith* total (this is separate from the *faith* total generated by the target of the miracle) using the other character's *faith* value as the difficulty number. Each result is read on the Combat Results Table (page 40) as stun damage. The damage has "spiritual consequences," defined below.

Example: In a pinch, Father Bryce performs a healing miracle on an Edeinos companion. The miracle succeeds, the Edeinos is healed. Even though the Edeinos **wanted** to be healed, there are still consequences to performing a miracle on a "disbeliever," or accepting a miracle from another faith.

Bryce's *faith* value is 13. The Edeinos' *faith* value is 14. Bryce gets a total of 13; no effect on the Edeinos. The Edeinos rolls a total of 19. Bryce takes 6 result points of stun damage (O 2). There are also "spiritual consequences."

Evil Enemies

Some mythos have the forces of a cosm divided into good and evil. Worshippers of the faith are aligned with the good. The enemy spirit and persons of the mythos are evil. Christianity has Satan and his demons. Zoroastrian religion has Ahriman.

When enemies of a mythos meet, the *faith* adds (not the *faith* **value**, just

the adds) of the enemy are added to the difficulty of any miracles a character tries to perform on the enemy, including miracles beneficial to the enemy (the enemy has no choice in this matter). If a character allows a beneficial miracle to be performed by an enemy, the two characters make *faith* checks and apply stun/spiritual damage as described above.

Conversion

Converting from one faith to another lowers a character's *faith* adds by one, although the add may be bought again at a later time. Characters must have *faith* skill of at least one to convert. If a character with one *faith* add converts, she is considered to have the *faith* skill, but with no adds. Conversion also gets rid of any spiritual damage effects the character may have taken — with new belief comes comes new hope and connection to the spiritual.

Example: A character with a *Spirit* of 9 and 1 *faith* add converts to a new religion. She still has the *faith* skill at value 9. She may buy a *faith* add for one Possibility.

If a character with no *faith* skills is the subject of a miracle that achieves *spectacular* success, the character **must** convert to the faith of the *focus* character. He gains the skill with one add, for a cost of two Possibilities.

Spiritual Damage Effects

When damage is taken in a spiritual struggle, it has spiritual consequences; even though the damage is treated in all ways as physical, if it has additional spiritual consequences it is referred to as *spiritual damage*.

When a character is KOed by spiritual damage, the character loses his *focus* skill. This does **not** include falling unconscious from accumulated shock, only from KO conditions. The character must undergo a *ritual of purification* (see "Miracles of Core Earth" on page 127) or conversion to get it back.

If a character suffers one or more wounds from spiritual damage and his cumulative damage total becomes *heavily wounded* or greater, that character loses both his *faith* and *focus* skills, and cannot get them back until he is purified and also undergoes a *ritual of hope*. In addition, his wound status may not be healed past *wounded* until he undergoes the *ritual of hope*.

Example: Father Bryce has taken a K-condition and two shock during a melee in the Living Land. He then heals his Edeinos friend as in the example above. Bryce took 6 result points of damage, an O 2. Bryce takes two more points of shock, and is KOed. When he comes to, he will have lost his *focus* and must undergo purification.

Example: A *wounded* character takes a *wound* from spiritual damage. He is now *heavily wounded* and loses his *faith* and *focus* skills until he can be purified and engage in a *ritual of hope*. In addition, he can heal the *heavy wound*, but he cannot heal the *wound* until his *faith* is restored.

Basic Types of Spiritual Belief

Below is a very brief guide to the basic kinds of spiritual belief known on Core Earth, as well as the game effects each type of belief has. When a character buys adds in the *faith* skill, she must declare what specific religion she is faithful to (Judaism, Norse myth, Worship of the Other). This can include being "faithful" to atheism. A character **cannot** take adds in different faiths.

Animism

Animism is the belief that all things have a vital life force. Some versions of animism state that all things have a soul or spirit. Animistic mythos rarely have enemies, in the sense of "Faith and Evil Enemies" above, within their mythos.

Atheism

Atheism is a strong belief in the non-existence of divine beings or spiritual power that can affect the everyday existence of humanity. Atheists cannot work any miracles, and are treated as a different faith by all mythos.

If a miracle is performed in the presence of an atheist (whether or not the atheist is the target), the atheist **may** generate a *faith* total. If the atheist's total is greater than the *focus* total of the miracle, the miracle fails.

An atheist may **choose** whether or not to add his faith adds to the difficulty number of any miracle used on him.



Valerie Valusek

Monotheism

Monotheism is the belief that there is but one god. Traditionally monotheists consider atheists, pantheists, and panentheists as enemies, while considering all other mythos to be of a different faith.

Monotheists almost always have an evil enemy within the mythos. Traditional monotheistic religions include Islam, Christianity and Judaism.

Pantheism and Panentheism

Pantheism is the belief that divine beings and the world are the same thing; the creator is the cosmverse. Panentheism is the belief that all reality is part of the body of a divine being or beings; the cosmverse is a part of the creator. Hinayana Buddhism is an example of a nearly pantheistic religion, as is the Force in *Star Wars*.

Polytheism

The belief that there are many gods, and no one god is vastly greater in power than the others. Polytheistic religions often have enemies within the mythos. Examples of polytheistic religions are the ancient Greek and Norse religions.

Belief and the Spiritual Axiom

The *Spiritual* axiom of a cosm rates the cosm for its spiritual power. A high *Spiritual* also corresponds to the literal truth of at least some sacred documents. There is reason to believe that for every imaginable mythos a cosm exists in which the *Spiritual* axiom is 33; in each of these cosms that single religion's sacred documents and histories are literally true. These are known as the *originating cosm* of that religion.

In cosms with lower spiritual axioms such as Core Earth, the documents of a religion tend to be slightly altered or vary more from the literal history of the religion — but they are still valid beliefs because they are true for the originating cosm of the religion, and faith in that religion will yield spiritual power in any cosm (at least those with an axiom greater than zero). A worshipper's faith tenuously connects her with the originating cosm, as well as other members of the community who hold the same faith.

Religious Artifacts

In the Infiniverse, there is always the possibility that divine power can realize itself in the form of an artifact. Also, possibility energy can, over a long period of time, be stored through faith; artifacts created by Apeiros or another divine agency (see Gamemaster Chapter Nine) can be shaped by faith to match items from the mythos. Artifacts created by any of these processes are called *religious artifacts*, for regardless of origin they take on all the qualities and aspects of the items of legends.

If a mythos considers an item to be unique, only one may be created — the belief that an artifact is unique guarantees its uniqueness. Such an item does not have to exist at all, but if one exists, then only one exists. If King Arthur's sword Excalibur does exist, then there is only one Excalibur in all the cosm of Core Earth.

Religious artifacts can have both *focus* and *faith* values, and miraculous powers beyond what the mortal faithful can hope to produce themselves.

Miracles and Invocations

To perform a miracle, the character with the *focus* skill generates a *focus* total (including modifiers for the community). If the *focus* is successful, the character providing *faith* for the miracle adds the same bonus number to his *faith* value.

Only one Possibility may be spent to enhance this roll, as usual; however, since there are two participants in the miracle, there are limitations on who may spend the Possibility. The *focus* character may spend the Possibility if and only if the *focus* total did not exceed the difficulty of the miracle before the additional roll. If it did, the *faith* character must spend the Possibility.

Example: Father Bryce generates a bonus number of 2 for a *focus* total of 14 to perform a miracle with a difficulty number of 13. He succeeds, and cannot spend a Possibility. The recipient spends a Possibility and rolls again, increasing the bonus number to 6.

If a miracle fails, the *focus* character may not attempt the miracle for 24 hours, or until he undergoes the *ritual of purification*. In addition, the character providing the *faith* must wait 24 hours or be cleansed in a *ritual of hope* before he can use his faith in **any** miracle.

If a character is providing both *faith* and *focus*, both restrictions apply.

Modifiers

Miracles are spiritual power realized to fulfill a need of the faithful, often affecting the material world. Miracles are not spells, dry processes which may be learned and then safely put away in a magic jar for use when desired. The conditions facing the faithful who request the miracle greatly affect the outcome of the miracle. The difficulty number of the *faith* check may be increased or decreased by circumstances.

Every mythos teaches the faithful about good and evil, about what behavior is applauded and what is taboo. A miracle that does not conform to the ethical guidelines of a mythos suffers a +15 penalty to the difficulty number of the miracle. For example, if honesty is important to a mythos, a miracle that deceives listeners would be penalized. In addition, the deities favor the use of religious power when it used to defeat the evil of the mythos, making the miracle more effective against enemies.

Miracles are meant to meet an immediate need. A character who is wounded needs healing, a character who is hungry needs food. If the miracle is not needed immediately, the penalty is applied.

If a believer, or community of believers, is in a life-threatening situ-



CONDITION MODIFIER CHART

Conditions	Modifier
Violates or stretches values important to mythos	+15
Miracle defends faithful against another faith	-3
Need for miracle is not immediate	+5
Need for miracle is urgent, life-threatening	-3
Target of miracle not providing faith	+3

ation, and the miracle would help preserve their lives, the miracle has a chance to be more effective than it might in ordinary circumstances.

Prayers and Rituals

There are two basic methods by which miracles are invoked: *prayers* and *rituals*. Prayers are quick requests for miracles, often personal and impromptu, while rituals carefully follow sacred rules. A prayer can be done in as little as 10 seconds (one combat round). A ritual takes at least 30 minutes, often longer. Some miracles may only be attempted as a ritual.

Healing

Faith can have miraculous healing powers, but there is a limit even to *faith*. A character may always be healed by miracle once per day. However, if the miracle does not fully heal the character, the miracle may not be repeated on that character until he is *mortally wounded*, or until the full 24 hours have passed.

Miracles and Multiple Targets

If more than one character or object is to be affected by a miracle, the multiple action rules (see Gamemaster Chapter Two) must be used. If a miracle is beneficial (as seen by the target character), the characters are affected in descending order of *faith* values, high value first. If the miracle is harmful, characters are affected in ascending *faith* value order, highest value being affected last.

Invocations

Invocations are a special type of miracle that ask for the direct intervention of spirits or a god. The base community rating and *focus* difficulty of an invocation is 20 + (33 - *Spiritual* axiom of area).

Example: The invocation community rating and difficulty number in Core Earth is 20 plus 24 (33-9) = 44. In the Living Land it is 20 plus 9 (33-24) = 29.

No *faith* rating is necessary when performing an invocation, as the spirit or deity is providing the spiritual energy necessary for the miracle. If the invoking character fails to beat the difficulty he may spend a Possibility, but if he succeeds he may not. The **deity** (at your discretion) may spend the Possibility if it deems it necessary.

If the invoking character gets a *minimal* success, the miracle disturbs the world in the least way possible while still meeting the needs of the invoker. If the invoker gets *average* or *good* success the miracle makes a more direct, noticeable impact to achieve its results. These levels of success restore internal resources, as well as providing possible solutions to the problem. On *superior* success, the miracle is achieved in a way which provides new resources which were previously unavailable. *Spectacular* successes show the work of a divine hand which is irrefutable to all but the strongest doubter; therefore *spectacular* success may only be achieved when made in an area with a *Spiritual* axiom of 13 or greater. If the axiom level is lower than 13, any success better than *superior* is treated as *superior*.

Example: A priestess is leading a collection of villagers on a harried flight through the fantasy cosm of Aysle when their path is blocked by the Trieridge mountains. Low on food and sought by numerous enemy patrols, the faithful desperately need a way over the mountain. The priestess invokes Dunad, asking that she and her people be given a way over the mountain. The villagers gather in ritual prayer in support of the priestess.

She rolls very well. If she gets *minimal* success, a scout for the villagers could find a path less arduous than the others they already knew about; perhaps they could make it if they pressed ahead.

If she gets *average* or *good* success, the villagers would find themselves refreshed and invigorated by a breeze coming from the mountain. The scouts would then find a path, and the journey could begin at good speed.

On a *superior* success, they gain the benefits above. In addition, as they began their journey, they would find sure-footed pack animals, apparently abandoned, who are tame enough to carry their gear and who instinctively know their way over the mountain. With the animals and the renewed energy, they cross the mountain with unnatural ease.

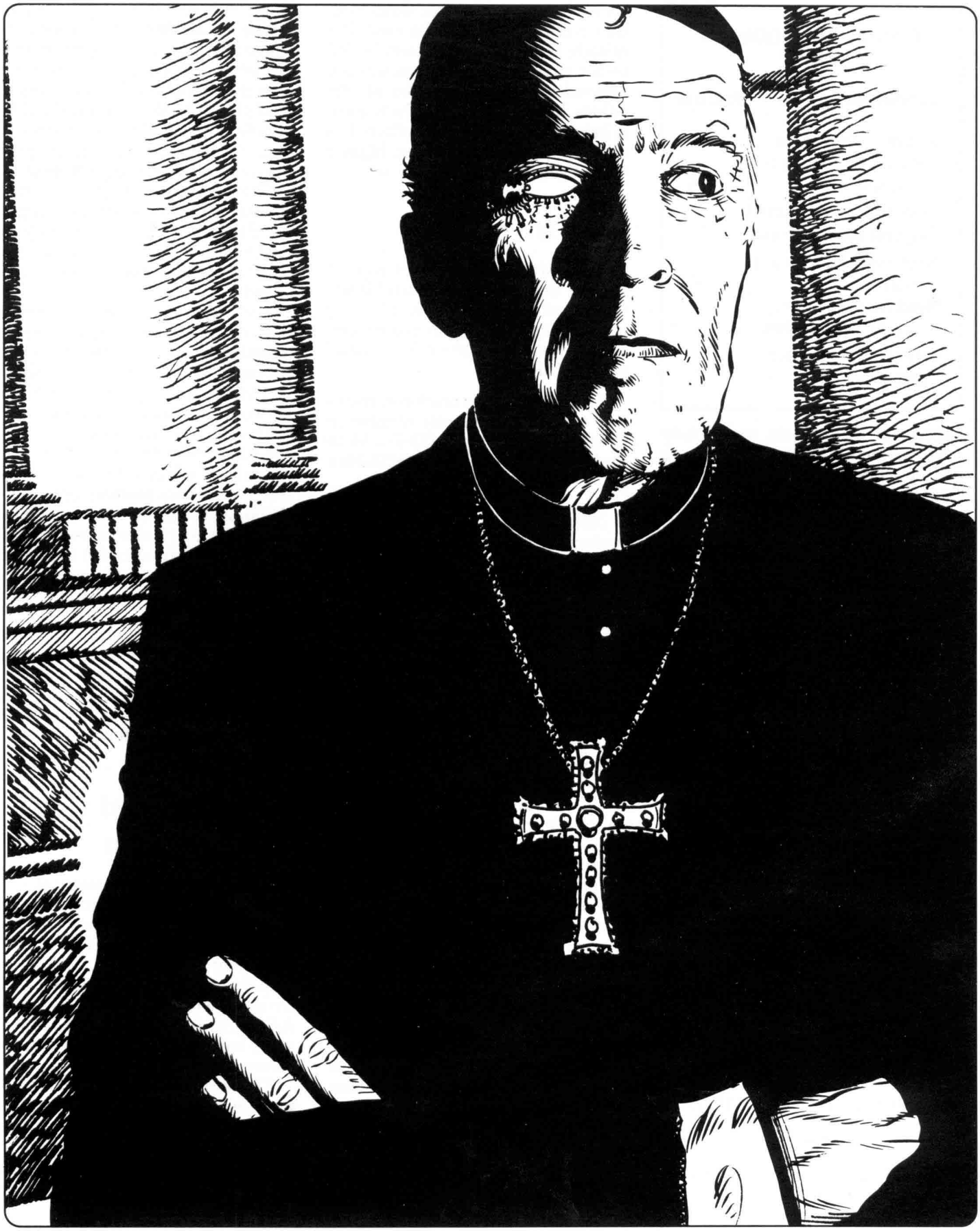
On a *spectacular* success the power of Dunad would carve a safe, level passage through the mountain in a storm of unprecedented frenzy. As the villagers passed through, an earthquake would reseal the pass.

Miracles of Core Earth

Core Earth has a comparatively low *Spiritual* axiom, which means spiritual power is difficult to attain and often uncertain. However, a wide variety of miracles exist which can help the pious and the faithful in their struggles with the Possibility Raiders. A Core Earth character who has a *focus* value has access to all of the miracles below.

The *spiritual rating* of the miracle is the minimum level of *Spiritual* axiom necessary to create the miracle. While Core Earth has a *Spiritual* axiom of nine, there are places and times when the axioms may be increased. Miracles





Timothy Bradstreet

rated greater than a nine may only be performed in those places, times, or circumstances. See Chapter Eight for more information on axiom variability.

The *community rating* of a miracle is the difficulty for faithful worshippers to contribute to a miracle as discussed above.

The *difficulty* is the difficulty number for the *focus* check of a miracle. If there is a *faith* check, the difficulty is also the *faith* difficulty.

Range is how far the focusing character may be from the target character or object. A range of "voice" means within hearing distance of the character using the *focus* skill. A range of "*faith* total" means the *faith* total is the value of the range in meters.

Duration is how long the miracle lasts. A duration of "performance" means the miracle lasts as long as the *focus* character actively continues the miracle through prayer, chanting, or ceremony. If the duration is listed as "na," then the effects of the miracle become a part of the real world even after the miracle is over.

Effect summarizes the effect of the miracle.

Bless

Spiritual Rating: 9
Community Rating: 10
Difficulty: 10
Range: touch
Duration: one hour
Effect: adds success levels to all bonuses of one attribute for one character

A *bless* surrounds and infuses the blessed character with spiritual energy. The *bless* enhances the character, adding to all bonus numbers generated while under the *bless*, for all actions controlled by any one attribute (but not to the attribute itself). The blessed character receives one bonus point for each success level attained by the *faith* total of the miracle, i.e. a *good* success is worth plus three to the bonus number. The attribute to be affected must be chosen by the recipient, at the time the blessing is performed. Only one *bless* may affect a character at a time.

Blessing Vow

Spiritual Rating: 9
Community Rating: 6
Difficulty: 8
Range: voice
Duration: until vow is broken
Effect: adds success levels to one attribute for one character

A *blessing vow* may only be performed as a ritual. In this ritual, the blessed agrees to uphold an institution, or virtues important to the mythos, for as long as he shall live. In exchange, the blessed receives an **increase in one chosen attribute** equal to the number of success levels achieved by the blessing (for example, an *average* success grants a + 2 modifier), for as long as he maintains the vow. A character may only have one *blessing vow* on him at one time.

The *blessing vow* is only given to characters who have proven themselves worthy to spiritual leaders and the community.

Calm

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 10
Difficulty: *Mind* of target
Range: *faith* total
Duration: performance
Effect: rids target of violent emotions

Calm eliminates any violent or extreme emotions of the target, replacing them with a tranquil state. During this time the target may be reasoned with, or communicated with by characters other than the characters who created the miracle (who are busy performing the miracle). The *focus* character may provide the *faith* for this miracle.

Common Ground

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 12
Range: *faith* total
Duration: performance
Effect: improve relations between targets

Common ground is used to mediate between individuals. In order for the miracle to work, the characters influenced by the miracle must have some common interest. If the characters share no goals, have no desires that are not mutually exclusive, then the miracle fails. Only where mutual gain is possible will the miracle work.

When successful, the miracle provides a temporary boost to relations. Each success level achieved by the *faith* provider improves the characters' attitudes one step each (see Gamemaster Chapter Five), up to a maximum of *friendly*. The *focus* character may provide the *faith* for this miracle.

Communication with Spirits

Each of the three miracles below allows spoken communication with any spirit in range. If no animal, plant, or elemental is visible or otherwise obviously present, the difficulty is increased by 3.

Minimal success means that only a pidgin version of communication is possible with the spirit, *average* success gives the miracle worker rudimentary understanding the spirit's language, *good* or *superior* results give the skill user complete understanding of the spirit's language, and *spectacular* success allows the user to speak and understand the spirit with no penalties. The *focus* character may provide the *faith* for these miracles.

Communicate with Animal Spirit

Spiritual Rating: 5
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 12
Range: voice
Duration: performance
Effect: speak to spirits of animals

The spirits of animals are considered to be more intelligent than the animal which houses them. While seeing things from the perspective of their animal host, the spirits can equal human intelligence.



Communicate with Elemental Spirit

Spiritual Rating: 5
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 15
Range: *faith* total
Duration: performance
Effect: speak to elemental spirits

There are five elemental spirits (other than plant elementals, covered below) — earth, air, fire, water and metal. Elementals are temperamental, of an intelligence less than human, but with a cunning greater than that of animals. They see things from a very pure standpoint relating to their own element.

Communicate with Plant Spirit

Spiritual Rating: 5
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 12
Range: voice
Duration: performance
Effect: speak with the spirits of plants

Plant spirits are slow — not dumb, just slow. They take their time when speaking ... even plants who have very short lives are slow communicators.

Cure Disease

Spiritual Rating: 10
Community Rating: 8
Difficulty: see below
Range: touch
Duration: na
Effect: stops the ravages of disease

DISEASE DIFFICULTY CHART

Disease	Difficulty
24-hour bug	8
Influenza	10
Pneumonia	12
Cancer	18
AIDS	22
Alzheimer's Disease	25

Cure disease destroys the disease that is ravaging the target character, but does not immediately rid the character of the physical damage caused by the disease. The character must regain her strength over time, or heal with medical, magical or miraculous help.

Enhance Food

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 12
Difficulty: 12
Range: 10 meters
Duration: permanent
Effect: increases quality or removes impurities from food

Food blessed by *enhance food* become better tasting, more nutritious, and possibly transforms into another food entirely.

Minimal or *average* success turns spoiled meat, rotted vegetables and the like into fresh food again. *Good* success can cleanse any food of any impurities or poisons. *Superior* success increases the quality of the food to the very best possible. *Spectacular* success actually transforms the food into a different kind of food; changing from a common fruit to an exotic one, from a cheap cut of pork to an expensive cut of beef, water to wine, etc.

Healing

Spiritual Rating: 10
Community Rating: 11
Difficulty: 15
Range: touch
Duration: na
Effect: reduces damage and wounds by number of success levels

If the miracle succeeds at all, the target removes all KO-conditions and shock. In addition, each success level of the miracle reduces the target character's wound level by one. For example, a character with a *heavy wound* who received *average* healing would be completely healed. A character suffering a loss of *faith* due to spiritual damage may not have his wounds fully healed, even via this miracle, until he undergoes the *ritual of hope*.

Ritual of Hope

Spiritual Rating: 5
Community Rating: 5
Difficulty: 12
Range: voice
Duration: na
Effect: restores lost *faith*

The *ritual of hope* must be performed as a ritual; it restores a character's lost *faith*, whether it was lost due to a failed miracle or spiritual damage. Once the character has undergone the ritual, he may use his *faith* and may be fully healed if under that restriction.

Multiply Food

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 3
Difficulty: 13
Range: 10 meters
Duration: permanent
Effect: multiplies existing food

This miracle is performed on an amount of existing food equal to a good-sized meal for one normal person. It must be performed as a ritual, during which members of the faithful bring food to the *focus* character. When successful, the miracle increases the amount of food. The amount of food produced is equal to the measure of the value of the difference between the *faith* total and the difficulty of the miracle.

Example: Father Bryce creates the *multiply food* miracle with a *faith* total of 17. The difference is 17 minus 13 = 4. On the Torg Value table, the measure of the value 4 is 6. The food Bryce blessed is now the equivalent of six meals.

Ritual of Purification

Spiritual Rating: 3
Community Rating: 15
Difficulty: 10
Range: voice
Duration: na
Effect: restores lost focus

Purification may only be performed as a ritual. The ceremony heightens awareness of one's religion and removes the impurities of the mundane and the material from the spirit. The target regains the use of his *focus* ability whether lost to spiritual damage or a failed miracle.

Refresh

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 8
Difficulty: 12
Range: 10 meters
Duration: na
Effect: heals mental restrictions

The characters who are *refreshed* regain the use of mental skills and knowledges such as *arcane knowledge* or magic if lost due to mental damage. A *minimal* to *good* success restores one such loss, *superior* or better success restores all lost mental abilities.

Soothe

Spiritual Rating: 7
Community Rating: 8
Difficulty: 10
Range: touch
Duration: 24 hours
Effect: acts as first aid

Soothe acts as a miraculous form of *first aid*, removing all shock and KO-conditions, and stopping the bleeding process from a *mortal wound*.

Ward Danger

Spiritual Rating: 9
Community Rating: 6
Difficulty: 13
Range: voice
Duration: performance
Effect: increases difficulty of harming character

Ward danger gathers the spiritual energy of the faithful and attempts to decrease the chance of the community coming to harm. The faithful must be praying for protection from one source of danger; if the worshippers are praying for protection from a tornado, the ward would have no effect against a terrorist who launched a missile at the church.

The difficulty number to harm a character protected by *ward danger* is increased by 3 for each success level of the miracle.

Ward Enemy

Spiritual Rating: 9
Community Rating: 6
Difficulty: 0
Range: self
Duration: performance
Effect: protects from attacks of evil creatures

Ward enemy only works against beings or forces which are enemies of the faithful, as defined by the mythos. For most monotheistic mythos this includes all kinds of supernatural beings, such as vampires in Christianity. The *focus* total is irrelevant for this miracle; *ward enemy* is the only Core Earth miracle that may be performed without a *focus*. If the performer of the miracle does not possess the *focus* skill, he must instead possess an icon or artifact of his religion (for example, any Christian may thwart a vampire by using a cross).

A warded character may not be attacked by physical, magical, or spiritual means. *Test of will*, *trick*, *taunt*, and *intimidate* may be used; on a player's call the warded character has succeeded in getting the warding character to lower his *ward danger*. Other effects apply if the warding character must perform an action, including generating another *ward danger*. A horror may not *mark the character for death* or fill the character with *fear* as long as the ward is effective; the Power of Fear is muted when a *ward enemy* is active. The only possible enemy attack is a faith attack; the attacker generates a *faith* total against the *faith* total of the miracle. This counts as the enemy's action that round. If the enemy's total is higher, the ward is breached, and the character suffers the result points in spiritual damage. The warding character must enact the ward again at his next opportunity if he wishes to be protected.

If the miracle's total is higher, the enemy fails to breach the ward. The enemy takes spiritual damage equal to the result points. However, the enemy's attack does cause the ward to waiver. The warding character must expend his next action to generate a ward enemy total, or the ward collapses at the end of his action round.





Chapter Twelve

Equipment

The sections below are organized according to types of equipment. Each table includes information about the item, its *Tech* level, its abilities, and price in Core Earth. Note that many of the items are available only (or most commonly) in other cosms; we are assuming that some few pieces of armor, weapons, etc. have found their way to wherever your characters are based. The prices given are Core Earth base prices in US dollars, as explained in Gamemaster Chapter Five, taking into account import costs and so on. In the price lists, "k" = thousands, "m" = millions, "b" = billions.

Availability

To help you determine the availability of an item (if you're unsure about a particular item), use its cost value number as a difficulty number; use *persuasion* or *scholar (street knowledge)* as the acting value. Success means the item has been found, though *minimal* success might mean finding a poor piece of equipment, or one higher priced than usual. *Superior* or better success could mean a good supply of the item, or a slight discount rate.

Use the difficulty number modifiers to help determine modifiers to the availability factor. For example, in a war zone, weapons might be at +4 difficulty; food in London will definitely be more difficult to find, etc.

Armor

While offensive and defensive technologies have vied for superiority on the battlefield, the defensive superiority is always short lived.

The armor adds listed below presume that the armor covers the torso (front and back), but not the rest of the character's body. If the limbs are also protected, increase the armor add by one; if a helmet of the same or better armor is worn, increase the add by one. A full suit of armor will therefore have two more adds than listed below, unless otherwise noted. The prices given are also only for torso; limb armor costs about 25 percent of the listed price, helmets are five percent of the listed price. If a character purchases only a helmet or limb armor, he is protected at full armor value, but only from blows you judge to strike the protected areas. If torso armor is added, the add is increased as above, and the armor is assumed to be protecting the whole body.

Example: Quin buys a Kevlar helmet; he has five armor adds for his head only. Later, he gets a Kevlar vest; he now has six armor adds for all hits.

Any armor listed with a "fatigue penalty" reduces a character's *dodging* skill value by 1 for a basic suit; limbs and helmet reduce the *dodge* skill value by an additional 1 each. The *fatigue penalty* also increases shock points from two to three when the character suffers a *fatigue* result on the conflict line or from an enemy *maneuver*, regardless of the size of the suit.

Descriptions

Hides and Furs: Hides and furs are the oldest forms of armor available. The hides are cured, but they are not tanned into leather.

Bone and Hide: Bone and hide armor consists of finely shaped bone pieces carefully sewn into the hide. It is very difficult to make, for if the bone layer does not conform in shape to the user, the bone breaks easily in combat. If the armor is not specifically made for the character wearing it, it breaks on a *wound* result or greater, reducing its add to +1.

ARMOR DESCRIPTION CHART

Armor	Tech	Value/Max.	Fatigue?	Price (Value)
Hides and Furs	3	+1 / 20	no	200 (12)
Bone and Hide	3	+3*/ 20	no	3000 (18)
Leather	5	+2 / 20	no	400 (13)
Bronze	8	+4 / 25	yes*	3500 (18)
Cuir Bouilli	8	+3 / 20	no*	450 (14)
Chain Mail	12	+4 / 25	yes	7500 (20)
Ring Mail	12	+3 / 20	no	6000 (19)
Silk Lining	12	+2*/ 20	no	500 (14)
Plate Mail	13	+5 / 25	yes*	8000 (20)
Bullet Proof Vest	21	+6 / 22	no*	400 (13)
Kevlar Armor	22	+5 / 22	yes	250 (12)
Kevlar/Ceramic	22	+7 / 22	yes	1000 (15)
IriMesh	24	+3 / 20	no	500 (14)
Kyoto Police RKD	24	+7 / 25	no*	100k (25)
Interdermal Plating	25	+6 / 25	no*	50k* (24)

*See special note in text

Leather: These are like hides, but are tanned to a stiffer, more durable finish.

Bronze: Bronze and other equally soft metal alloys are heavy in comparison to the protection they give. In addition to the normal *dodge* penalty, any character wearing bronze armor on torso and limbs takes four points of shock damage from a *fatigue* result instead of three.

Cuir Bouilli: Cuir bouilli is boiled, treated leather, increasing its toughness but reducing its flexibility. Any character wearing cuir bouilli on torso **and** limbs has her *Dexterity* reduced by 1.

Chain Mail: The classic middleweight armor, made of linked chains of worked metal.

Ring Mail: The larger mesh of ring mail makes it slightly lighter than chain mail, but therefore less effective.

Silk Lining: Silk lining is an early example of composite armor — armor made from two distinct substances to gain benefits from both materials. Silk lining increases the effectiveness of armor (*Tech* 19 or less) by giving, but not tearing when a weapon penetrates the outer coating. Silk lining is effective against all melee and missile weapons, but is of no use against firearms of *Tech* level 19 or better. Silk lining is very expensive at the *Tech* levels where it is effective; the price of silk is often literally its weight in gold.

Plate Mail: Early plate mail is heavy and hot; any character wearing plate mail on torso, head and limbs takes four points of shock damage from a *fatigue* result, three if wearing any plate. At *Tech* 15 these defects can be worked out by the best armorers, so the *fatigue* penalty is treated normally for a fully armored knight, and is ignored otherwise.

Bullet Proof Vest: Bullet proof vests first appeared in the form of flak jackets, and with refinements became available for infantry use. Wearing a full suit of bullet proof vest material is impossible; no more than a helmet and vest may be worn for *Tech* 21 bullet proof armor. They are also quite clumsy; a character wearing a vest has his *Dexterity* attribute (and all related skill values) reduced by 1.

Kevlar Armor: Kevlar is a synthetic material that becomes "bullet proof" when better than a dozen layers are carefully laminated together. Kevlar is light enough to line overcoats or other bulky outerwear, but is quite hot.

Kevlar/Ceramic: A composite armor which is quite heavy. The best available mix is a helmet/torso combination.

IriMesh: IriMesh is the lightweight armor of choice, weighing about twice what comparable street clothes weigh. While the heat pores are only moderately successful at removing excess heat, they do negate any fatigue penalty.

Kyoto Police RKD: A product of the Kanawa manufacturing empire, processed RKD armor became known as Kyoto Police, or simply Kyoto armor, as that's where it had its extremely successful debut. Small biocams were hooked into the armor which augmented the motion of the wearer just enough to overcome the clumsiness of the full suit, while efficient H-cross units disposed of the heat, converting a fraction of it back into useful energy for the biocams.

RKD is dangerous only if used while disconnected. It has a normal *fatigue* penalty in this case, and an additional *Dexterity* penalty (as Cuir Bouilli).

Interdermal Plating: The surgery is painful and dangerous (see *The Cyberpapacy Sourcebook*), but those who require it already face a desperate situation. The armor is almost a living part of the person, being maintained by nanotech machines which draw the necessary raw materials from the host being's bloodstream.

General Gear

The list on the following page is a sampling of gear that Storm Knights may encounter or find useful adventuring from cosm to cosm. The gamemaster can extrapolate other equipment from the *Tech* axiom list given in Chapter Eight.

Vehicles

Modes of transportation vary widely from realm to realm. To journey 500 miles can be less than an hour's work in Core Earth or Nippon Tech, but can require weeks in less technically advanced realms.



GENERAL GEAR CHART

Item	Tech Level	Price
Hemp Rope (100 ')	8	15
Nylon Rope (100 ')	21	25
Climbing Cable	23	50
Torch	5	5
Oil Lamp	7	25
Candles	10	5
Gas Lantern	19	30
Flashlight	20	10
Sundial	9	5
Mechanical Clock	13	20
Pocket Watch	18	75
Wrist Watch	20	50
Electric Watch	21	10
Down Parka	21	150
Thinsulate	22	100
Glass mirror	10	10
Canoe	3	600
Inflatable Raft	21	150
Iron Spikes	10	5
Piton	19	25
Knapsack	14	10
Backpack	14	100
Hip Packs	23	40
Collapsible Tent	20	100
Sleeping Bag	18	100
Sleeping Mat	9	25
Refrigerator	19	800
Wood Stove	17	1100
Gas Stove	19	500
Microwave Oven	21	250
Telephone	19	25
Field Telephone	20	100
Field Radio	21	500
Walkie Talkie	21	50
Car Phone	23	750
Semaphore	13	100
Telegraph	18	250
Satellite Trans.	22	5000
Meat Jerky (1 wk)	10	20
C-rations	21	15
Freeze-Dried Food	21	30
Dehydrated Food	21	75
Microwaveable Food	22	60

Air Vehicles

Tech 16

Hot Air Balloons: Hot air balloons are at the mercy of whatever winds are available to move them. They can carry cargos of up to 400 kilograms, about half of which is usually ballast. *Tech* 21 and later balloons can carry substantially more cargo, close to 1,000 kilograms. Hot air balloons have an effective ceiling of 15,000 feet. Hot air balloons vary in *Toughness* from 9 to 15, while the gondolas provide soft cover. (Cost = $15,000, value 21).

Tech 19

Gliders: Crude gliders have a glide-to-descent ratio of about four to one, which means they glide four meters for every one meter drop — less a form of flying than a slow method of falling. At *Tech* 20 the glide ratio improves to around eight to one, and lightweight materials at *Tech* 23 make 20 to one possible. *Tech* 22 materials are light enough to make hang-gliders practical. Gliders provide soft cover (hang-gliders provide no cover) and have *Toughness* from 8 (hang-gliders) to 19 (WWII troop landing gliders). (Cost = $12,000, value 21).

Zeppelins: Aerodynamically shaped, Zeppelins are hydrogen-filled balloons over lightweight wood and aluminum frames. The cargo gondola is slung beneath the Zeppelin. *Tech* 19 Zeppelins carry only a small crew, no passengers and a small payload. Zeppelins of *Tech* 20 carry 80 passengers and a crew of 12. They can achieve a top speed of 100 kmh (60 mph). Zeppelins have *Toughness* from 10 to 21. Their gondolas provide soft cover. (Cost = $800k, value 30).

Piston-Powered Airplanes

Early aircraft are slow, and barely able to lift their own weight. These rapidly develop into warplanes, at first capable of inflicting damage only on each other, then becoming lethal ground support elements. Metal skinned aircraft make their appearance at *Tech* 21, a greatly improved fuel efficiency is possible at *Tech* 23. At *Tech* 24, solar-powered piston craft are possible.

In the table below speeds are given in kilometer per hour (kmh) and miles per hour (mph) as well as game value. "Pass." is the total number of passengers, including the pilot.

Sopwith FI Camel: The Camel is extremely tricky to fly, having a tendency to climb when turning left, and a strong tendency to dive when turning right. These peculiarities could become advantages in the hands of a skilled pilot. The camel has an operational ceiling of 22,000 feet. Standard armament is two Vickers machine guns.

Fokker DVII: Highly maneuverable biplane, with an operational ceiling of 20,000 feet. The Fokker can dive and climb faster than the Camel, and can turn with alarming swiftness. The Fokker is armed with two 7.92mm Spandau machine guns.

PISTON AIRCRAFT SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/Value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
Sopwith FI Camel	20	200/120/14	1	13	60k (24)
Fokker DVII	20	200/120/14	1	13	60k (24)
Spitfire VB	21	600/ 380/ 16	1	17	200k (27)
Me109 F-2	21	600/380/16	1	16	200k (27)
DC-3	21	320/ 200/ 15	36	19	150k (26)
G-21 Turbo-Goose	22	350/ 220/ 15	12	18	250k (27)

ROTARY AIRCRAFT SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
Avro C.8L Mk II	20	160/100/ 13	1	14	300k (28)
PA-19	21	150/ 90/ 13	4	14	450k (29)
Bell H-13	21	150/ 90/ 13	2(+2)	14	600k (29)
Bell AH-1G	22	350/ 220/ 15	2	17	1.5 m (31)
Aerospatiale Lama	22	150/ 90/ 13	2	15	1 m (30)
Mi-24 Hind A-10	22	370/ 230/ 15	10	21	12 m (36)
AH-64 Apache	23	300/ 180/ 15	2	20	8 m (35)

Spitfire VB: The large elliptical wing is a boon for pilots desperate for a tight turn, and the Spitfire has excellent speed. It is difficult to repair, however, and early models' poor carburetor design can cause a loss of power when going into a steep dive. A Spitfire is armed with four .303 inch Brownings and two 20mm cannons.

Me109 F-2: The Messerschmitt Me109 F-2 has a ceiling of 36,000 feet and superior dive characteristics that allow it to strike quickly from above, or to flee battle if necessary. The plane is armed with one Mauser MG 151 (15mm) and two 7.92mm MG17s.

DC-3/Dakota: The 1,500 mile (2,400 kilometer) range of the DC-3 Dakota is quite impressive for *Tech* 21. A military transport version has also been developed, the C-47. Both types of aircraft continue to see use in Core Earth.

G-21 Turbo-Goose: The turbo version can carry nine to 12 people, while the *Tech* 21 full-prop version is limited to six or seven passengers. The G-21 is a flying boat, able to land in water less than six feet deep.

Rotary Wing

"Rotary wing" covers aircraft which get their lift from a spinning airfoil, called a rotor. They include autogyros and helicopters. An autogyro does not power its lift rotor; instead, the forward motion of an autogyro sets the rotor spinning, and the vehicle lifts. In that respect an autogyro is more like a plane than a helicopter, requiring a running start to take off.

Avro C.8L Mk II: The Avro C.8L Mk II is noted for its extremely short take-off distance, which is reduced to a few meters by gearing the engine to the rotor, and then disengaging once airborne. It can take off and land from the roof of a large building. Almost a helicopter, it lacks only a helicopter's ability to hover.

PA-19: The Pitcairn autogyro is a popular commercial model, made even more popular by its supposed exploits at the hand of G-men and other heroes of the day. With external tanks, its range can exceed 300 miles.

Bell H-13: The well-known "MASH" helicopter, used in the Korean War for medical evac. It carries a crew of two, plus two additional "passengers" who can be strapped into the stretchers on the sides of the craft.

Bell AH-1G: Known as the Huey Cobra, this helicopter is amazingly lethal for *Tech* 22. Its crew of two has a turret with two Emerson Electric 7.62mm miniguns with six barrels each, and twin wing pods that can hold a total of eight rockets.

Aerospatiale Lama: The highest-flying 'copter built; it is used extensively in the India/Indonesia area.

Mi-24 Hind A-10: An experimental model developed from the helicopter gunships which saw extensive use in Afghanistan, the A-10 is Core Earth's fastest helicopter. The Soviets are returning to production of the Mi-24A-10s in response to threats posed by the Possibility Wars, and limited quantities are available for export. The Hind can carry eight troops in addition to crew of two, who are armed with a four-barrel machine gun, four rocket pods, and four missiles.

Apache AH-64: The Apache gives up speed in order to gain increased maneuverability, superior armor and armaments. The Apache is armed with a M230A1 Chain Gun 30mm cannon with 1,200 rounds of ammunition, its stub wing armament can be either 16 Hellfire anti-tank rockets, or 76 2.75 inch rockets.

Jet-powered aircraft

F-86: The F-86 is an aircraft on the edge of a *Tech* 21 dream, a fighter with level supersonic performance. It doesn't quite make it, but its maneuverability and stability make it the best dogfighter of its cohorts. The F-86 is armed with six .50 caliber Browning machine guns.

Mirage III: Produced in interceptor, reconnaissance, trainer and ground attack versions, the Mirage III is in

JET-POWERED AIRCRAFT SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
F-86	21	1,100/ 680/ 18	1	21	150k (26)
Mirage III	22	2,400/ 1,500/ 19	1	22	5 m (34)
Learjet L24	22	780/ 480/ 17	8	20	1.5 m (31)
Boeing 727-200	22	900/ 570/ 17	189	23	1.5 m (31)
Boeing 747	22	950/ 590/ 17	490	24	5 m (34)
F-15	23	2,250/ 1,400/ 19	1	22	17 m (37)
SR-71	23	3,600/ 2,200/ 20	2	22	32 m (38)



FIREARMS

	Tech	Damage Value	Ammo	Range (meters) Short	Med.	Long	Price (Value)
PISTOLS							
Wheelock Dag	16	13	1	3-5	10	25	1500 (16)
J. Murdoch Flintlock	17	14	1	3-5	15	25	1500 (16)
BP 1856	18	15	1	3-5	15	40	400 (13)
Colt Peacemaker	19	15	6	3-5	15	40	500 (14)
.38 Revolver	20	14	6	3-10	25	50	150 (11)
9mm Beretta	22	15	9	3-10	25	40	550 (14)
.45 Colt Auto	20	16	7	3-10	15	40	450 (14)
.357 Desert Eagle	22	16	6	3-10	25	50	400 (13)
.44 S&W Magnum	22	17	6	3-10	15	40	400 (13)
13mm Chunyokai	24	18	9	3-10	40	50	1000 (15)
SUBMACHINE GUNS (auto)							
MAC 10	22	18	10	3-15	25	50	200 (12)
Uzi	22	17	11	3-15	40	100	400 (13)
Schmeisser MP40	21	17	11	3-15	40	100	400 (13)
Thompson 1928	20	20	2*	3-15	25	100	900 (15)
SC Kyogo 144	24	18	15	3-15	40	150	500 (14)
RIFLES / MUSKETS							
Brown Bess	6	17	1	3-25	40	150	1200 (16)
Kentucky Rifle	16	16	1	3-40	100	250	1200 (16)
Sharps 1855	19	18	7	3-40	250	600	800 (15)
Lee Enfield MK 1	20	19	10	3-40	600	1.5k	550 (14)
M1 Garand	21	20	8	3-40	400	600	250 (12)
M-16 (auto)	22	20	10	3-40	250	400	300 (13)
AK-47 (auto)	21	21	10	3-40	150	400	1500 (16)
SC Kyogo T11 (auto)	24	21	40	3-40	150	400	2000 (17)
SHOTGUNS							
Hammer Shotgun	20	17	2	3-15	25	40	100 (10)
Savage 77E	22	18	5	3-15	40	60	200 (12)
MACHINE GUNS (auto)							
Vickers	20	23	20	3-100	500	1k	3000 (18)
Spandau	20	24	15	3-100	500	1k	3500 (18)
Maxim	19	23	25	3-50	500	1k	2500 (17)
Bwng .50/.303/MG-17	21	25	11	3-250	1k	2k	1500 (16)
Maremont M60	23	23	15	3-100	600	1.5k	3000 (18)
Nato 7.62mm (.30 cal)	22	24	15	3-150	600	2k	2000 (17)
7.62 Minigun	22	27	10	3-250	1k	2k	75k (25)
HEAVY WEAPONS							
15mm cannon	21	25	15	3-400	2.5k	4k	60k (24)
20mm cannon	21	27	8	3-400	2.5k	4k	75k (25)
30mm cannon (auto)	22	30	10	3-400	2.5k	4k	100k (25)

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37mm cannon	21	27	25	3-400	2.5k	4k	110k (26)
12-pnd 1857	17	24	1	3-150	600	1.5k	4000 (18)
18-pounder	16	24	1	3-150	400	1k	8000 (20)
Culverin	15	22	1	3-100	250	600	10k (20)
Mons Meg	15	27	1	25-150	1k	2.5k	25k (22)
88mm (A)	20	27	1	50-600	4k	6k	90k (25)
Long Tom (A)	21	30	1	—	1k-6k	25k	200k (27)
Hellfire (M)	22	29	1	50-2k	15k	—	100k (25)
Tow Missile (M)	22	28	1	100-400	1k	4k	36k + 7k (23/20)
LAW Missile (M)	22	27	1	10-100	250	400	300 (13)
Stinger AA (M)	23	27	1	100-1k	2.5k	4k	50k (24)
105mm tank (T)	22	29	1	100-1k	2.5k	4k	500k (29)
125mm tank (T)	22	29	1	100-1k	3k	5k	550k (29)
105mm howitzer (A)	22	32	1	400-1k	6k	15k	150k (26)
75mm tank (T)	21	28	1	100-400	600	2.5k	300k (28)
2.75 in rockets	21	29	1	100-400	1k	2.5k	200 (12)
Torpedo	22	34	1	—	1k-20k	40k	500k (29)
Grenades (G)	22	19	1	1-6	15	40	10 (5)

Burst Radius Notation: (A) = Artillery shell; (T) = Tank shell; (M) = Missile; (G) = Grenade
(auto) = capable of full-auto fire

MELEE WEAPONS

	Tech	Plus to Damage Value	Maximum Damage Value	Price (Value)
Dagger	7	+3	17	50 (9)
Short Sword	8	+4	18	150 (11)
Rapier	15	+5	19	300 (13)
Broadsword	9	+6	20	400 (13)
Two-Handed Sword	10	+7	21	750 (15)
Baseball Bat/Club	6	+3	18	20 (7)
Mace	8	+4	19	100 (10
Ball and Chain	10	+6	21	400 (13

MISSILE WEAPONS

	Tech	Damage/ Max. Value	Range (meters) Short	Med.	Long	Price (Value)
Throwing Dagger	7	+3/17	3-5	10	15	100 (10)
Spear	5	+4/18	3-5	25	40	25 (7)
Short Bow	8	+5/19	3-10	40	100	70 (10)
Long Bow	12	+6/20	3-10	100	250	300 (13)
Composite Bow	13	+7/22	3-10	60	250	400 (13)
Modern Compound Bow	22	+7/25	3-10	100	250	150 (11)
Lt Crossbow	10	15	3-10	100	200	150 (11)
Hvy Crossbow	11	16	3-10	100	300	250 (12)
War Boomerang	7	+4/19	3-5	40	100	40 (8)

EXPLOSIVE BURST RADIUS (in meters)

	Short	Med.	Long
Grenade	0-3	8	15
Tank Shell (HE)	0-4	10	25
Missile	0-5	15	20
Artillery Round (HE)	0-5	15	40



service in better than a dozen nations of Core Earth. It has an attack radius of 745 miles (1,200 kilometers). Armament includes two fuselage-mounted 30mm cannon and a mixture of bombs, rockets and guided missiles depending on the mission and configuration of the plane.

Learjet L24: When a plane flies paying customers it is called an airliner. A privately owned Learjet is given the loftier sounding title of "executive transport." In addition to the passengers, the L24 has room for about 1,000 pounds (450 kilos) of cargo.

Boeing 727: A design which originally competed for a contract as a military transport, the 727 became the most common jetliner in dozens of fleets. The plane has a range of 2,600 miles (4,200 kilometers).

Boeing 747: The Boeing 747 is a marvel of engineering, and continuous adaptations have kept the plane up to date with new developments in avionics. The 747 has a range of 7,000 miles (11,000 kilometers).

F-15: While fast, the F-15 is not built for speed — it is built for acceleration. The F-15 is capable of climbs, dives, and turns which are more than enough to outmaneuver an opponent. Unfortunately, the fighter is capable of maneuvers that can knock a pilot unconscious from the G-force. Knowing how to push the envelope is the key to victory and survival. The F-15 is armed with a 20mm rotary cannon, and eight air-to-air missiles.

SR-71: The SR-71 started development at *Tech* 22, and its power plant is of that generation. However, its control-surface technology and stealth/ECM gear are strictly state of the art of *Tech* 23. The SR-71 has a service ceiling in excess of 80,000 feet, and literally flies faster than a speeding bullet. The SR-71 is a reconnaissance aircraft.

Self-Powered Land Vehicles

Internal Combustion

Model T: The Model T comes only in one color, black. It requires hand-cranking to start and is not completely sealed against the weather. Durable and relatively inexpensive, it sold more than any other car of its day.

Daimler-Benz: This sedan epitomizes the low, sleek rounded designs of its day. The Daimler-Benz has a suspension system which gives it a coveted ride.

Thunderbird: The Thunderbird encapsulates tastes in the opulent United States of the 1950s: powerful, heavy, and sporting liberal applications of chrome.

Lotus Esprit: The Esprit is responsive — overly responsive in the hands of inexperienced drivers. The mid-body engine is difficult to service, but the design gives the car great maneuverability.

Ford Taurus: The basic design of the Taurus literally spawned a whole fleet of similar cars. Moderately reliable, the primary failing of the Taurus is that it sustains more damage in a collision than similar cars.

Kenilworth Semi-Truck: While all large trucks are designed to sacrifice acceleration for efficient power, the Kenilworth is slower off the mark than most modern semis. In return it can haul more freight than any other truck — nearly 35 tons.

Railroad

1868: Powered by coal-generated steam, this class of locomotive spread throughout the Americas, as far south as Patagonia and as far north as Alaska. A half dozen or so of these vehicles have been refurbished as a result of the Possibility Wars, as they are more easily "repaired" than more modern vehicles.

1907: Coal and steam are the sources of power for these long trains, many with richly appointed passenger cabins. Lower-class tickets are located in the rear, which occasionally receives the ash from the locomotive. A variation of the 1907 is the most common train in Orrorsh and the New Empire of the Nile.

1950: Diesel engines pull these trains, and passengers have given way to increased freight. Superior brake technology takes credit for much of the increase in speed performance; less technically sophisticated trains may be able to get up to speed, but they cannot stop in a reasonable distance.

Bullet Train: Developed in Japan and France, these trains make use of superior aerodynamic knowledge and materials to allow the train to reach speeds that would derail ordinary trains.

Military Vehicles

1938 Halftrack: Halftracks are lightly armored trucks for troop transport. The rear of the vehicle is tracked for better off-road performance, and they are often armed with a .30 caliber machine gun.

Tiger Tank: The state of the art tank for nearly a dozen years, the Tiger Tank has a 75mm cannon which is advanced for its *Tech* level.

Jeep: This all-purpose utility vehicle is not so much rugged as it is easy to patch back into a semblance of working shape. Repairs have been made literally with safety pins and chewing gum.

T-72: The T-72 is a common tank in dozens of nations who had cordial relations with the Soviet Union. The T-72 sports a 125mm smoothbore gun, with a troublesome autoloader which is still a vast improvement over its predecessor.

M113A2: The M113A2 is an armored personnel carrier used extensively by US forces in the Vietnam War. Its experimental aluminum armor is light, but provides inadequate protection against heavy weapons.

M1 Abrams: Currently the most modern tank in US inventories, the Abrams is capable of good highway speed, and carries composite armor. While its 105mm gun is slightly less impressive than the Soviet 125mm, the Abrams can carry over 60 105mm shells, as opposed to 40 120mm shells for the T-72.

Space Vehicles

US Space Shuttle: While the avionics and some of the control surfaces of the newer shuttles are *Tech* level 23, most of the fleet remains level 22. The shuttle can place over 60 tons into low Earth orbit.



LAND VEHICLE SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/ value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
Model-T	20	55/ 35/ 11	2	14	3000 (18)
1933 Daimler-Benz	21	100/ 60/ 12	4	15	8000 (20)
1955 Thunderbird	21	125/ 80/ 13	2	16	8000 (20)
1977 Lotus Esprit	22	210/ 130/ 14	2	15	35k (23)
1990 Taurus	23	160/ 100/ 13	5	14	15k (21)
Semi-Truck	22	140/ 90/ 13	2	23	120k (26)

RAILROAD SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
1868	18	40/ 25/ 10	80	28	15 m (36)
1907	20	70/ 45/ 122	20	32	25 m (37)
1950	21	110/ 70/ 13	160	37	50 m (39)
Bullet Train	23	300/ 180/ 15	250	33	70 m (40)

MILITARY VEHICLE SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
1938 Halftrack	21	55/ 35/ 11	10	25	100k (25)
Tiger Tank	21	40/ 25/ 10	4	29	200k (27)
Jeep	21	80/ 50/ 12	4	15	6000 (19)
T-72	22	55/ 35/ 11	3	31	750k (30)
M113A2	22	65/ 42/ 12	13	24	100k (25)
M1 Abrams	23	70/ 45/ 12	4	33	1.4 m (31)

SPACE VEHICLE SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
US Space Shuttle	22	28k/ 18k/ 24	6	27	2 b (47)
Mitiya Corp Low Orbital	24	28k/ 18k/ 24	20	28	600 m (44)

WATER VEHICLES SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
Trireme	8	10/ 6/ 7	120	24	6 m (34)
Galleon	15	20/ 12/ 9	220	25	15 m (36)
Clipper Ship	17	40/ 25/ 10	140	26	20 m (37)
Coal Steamer	18	30/ 18/ 10	24	30	20 m (37)
Diesel Steamer	21	40/ 25/ 10	24	31	30 m (38)
Luxury Liner	22	25/ 15/ 9	3,200	34	110 m (41)



Mitaya Corporation Low Orbital: The Low Orbital filled a need for reliable transportation between Nippon Tech's early Lagrange industrial stations and the Earth. The turnaround time, from landing to takeoff, can be less than 90 minutes.

Water Vehicles

Surface Vessels

Trireme: Named for the three rows of oars which provide most of the ship's power (although a square-sail provides some additional mobility), the trireme is a mobile combat platform as much as a seafaring vessel. Triremes are equipped with reinforced rams, their principal method for destroying enemy ships.

Galleon: Galleons are a compromise between a merchant ship and a warship. They are better merchanters. Galleons are bulky and not too maneuverable, but can haul a good deal of cargo, pack several dozen cannon, and take considerable damage before going under.

Clipper Ship: The clipper ships are the ultimate tall ships. Complicated and sophisticated rigging can, in the hands of skilled crews, be used to draw every ounce of power from the winds. Only moderately armed, the ships count on escape rather than confrontation.

Coal Steamer: Early steamers retained their sails, in part to take advantage of the wind, in part due to a distrust of the machinery which moved the vessel. As the efficiency of the engines — and people's acceptance of the technology — grew, the sails were abandoned. Coal steamers can sail throughout the year as dictated by the needs of trade rather than the prevailing wind patterns.

Diesel Steamer: Oil-fired engines also went through a transitional tech period; oil-soaked coal was first used, then pure oil-fired engines replaced the coal burners. Oil brings great gains in efficiency; ships can remain at sea for months, rather than three weeks or so for a coal burner.

Luxury Liner: Diesel powers these great behemoths, which require more than three times the space of military vessels carrying a similar number of people. They are remarkably seaworthy. Many have been pressed into military service as a result of the Possibility Wars, ferrying troops equal to twice the normal passenger limits, plus hundreds of tons of gear.

SUBMARINE SPECIFICATION CHART

Craft	Tech	Speed kmh/mph/value	Pass.	Tough	Price (Value)
Type 209 class	21	40/ 25/ 10	33	28	30 m (38)
Los Angeles class	22	55/ 35/ 11	140	33	2 b (47)

Submarines

Type 209 class: Designed by West Germany, this diesel-powered submarine is in service throughout the world. Their sensors are more modern (*Tech* 22 or 23) than the rest of the vessel. The 209 is meant for patrols of 50 days or less.

Los Angeles class: The Los Angeles class submarine is a nuclear powered attack submarine, using extremely sophisticated sensing gear (*Tech* 23) to hunt other submarines. While equipped with torpedoes, these submarines hunt with missiles which hit the water only as they near the target.





Chapter Thirteen

Creating Templates

Although we give you a number of templates to choose from (located in the World Book), your players may at some point want to build their own. The procedure for creating a new player character template follows. If you want hints about creating gamemaster characters, look in the Adventure Book.

Attributes and Skills

• A character has 66 attribute points to assign; the total of all the character's attributes must be 66. On Core Earth, no attribute may exceed 13. The sourcebooks about each cosm may contain rules giving characters a way around this limit; check the character generation sections in those sourcebooks for details.

• Add skills to the template that you think would be appropriate for that character, and that that character would have access to. A character begins with 16 skill points to assign among all the skills listed. At least one skill must be assigned three points (the tag skill), and no skill may be assigned more than three. Every character must have at least one add in the *reality* skill.

• Every character starts with 10 Possibilities.

• Running, swimming and other limit values are listed in Gamemaster Chapter Two. To determine the character's movement rates, compare his *Dexterity* and *Strength* as modified by the Character Limit chart (page 42) to the Torg Value chart. If the *Dexterity* or *Strength* attribute exceeds the limit, use the limit value instead.

Example: A character template has a *Dexterity* of 11 and a *Strength* of 9. The character runs 100 meters per round (limit value for *running* is 10) and lifts 60 kilos — though this could go up to 100 kilos if the character chooses *lifting* as a skill.

Magicians

When designing magicians, an additional step is required. If the template has at least one add in any of the magical skills (*apportation, divination, conjuration* or *alteration*) then the character gets 12 additional points with which to buy arcane knowledges and spells. Each spell costs one of these points; arcane knowledges are purchased like skill adds. The character may also spend any or all of his starting Possibilities in order to purchase additional spells (one Possibility per spell).

Background

Next think up a background for the character. Try to think of where she comes from, how she fits into the Possibility Wars. Then think of how others would see her ... how she dresses, how she talks, how she reacts to other types of characters. Come up with a name for the character's "template type," a quick hook as to the type of character she is.

Next, think up connections the character could have which would tie her in to other characters. See the printed templates and Player Chapter One for hints on connections.

Equip the character from the list of equipment in Chapter Twelve. As the character is just starting out during the chaos of the Possibility Wars, assume she begins with enough materiel to have survived this far. She will have weapons, perhaps, and some

general equipment, and not much else. Two rules of thumb to follow when picking equipment: 1) if the character cannot carry it, she probably does not have it, and 2) working hardware is hard to come by on Core Earth since the Possibility Wars have started. The player must always clear any equipment with the gamemaster.

If the player wants possessions which do not appear on the equipment list, she is responsible for providing you with enough information about the item so you can make up your mind. For example, if the item in question is a weapon, the player would have to describe, in game terms, how effective the weapon is, and what sort of ammunition or maintenance is required, how she came across the weapon, etc. A picture would be useful.

If the player wanted a mansion, she would have to draw the floor plans of the mansion, a map of the grounds, delineate the caretakers, and give you enough written description so that the mansion can fit into the campaign.

In short, if a player wants lots of equipment or material possessions, she must pay for it. The payment is not only in game money, but in imagination; she must work the equipment in so that it contributes to the story, and is fun for you and the other players, as well as herself.



Valerie Valusek

TORG™ CHARACTER SHEET

Player Name _____

Character Name	Home Cosm	Magic	Social	Spiritual	Tech

Age	Shock Damage	K O	Possibilities

Height	Wound Level	Wound	Heavy Wound
Weight		Mortal	Dead

Skill	Add	Attribute	Value
Reality		Spirit	

Equipment	Value	Axiom Level	Range S	Range M	Range L
Armor					
Weapons					

Attributes	Approved Actions
Dexterity	Maneuver
Strength	
Toughness	
Perception	Trick
Mind	Test
Charisma	Taunt
Spirit	Intimidate

Movement Rates	Limit Values
Running	
Swimming	
Jumping	
Climbing	
Lifting	

Drama Card Record

Number	Name

Bonus Chart

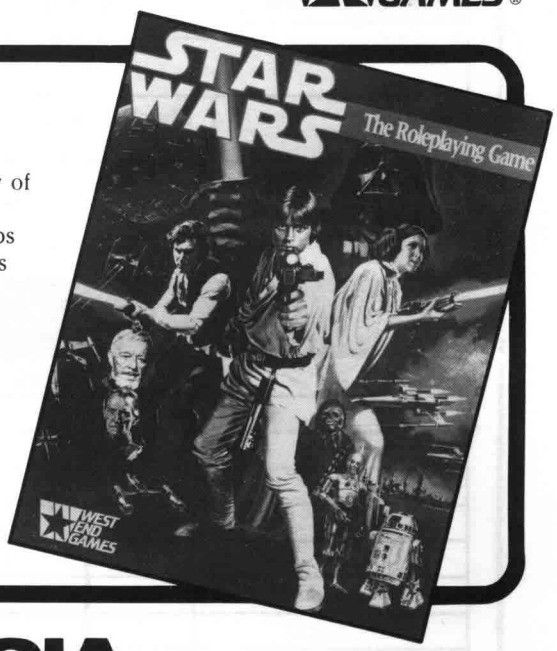
Die Roll	1	2	3 4	5 6	7 8	9 10	11 12	13 14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21 25	26 30	31 35	36 40	41 45	46 50	+5
Bonus #	-12	-10	-8	-5	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	+1

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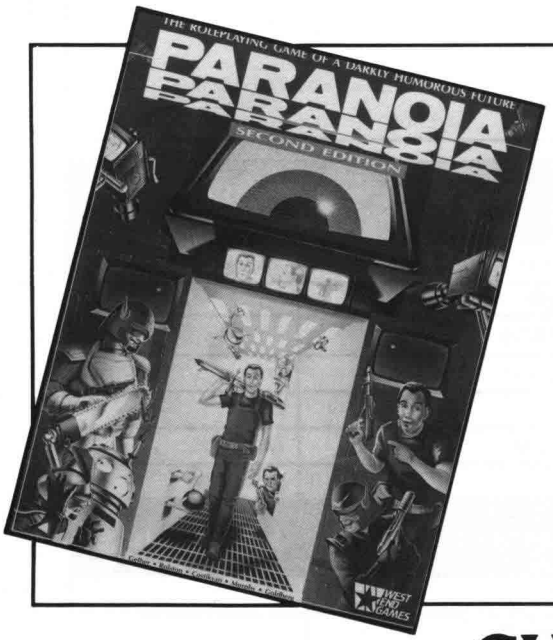
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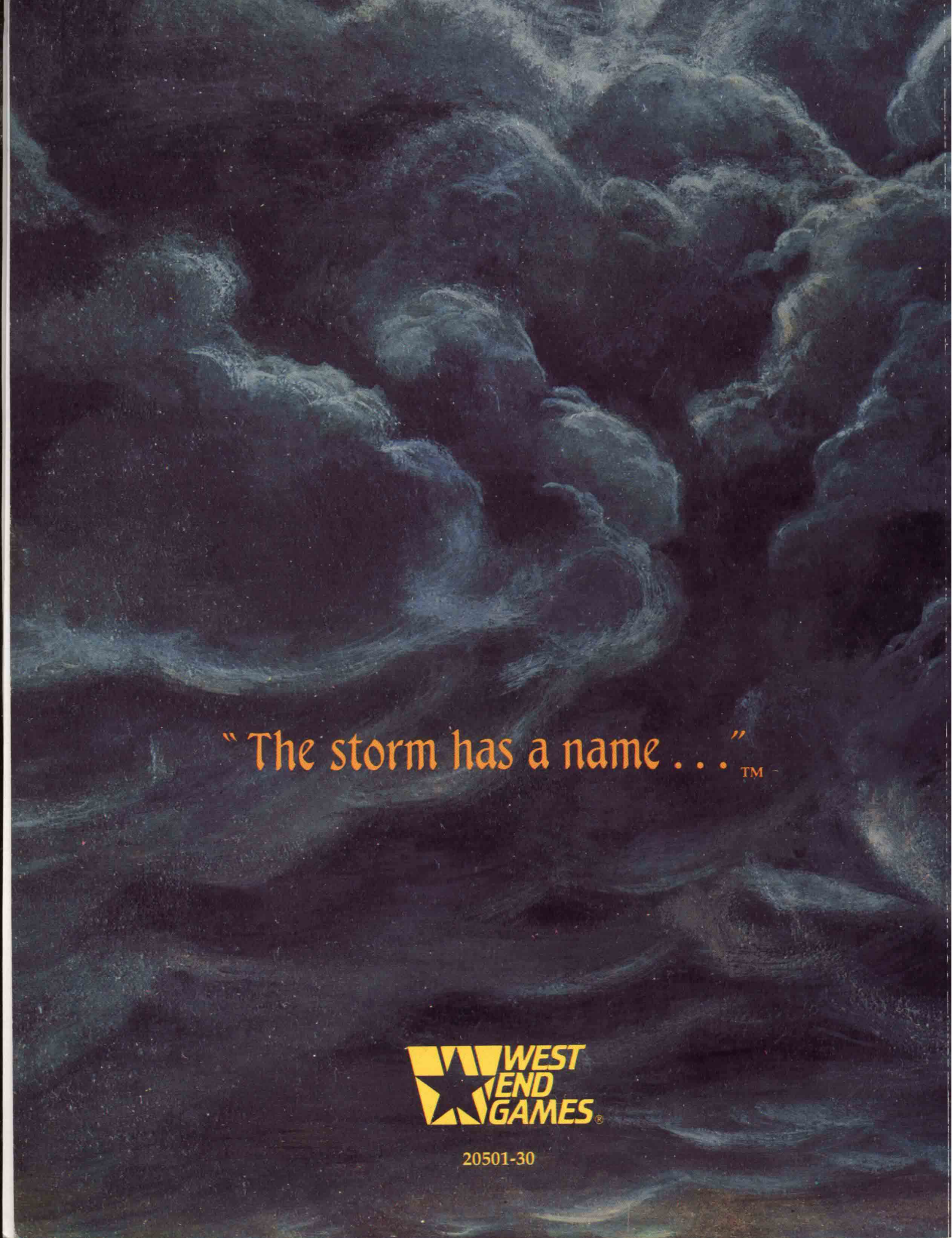
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